Witness Name: Bernadette Farrell
Statement No.: WITN0470001
Exhibits: **WITN0470002 – WITN047007**
Dated: 21st May 2019

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF BERNADETTE FARRELL

I provide this statement in response to a request under Rule 9 of the Inquiry Rules 2006 dated 25 October 2019.

I, Bernadette Farrell, will say as follows: -

Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is Bernadette Farrell. My date of birth is GRO-C 1959 and my address is known to the Inquiry. I work in the pharmacy of GRO-C Royal NHS Foundation Trust, formerly Hope Hospital. I am separated and I have a daughter.
2. I intend to speak about my infection with Hepatitis C (HCV, formerly called NANB Hepatitis). In particular, the nature of my illness, how the illness has affected me, the treatment I received and the impact on my family and me.

Section 2. How Infected

3. On the 17th September 1987 I had a full-term stillborn at Hope Hospital, now Salford Royal NHS Hospital. I had a large haemorrhage so I was transfused with quite a lot of blood. I was given two units of Fresh Frozen Plasma on the 17th September, followed by four units of blood on the same day and a further two units of Fresh Frozen Plasma. On the 18th September I was given a further two units of packed cells.

4. I was unaware of the infection for a number of years. I found out I was infected after donating blood with the National Blood Transfusion Service at my workplace, Hope Hospital, on the 17th December 1991.

5. I had given blood regularly from the age of eighteen or nineteen, starting at the BT centre in Manchester Piccadilly. I hadn't donated blood for a number of years due to the trauma of losing my first baby, and then giving birth to my daughter Beth, a relatively short time after. There was a mobile blood donation unit at the hospital, so I decided to go along and I gave blood for the first time since my transfusion, over four years previously.

6. On the 15th January 1992 I received a letter informing me that I could not donate blood anymore, due to abnormal cells and to contact them for an appointment. I was reassured that the antibodies for AIDS was negative, but that I had to go into hospital to discuss. I went to the deputy director of the pharmacy, my boss, in floods of tears because of this letter. I exhibit this letter from the National Blood Transfusion Service, dated 13th January 1992, informing me that there was an issue with my blood as **WITN0470002**

7. I had my appointment on the 21st January 1991, and it was here that I was informed by my consultant, Elizabeth Love, that I had non-A-non-B (NANB) Hepatitis (now referred to as Hepatitis C). It was explained to me that it was a viral infection.

8. Nothing was really explained to me, not that I can remember but maybe I was in a state of shock. I had no idea what NANB Hepatitis was, and no idea what was involved. They couldn't tell me the degree of my infection at this point, I only knew it was serious enough not to give blood. I remember being in a state of shell-shock when I was informed. I didn't know what was happening and the first thought was that I have a toddler, and I'd just started a new job and I was the main breadwinner in the house (my husband had recently been made redundant). I didn't know anything about it and how it would affect my life.

9. It was discussed that Hepatitis was spread through having unprotected sex, using needles etc. I had to have the conversation with the doctor whether I was a drug user, whether I was promiscuous and so forth. It was a similar theme to what was seen as an 'AIDS thing'. I can't remember if this happened in the initial meeting or when I was referred to the Hepatologist. After I stated that I had not done any of these things, it was explained that I probably got Hepatitis C through my blood transfusion.

10. It was explained to me that Hepatitis C affected your liver. It was stated that I couldn't use the same cups, toothbrush, towels as other people, and that I couldn't have unprotected sex, otherwise I might infect others. At this point, the idea as to what Hepatitis was, began to escalate in my mind and it started to hit home. I didn't have any access to the internet at this time so I couldn't find any information about what it was, I could have asked my colleagues at the pharmacy because they worked with this also but I didn't want to do that because I didn't want people to know. I only told my husband and best friend in the beginning. I didn't want to tell anyone else, I didn't tell the rest of my family until much later on.

11. I was referred to a Hepatologist at Manchester Royal Infirmary (MRI) pretty quickly. There, it was explained to me by the consultant, Mr. Mc Lindon, that Hepatitis C affected the liver and could turn into cirrhosis, scarring on your liver.

12. One question I did ask was whether my daughter could be infected. I had her twelve months after being infected. The doctors said it was very unlikely, which was something I couldn't get my head around because it is a blood-borne infection and there are the risks of giving birth and breastfeeding. It was particularly confusing given the fact I had been warned about sharing towels and cups. I had to push for Beth to be tested because although it was a low risk, it was still a risk and I was worried. She was tested in November 1992 and thankfully, she was negative.

13. My husband was tested at the same time. I also had to push for him to be tested. I think they held the belief that he would not be infected, but I was having sexual relations with my husband after my transfusion, without protection and I thought it could be passed onto him, particularly because the doctors said it was infectious. He was negative as well.

14. I exhibit the letter from Manchester Royal Infirmary dated 24th November 1992 informing me that my daughter Beth had been tested clear of HCV as WITN0470003. My husband was tested at the same time and would have received a similar letter.

15. It didn't make any sense that the doctors were saying that they would be fine. I thought that the first thing the doctors would say was that there was a possibility my daughter and husband could be infected, particularly because they were warning against using the same cups, towels etc.

Section 3. Other Infections

16. I have not received any infection or infections other than HCV.

17. However, since the transfusion I was constantly plagued by abscesses so extreme that they left me hospitalised. I was referred to various doctors to determine the cause but no conclusion was arrived at. I believe it was to do with my infection.

Section 4. Consent

18. I was not in a position to consent to the blood transfusion, but had I been asked I would have consented because I needed it. I would have died without it; I wouldn't be here, and my daughter wouldn't be here.

19. However, if there was a choice between having no blood or infected blood, I would have gone no blood. I was not informed of the risks.

Section 5. Impact

20. My personality changed after my diagnosis of HCV. I was very low, but I didn't know if that was to do with the circumstances I was in. My self-confidence went and I didn't want to associate with people; I cocooned myself.

21. It was difficult because I had a social life before this, I would go out for meals with my husband and out with work friends but this all changed after my diagnosis. Although I was not much of a drinker before, I couldn't drink because of the further pressure it put on my liver. This led to me being further withdrawn, particularly because my social group would make comments if I was in the pub with them and not drinking.

22. Because I wasn't being given answers; being told on one hand that I could infect my daughter and husband, and on the other hand that I could not, I became obsessive with cleaning and what Beth was doing. For example, when my daughter dropped her dummy, I would instinctively put it in my mouth to remove the dirt, I became horrified, worried even this may have infected her. After my diagnosis, I would no longer get into the bath with Beth, I would not help her if she cut herself and if I cut myself I would panic. Everything would be blown out of proportion, more exaggerated than it should have been really.

23. As a result, the bond between Beth and me took a shift away, even the bedtime routines, such as baths changed and stopped completely. I just drew myself away slightly from her, to a less tactile relationship until she was about ten or eleven, until she was actually grown up, because I was so concerned about infecting her. She had to go to her Dad for her kisses and cuddles and because of this I believe that our bond was broken.

24. The physical relationship with my husband also stopped. That was my choice because I was worried about infecting him. We tried to work it through because we had Beth to think about but it was never going to be the same; I don't believe that you can have a proper relationship without intimacy. When my husband got back to work (he was an electrician), he worked away a lot. We wanted more children but I couldn't: I didn't know what the situation was, or would be. I didn't know if I'd be around in six months' time.

25. I wouldn't kiss anybody on the lips anymore including my daughter, husband and parents. I put this down to lack of information; information was sparse and I felt totally alone.

26. All of this took its toll on my husband and our relationship. We've been separated for about fifteen years now, we're not divorced, we're still on

good terms and he lives up the road. I believe that my Hepatitis is definitely linked to our separation. We had been together since I was eighteen, he was twelve years older. We had bought a house, had a baby; everything was going as it should. After I got this diagnosis out of the blue, everything changed.

27. My diagnosis with HCV also affected the relationships in my wider family. I have two brothers, and one sister who died four years ago; I am the second youngest out of my siblings. I told my parents about my diagnosis because they used to babysit Beth and they noticed things were different. They also used to watch Beth whilst I had hospital visits and hospital stays, because my husband would take me. I had to sit them both down and tell them. They were 'old school', and they didn't really understand. AIDs came into it. It was a massive thing back then and it was confusing for them. I think they thought that I might have that, I didn't want to scare them.

28. A problem emerged with my sister-in-law. I told my brothers about my condition and I told them I didn't want it going outside the family, that I just wanted us to keep it to ourselves. However, one day, about six or seven years after my diagnosis, I got a phone call from my mum whilst I was at work. She was in tears, telling me that I needed to go home. It turned out that my sister-in-law had told a neighbour of my mum's that I had HIV. That neighbour then approached my mother on the street and asked about me and whether I had it. This blew up into a massive fallout: my sister ripped into my sister-in-law, my mum and dad fell out with my sister-in-law and my brother took her side. This just caused extra stress that I really didn't need at the time. The last time I saw my sister-in-law was at my sister's funeral, and even then, I didn't really talk to her. My sister never spoke to her again until the day she died. It affected my relationship with my brother and I don't see him very often anymore.

29. My parents were very worried because they didn't really understand HCV and HIV; my sister-in-law saying this made them think it was HIV that I had and they didn't believe me for a while when I said it wasn't. It took some convincing but they eventually took my word for it.

30. This also had a big impact on me. My sister-in-law apologised but the damage had been done. I didn't want to go down to my mum's anymore in case the neighbours were talking. As much as you tell people that nothing happened, mud sticks. It was more stress and hassle that I didn't need, just from one throwaway comment. For example, my daughter played with the children living on my mum's road and I was worried that it might get to the school and affect her. I was worried that the neighbours were telling other people that I had HIV, and how that was going to come back to me. It made it even more so that I didn't tell anybody in the future; I lost trust and I was even more worried that if I told someone they would tell other people.

31. The treatment I underwent to try and clear my HCV infection had a big impact on my life, which I will outline below.

32. After my diagnosis, for the first few years, I kept on going back to the hospital for various tests and biopsies on the liver.

33. Three to five years after my initial diagnosis, in the mid-1990s, I received Interferon treatment. The first lot of treatment was about six months, with three injections a week; Monday, Wednesday and Friday. I was required to self-inject the interferon which I didn't like at all. I spent a few days at the hospital being shown how to do it, for example by injecting an orange. I mainly injected it in the top of my leg, and very occasionally in the stomach. Sometimes I hit a nerve in my leg and I had to go into hospital. This happened a number of times and it was a hazard of doing what I had to do. They told me to change and to inject into my stomach but I just couldn't do it.

34. I remember when I went in to get the first interferon prescription my GP, Dr GRO-D, who had been my GP since I was around eighteen, asked me, "do you realise how much this is costing us?". I remember coming out absolutely distraught at this comment, although it probably wasn't meant in a bad way. It felt as though I was a burden even though it was not my fault and I had not done anything wrong.

35. Prior to the start of treatment, I was told about the side effects of weight loss, hair loss and so forth. I lost a lot of weight, I was nine and a half stone before the treatment and I lost two stone during the treatment. I lost my hair and I was very fatigued throughout.

36. I was still working during my treatment; I was part-time when I was first diagnosed, but then I went full-time because my husband had been made redundant. It was a matter of coming in from work, having something to eat and going to bed.

37. The Interferon was what is known as 'fridge', line' so we couldn't go on holiday. I didn't want to take the drugs away and go through all the paraphernalia of getting drugs through customs, organising the fridge box and everything that went with it.

38. The treatment affected my work; it affected how I behaved at work and stopped me from performing to the best of my ability. I didn't want to tell anyone. My boss, the person I went to when I first received my letter knew I was having treatment. People at work must have known that something was wrong, they saw that I was losing weight and losing my hair but they never asked me directly. I think I just said that I was having treatment for something, maybe cancer to explain the hair loss. It would have been easier for me to talk to people about what I was going through if I had been ill with cancer rather than Hepatitis, due to the stigma. I didn't want people in the staff room thinking, "oh she's just touched that spoon, or that cup".

39. Not telling anyone meant that everything was bottled up. People were wondering why I was acting strangely and out of character. I didn't have lunch in the staff room like I always had before, I would take myself away. I would no longer socialise after work.

40. At the end of the six months I was informed that although the interferon had stopped the Hepatitis C from progressing, it had not cleared the infection. I was also told about a new treatment, a clinical trial with Interferon and Ribavirin but that I would have to wait two years to try treatment again. By this time, I was in a really bad place, both physically and mentally drained. We carried on for another couple of years with the routine checks that we did prior to the treatment; biopsies, blood tests etc.

41. My husband eventually made enquiries wanting another course of Interferon, to see whether it could clear the Hepatitis second time round. We were informed that another course of Interferon probably wouldn't benefit me at that time, that it wouldn't work because the last one didn't. My reaction was, "isn't it worth a go?". I was willing to go through it again to see if it worked.

42. My husband wouldn't take "no" for an answer, so got Hazel Blears, the then Chair, Salford & Trafford Community Health Council (later to become my local MP) involved. She came around to the house.

43. Hazel Blears then got in touch with a consultant at Central Manchester. I exhibit a copy of this letter dated 30th November 1996, to Dr Ian Greatorex of Salford & Trafford Health Authority asking why I was not being offered treatment, as WITN0470004

44. I exhibit the reply to Hazel Blears' letter of 30th November 1996, dated 31st November 1996 as WITN0470005. The response was from Dr Jennifer Hill within which she identifies the need for me to have

'counselling and support'. I would like to point out that I did not receive this until some nine or ten years later.

45. I received a further letter in response in April 1997 stating that they would not continue with another course of Interferon on its own but the most appropriate treatment would be Interferon with Ribavirin. They stated they could not offer this to me at this time, but hoped to consider me if it came available under medical trial.

46. I was not offered any more treatment until three years ago, in 2016. This is ten years after the discussion of being offered Interferon and Ribavirin. In between 1996 and 2016 I just kept on going back for liver function tests and blood tests, I don't remember anything changing. After my first treatment everything had died down and we went back to normality. I was still very conscious about things around me, but day-to-day stuff carried on as normal. My general health was alright, I was tired but I don't think that had a big impact on me. I was working full-time and looking after a child so I largely put it down to that.

47. Ten years ago, during this in-between period, I became a grandmother. I dealt with my grandson the same way I dealt with my daughter when she was younger. Beth never did have a problem with my infection, I think it was just me being paranoid.

48. On 25th February 2013 I was offered further treatment. I exhibit a letter dated 25th February 2013 as WITN0470006. This letter informed me that I had been selected for the 'triple therapy' treatment. This was a six-month treatment that involved taking three different treatments: Interferon, Ribavirin and Telaprevir.

49. I can't remember how it came about exactly. Every three to six months I went to Manchester Royal Infirmary for scans and blood tests. It was obviously discussed at one of my appointments that there was a treatment available, and if I wanted to do it. I was told there were some

bad side-effects, such as hair loss, weight loss and depression, but that everyone reacts differently. There was a group meeting at Manchester Royal Infirmary liver clinic with other people offered this treatment where they went through slideshows, explaining things and showing examples of potential side effects.

50. The treatment was very invasive on my life. It was triple therapy, ie three different drugs, all tablets. I was constantly taking tablets throughout the day. For example, the most invasive of the medications was Teleprevir, which I had to take every four hours. I had to set an alarm during the night and you couldn't miss one, you had to eat before it. This meant that I would have to get up in the middle of the night and eat, which was an issue given that I have never usually even eaten breakfast. In itself, this was so restrictive, I couldn't go anywhere.

51. It didn't take long for the side-effects to kick in, and they were awful. I was in work for the first couple of weeks but due to the lack of sleep, the exhaustion and my loss of weight I had to take six months off.

52. I didn't eat because I had absolutely no appetite. For example, my best friend would come over with a sandwich to try and incite me to eat. However, I could only stomach eating one quarter of the sandwich and I would have to throw the rest away when she had left. As a result, I went from ten stone to six-and-a-half-stone.

53. The depression was crippling to the point where I had to take talopram and diazepam. I am not a pill-popper, I didn't want to go on them because you hear about addictions, particularly working as a pharmacist. However, my depression got so bad I didn't feel as though I had another choice. The anti-depressants zombie-fied me; I didn't want to see anybody, I didn't want to talk to anybody, not even to go and watch TV at a friend's house. I've never been that low; black moods, black thoughts. I was so low, I didn't even want my daughter around.

54. I also developed a bit of an obsessive, compulsive disorder (OCD). In particular, everything had to be straight. I went for a friend's birthday, out for afternoon tea, and a picture wasn't straight on the wall. I couldn't stop myself getting up and moving it and I'm sure everyone thought, 'what is this woman and what is she doing?'.

55. Two months into treatment I woke up in the middle of the night feeling funny. I was ricocheting from wall to wall. I called my friend who said I did not look well and took me to the hospital. When I got to the hospital, I saw the nurse who was confused because it wasn't the day of my usual appointment. She said that I did not look well and sent me to the emergency room. My blood pressure had dropped and I was told I had developed pneumonia because my immune system was so low.

56. As a result of my pneumonia, because I felt so bad, I missed one dose of the Telaprevir that needed to be taken every four hours. Because I had missed one dose I was taken off the tablet, it was that critical. I was distraught because I had spent two months going through the ordeal of taking the Telaprevir every four hours and I felt that I had ruined my chance of ridding the disease. I still continued to take the Interferon and Ribavirin, and I physically felt a little better for coming off Telaprevir; I think Telaprevir had affected me the most but it is difficult to tell.

57. I tried to go back to work after four months of treatment, even though I was being paid. I felt really unwell when I started working again. When my boss walked in, straight away they asked me what I was doing there and told me to go home because I was not well. Occupational health signed me off for another twelve weeks paid sick leave straight away. I would have been in real trouble had I not been being paid. However, I was still financially disadvantaged by this situation due to the fact that I usually worked on a shift pattern which came with a shift allowance. This along with regular overtime brought in more money than the basic pay. I had a new mortgage, having just bought my

husband out of the house, and getting a new mortgage at my age meant that the monthly payments were higher as they had to be over a shorter period. It was quite a high mortgage. Consequently, I felt the pressure to go back to work after the six months because I could not afford not to be paid.

58. Throughout the trial I had to had to go for blood tests at the hospital. One week the liver count would be down, the next it would be up. It was awful: you would be on a high after the count was down, then the next week it would go back up and I would get upset again wondering if I'd done anything differently. This was particularly the case after I had to come off Telaprevir because it messed everything up, my blood tests were off the scale. Thankfully, towards the end it was just coming down and down.

59. Following my treatment, I went back and they just said it was clear. They don't know if it will come back and I went back every three months, they said you needed to be twelve months clear. I remained clear and I now go back every twelve months.

60. Getting the all clear felt strange, I didn't believe it. I remember asking whether it was right and asking if it will come back. Now, I try not to think about it. I feel like I'm clear, even though I was never 'ill' ill, other than when undertaking my treatment. If I had never been a blood donor I wouldn't have known because I wasn't physically and obviously poorly. I was always tired but with the trauma of losing the first baby and becoming pregnant with my daughter GRO-C months later, then looking after a toddler, all while working, I put this tiredness down to constantly running around.

61. After my treatment, I initially went back to work on reduced hours. I was unable to work overtime which was quite a financial knock.

62. If I was offered the triple therapy again I wouldn't take it, even though it cleared my Hepatitis C. The side-effects were too bad.

63. I've never really been ill with anything else, I've always been quite healthy. I found it very difficult to tell even health professionals about my infection. For example, I broke both elbows and I had to tell the ambulance crew and then the hospital staff straight away. I always felt that I had to say it and then quickly add that it was through a blood transfusion, in case they thought I got some other way. The stigma; I hated it.

64. The dentist was even worse. I eventually stopped going and I haven't been since. I had to tell them that I was infected, so after I was diagnosed I went in and informed them. The dentist said that it was fine but I would have to be the last appointment of the day. However, when I walked in for the first appointment after telling him it looked like something out of a sci-fi movie: everything was covered in plastic, and the staff were covered head to toe, with even glasses on. I understand that they were protecting themselves and I didn't have a problem with them as people, but the whole thing was so stressful. Although I have been free of Hepatitis for three years now, I still don't know whether to tell them when I do go. I have received no advice about whether to disclose it. Instead, I was simply told I was cleared, and to go to the GP to get bloods done, they didn't give me any advice.

65. Since I've been clear my health has been fine.

66. It took me a while to get my strength back. When I was back at work I looked ill, and I was still very weak and my mind was all over the place. I knew that people were still talking about me.

67. I also tried to come off anti-depressants during treatment, which was not a good idea and I had to go back on them. I stopped straight away three months after my treatment ended, I just wanted it all to end. I

didn't feel a side effect, there probably was but not a major thing that I couldn't cope with.

Section 6. Treatment/Care/Support

68. When I was having my Triple Therapy treatment I was referred to a counsellor and a dietician. I didn't find the dietician that useful; they simply said I had to eat, even though I was not eating only because I could not face food.

69. I was not offered psychological support outside of this treatment despite receiving a letter in 1996 saying that I would benefit from counselling.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

70. I was given no information that there was financial assistance out there. When I went on my second course of treatment it left me in a bit of a financial mess, partly because I couldn't work as much but also because of the cost of prescriptions. It cost me about £220 for a 'bulk' annual prescription. I was taking three drugs during this treatment, alongside anti-depressants and everything on top of that. I also had to pay somebody weekly to take me to the appointments, and somebody to walk my dog and clean the house.

71. I now receive money from the Skipton Fund, now the EIBSS.

72. I wasn't told about the Skipton Fund from the hospital. I found out through a girl that I worked with. Her brother was a Haemophiliac with Hepatitis C, and she told me that he was receiving payments from the Skipton Fund and that I would probably be entitled. I didn't really give it any thought after that but a couple of weeks later she asked me if I had looked. I subsequently googled it and gave them a ring. The man on

the other end of the phone was really nice and he had also had Hepatitis C.

73. On 21st September 2012 I received a cheque for £20,000 through the door. It came in useful because I'd bought my husband out of the house and my mortgage payments were large.

74. A couple of years ago I started receiving monthly payments. I received a one-off payment for £3500 on the 28th November 2016, which subsequently changed to £297 monthly. After April this amount will go up to around £333 a month.

75. I receive a £500 fuel allowance every winter.

76. I recently received another letter through the door telling me that the fund are upping payments slightly depending upon what pay bracket you're in. I have had to send what income bracket I am in, to send the payslip and council tax bill. I received a subsequent letter informing me of my new payment scheme from April.

77. You're not aware of what you're entitled to until it comes through the door. It is only as the inquiry has started that I am receiving more information regarding what help is available with the dentist, prescriptions and so forth.

Section 8. Other Issues

78. Around 1993, through my husband, I initiated solicitors, Betesh Fox and Co, based in Manchester, for which I have correspondence that I shall keep should the inquiry want to look at it. They dealt with me individually for a medical negligence claim.

79. I was allowed legal aid and my case was reviewed by counsel Mr Brooke and he suggested that I had a possible claim for clinical mis-management against Salford Health Authority and/or anyone else responsible for my care during my first pregnancy. They pursued a claim against the way I was dealt with that may have necessitated me having a blood transfusion in the first place as opposed to looking into the blood that I received. With regards to this, my medical records were requested in April 1994 and by July 1994 I had received my GP records. However, although Salford Health Authority had offered disclosure of my medical records, they later said they wouldn't release them until they received the charges for photocopying and that an application would have to be sent to the legal aid board in respect of this. In October 1994 the solicitors received copies of my medical records.

80. In a subsequent letter in November 1994 from the solicitors, it was reported that my records had been reviewed by an expert and that I had been looked after extremely well at Hope Hospital and there could have been no criticism for the care I had received. It was on this basis that I was informed that this expert was unable to advise either myself or the legal aid board to pursue this claim.

81. Although there was other subsequent correspondence, this claim led nowhere and by August 1995 I received notification from the solicitors that the file papers referring to my matter would be retained by them until August 2001 when they would be destroyed.

82. It seems to me at no point during my dealings with the solicitors was the issue of infected blood taken up with the health authority. This may have been due to the fact that previously people had tried and failed in legal action regarding infected blood and blood products.

83. I exhibit as WITN047007, a document that may be of use to the Inquiry. It is dated December 4th 1996 and is from Katherine Wright apparently from the Social Policy Section, House of Commons Library to Stan Orme MP and is with regards to compensation to HCV victims. I cannot remember how this letter came into my possession but it was most likely through correspondence between my husband and my MP at the time Stan Orme.

84. I was not aware of the issue of infected blood until this inquiry. All I knew was that it was a contaminated batch, and that I missed screening by roughly twelve months. I am aware that it is not possible to screen for everything, but I believe that England was dragging its feet. Other countries seemed to screen earlier, and hold inquiries much earlier than the UK has.

85. What happened to me, and so many others, cannot happen again. I know that there are stringent rules in place for a lot of things, but obviously there was a cover up and things weren't done when they were supposed to have been done. They knew it was happening so why wasn't it stopped? Why was it allowed to continue?

86. I worked for the NHS for thirty years and it is beggar's belief that this could have happened. In pharmaceuticals, every 'i' is dotted, every 'T' is crossed, there are so many rules and regulations. If it is possible for these regulations for medication, why was this not done for something as important as blood. Why wasn't something from somebody's body that is being put into someone else's body being screened? Would they have done this with mothers' milk at the milk bank? Everything comes into question.

87. The government dropped a massive cataclysmic clanger with this situation and it is scandalous. I think it is important that they are brought to book for it, so that it cannot happen again.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed GRO-C

Dated 21/5/19

Summary of my exhibits

WITN047002		Letter from National Blood Transfusion Service, dated 13th January 1992, informing me that there was an issue with my blood.
WITN047003		Letter from Manchester Royal Infirmary dated 24th November 1992 informing me that my daughter Beth had been tested clear of HCV as WITN047003
WITN047004		Letter dated 30th November 1996, from Hazel Blears to Dr Ian Greatorex of Salford & Trafford Health Authority asking why I was not being offered treatment.
WITN047005		Reply to Hazel Blears' letter of 30th November 1996, dated 31st November 1996 from Dr Jennifer Hill identifying need for counselling for.
WITN047006		Letter dated 25th February 2013 as informed me that I had been selected for the 'triple therapy' treatment.