

## INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

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### FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF ELLISA DAWSON

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I provide this statement in response to a request under Rule 9 of the Inquiry Rules 2006 dated 13 July 2021. I adopt the paragraph numbering in the rule 9 request for ease of reference.

I, Ellisa Dawson will say as follows: -

#### 1. Introduction

1. My name is Elisa Dawson. My date of birth is GRO-C 1969, and my address is known to the Inquiry.
2. I am providing this statement in relation to my late grandmother, Robina Clouston. My late mother, Ethel Hall, also gave a statement regarding what happened to my grandmother (W2610).

#### 2. How affected

1. From what my late mother has told me, I am aware that in March 1978 my grandmother was taken to Sunderland General Hospital after feeling unwell and run down.
2. At the hospital, she received a blood transfusion and subsequently contracted septicaemia. A short while after this, whilst in the hospital, she passed away.

3. My mother was not immediately aware of what had happened to her mother and only found out years later that her mother had been given infected blood and that was the reason she had died.
4. I am unable to provide the exact details or dates as to when my grandmother received infected blood and as she passed away in 1978, her medical records have now been destroyed.
5. Neither myself nor my mother are aware of the advice my grandmother received regarding the risks of having a blood transfusion.

### **3. Other Infections**

1. I am not aware of my grandmother having any other infections as her death was so sudden.

### **4. Consent**

1. I believe that if my grandmother had been made aware of the risks associated with the blood transfusion then she would not have agreed to it.

### **5. Impact**

1. I was nine years old when my grandmother passed away. I recall the phone call my mother received to inform her that my grandmother had passed. My mother was in a complete state of shock and did not expect to receive a call like that.
2. The news became even more difficult to deal with as my grandfather and mother did not have a good relationship. My grandfather had motor neurone disease which meant that he was quite intolerant and short tempered.
3. The phone call my mother received informing her that my grandmother had passed away was from a family friend. The family friend explained to my

mother that the hospital had told her that my grandmother had passed away as a result of receiving bad blood through a blood transfusion.

4.

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5. In the years that followed by grandmother's death, my mother attempted to get documentation such as records from Sunderland Hospital. However, she was unsuccessful and was informed that the records had been destroyed. As a result of the lack of medical records, my mother was always left wondering what caused her mother's death after she received the blood transfusion.
6. Then, around four years ago, my mother saw an article in a national newspaper that discussed contaminated blood. Immediately, my mother thought of my grandmother and this sparked her memory.
7. When my mother gave a statement to the Inquiry it triggered a lot of emotion in her. Going through the statement process upset her and she found this difficult.
8. I felt so sad for my mother when she passed away as she never had full closure regarding her mother's death and the circumstances surrounding it. I know that my mother wanted to see the end of the Inquiry.
9. My grandmother was 68 years old when she passed away. When my mother had her 68<sup>th</sup> birthday, she came to the realisation that 68 is not very old. My grandmother's sister lived into her 90s, therefore my mother was always left wondering how much longer her mother would have lived had she not received contaminated blood.

**6. Treatment/Care/Support**

1. Please refer to my mother's statement for further detail on this.

**7. Financial Assistance**

1. I have not received any financial assistance from any trusts or funds. My mother has not received any financial assistance either.

**8. Other Issues**

1. There are no further issues that I wish to discuss.

**Statement of Truth**

I believe that the facts stated in this witness statement are true.

Signed. 

**GRO-C**

Dated.....7-8-21.....