

Witness Name: Michael Kitterick

Statement No.: WITN0461001

Dated: 24th JUNE 2019.

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF MICHAEL JOHN KITTERICK

I provide this statement in response to a request under Rule 9 of the Inquiry Rules 2006 dated 28 January 2018.

I, Michael Kitterick, will say as follows: -

Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is Michael Kitterick. My date of birth is GRO-C 1951 and my address is known to the Inquiry. I am now retired, but previously I was a teacher for 30 years.
2. I intend to speak about my brother Patrick Kitterick's infection with Hepatitis C ("HCV"). In particular, the nature of his illness, how the illness affected Patrick and our family, the treatment he received and the impact it had on him and our lives together.
3. I am unsure of exact dates, and timescales can be difficult, but the statement provided is my experience as an affected person to the best of my recollection.
4. Please read my statement in conjunction with Marian Sadri's, to gain a more informed overview of the family experience.

Section 2. How Affected

5. In the late 1970s, whilst in his twenties, Patrick had an operation on his liver at University College Hospital Coventry (formerly Walsgrave Hospital). I think that the operation was probably exploratory to determine the extent of any damage, or possibly even to try and repair or remove part of the liver. However Patrick did not tell me all the details, so I am not completely sure what the purpose of the surgery was – these are just my own thoughts.
6. During and after the operation, he was given blood transfusions. Patrick received transfusions due to losing a lot of blood throughout the course of the operation. I am unsure about the exact date of the operation, however I am aware that it was performed in the late 1970s. Patrick was a young man in his twenties. I presume that he would have been given information concerning his HCV diagnosis, most likely by his consultant Dr Gunstone. Patrick did not always communicate the extent of his illness to our parents or myself.
7. I am not aware of my parents being advised about the risk of Patrick contracting an infection from a blood transfusion – I certainly was not advised about this. However, this is not to say that Patrick was not informed of the potential risks before accepting the transfusions; I may just not have been told about it.
8. I am unsure as to how long after Patrick received the blood transfusions that he was made aware that he had contracted HCV. However Pat was poorly throughout the latter years of the 1970s, so I would imagine that his diagnosis for Hepatitis C was probably sometime between 1976 and 1979.
9. I am not aware of how Patrick's diagnosis was communicated to him.

10. I became aware of the fact that Patrick was suffering from HCV while he was in hospital and I went to visit him. Patrick informed me that he had contracted HCV, and he gave me a general outline of the condition. However, neither the doctors nor hospital staff provided my parents or I with any specific information about the condition.

11. I am unsure whether adequate information was provided to help Patrick manage and understand his infection. I am also unsure whether information regarding the infection should have been given to him earlier than it was.

12. I am unsure whether Patrick was informed about his infection and the likely prognosis. Pat was an intelligent young man and he was aware that he had a life threatening illness. However, whether he was given sufficiently detailed information early enough - or whether it would have made any difference - will always be a matter for conjecture. I do not recall our family being given any information about the risks of Patrick transmitting the virus to others.

Section 3. Other Infections

13. I am not aware that Patrick was infected with any infections other than HCV.

Section 4. Consent

14. I am sure that Patrick gave his consent for the blood transfusions. However, I am also sure that if he had been made aware of the extremely serious risk of being transfused with contaminated blood, like any sane person he would not have given his consent.

Section 5. Impact

15. Prior to Patrick's illness he was an outgoing, adventurous, fun loving young man. He rarely talked about his illness but it was obvious that it weighed heavily on his mind. There is no doubt he became much more circumspect.
16. Patrick lost weight and at times he looked emaciated. He began to lose his hair; he lacked energy and was often tired. At times he had difficulty eating or keeping food down. Patrick was in and out of hospital on numerous occasions during the late 1970s. When his condition became critically acute, he lost consciousness on a number of occasions and required hospitalisation. On such occasions, he would often remain in a coma for two or three days at a time depending on the severity of his condition. On leaving hospital it would often take another week or two of convalescence before he was anywhere near back to his normal self.
17. In hospital Dr Gunstone, whom Patrick had great respect for and every faith in, oversaw his treatments. What treatments may or may not have been offered to Patrick and whether these would have made any difference in the long run is another matter of conjecture. However, I do know that the hospital staff always did their very best for Pat.
18. The Hospital staff treated Pat under the guidance of Dr Gunstone mostly at University College Hospital Coventry and then more latterly under Doctor Knell at Warwick Hospital.
19. Patrick basically faded away: he lost weight, he was in pain and eventually on the 12th of July 1980 at around 4am, he died. The death certificate stated that the cause of death was Pneumonia. I believe the cause of death to be the HCV and the consequent damage to his liver.
20. Patrick's life was massively hampered by his illness. He was off of work for weeks at a time and he had numerous hospital appointments to

attend. He was often tired, so involving himself in even fairly mundane social events became a chore.

21. With regards to work, it was difficult for Patrick. There were periods when he was either in hospital, or recuperating at home after an operation. It meant a lot of time off of work and this obviously impacted financially on him.

22. Prior to Patrick's illness we were like twins. Patrick was only eighteen months older than me. We played football, cricket, squash and numerous other sports together, and had the same circle of friends. We were as close as any two brothers could be.

23. The effect of Patrick's illness was devastating. Watching Patrick deteriorate physically over the years; sitting at his bedside in hospital wondering whether he was ever going to come out of this coma; and finally being there in the early hours of a July morning as he struggled to breathe and eventually passed away. I have no doubt that my life would have been very different had my brother not died.

24. My parents were bereft at the death of their son. My mother in particular was distraught. Although the passing years no doubt healed some of the pain, I personally feel that the shock and anguish was partly responsible for the [GRO-C] my mother suffers from in her 70s. My father dealt with it in his own inimitable way, choosing to reflect upon the happiness that Patrick had brought to his life.

25. I did not personally suffer any stigma as a result of Pat's Hepatitis C, nor did any of my family as far as I am aware.

Section 6. Treatment/Care/Support

26. I am not aware whether Patrick faced difficulties or obstacles in obtaining treatment, care or support as a consequence of being infected with HCV.

27. I am also unaware as to whether support or psychological support was ever made available to Patrick.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

28. No financial assistance has ever been offered or received from any trust or fund by either Patrick or any member of my family.

Section 8. Other Issues

29. There are no other issues I would like to discuss.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed

GRO-C

Dated :

4TH JUNE 2019.