

Witness Name: A M Dobson

Statement No: WITN 1192001

Exhibits:WITN1192002

Dated: January 2019

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF ANDREW MARTIN DOBSON

I, Andrew Martin Dobson will say as follows:-

Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is Andrew Martin Dobson. I was born on GRO-C 1974 and live with my wife and two children at GRO-C
GRO-C
2. I make this statement as the son of Martin John Dobson (deceased) who was infected with Hepatitis C as a result of receiving contaminated blood products and died on the GRO-C 2002.
3. This witness statement has been prepared without the benefit of full access to my late fathers' medical records.

Section 2. How Affected

4. My father had Haemophilia A classed as moderate with a 6% clotting factor. He was diagnosed when he was about he was about 1 year old and was initially treated at Bristol Royal Hospital For Sick Children, then the Royal

United Hospital Bath, and eventually the Haemophilia Centre at the Churchill Hospital, Oxford, (later called The Oxford Radcliffe Hospitals).

5. I am unaware of the name of the Factor VIII products received by my father; so I am contacting the UKHCDO. National Haemophilia Database ,to see if it has any record of the blood products given to him.
6. My father received a substantial amount of his Factor VIII from his then GP Doctor Miall of Elm Hayes Surgery Paulton, Bristol, as he did not self-administer and was never able to.
7. I believe he received contaminated blood products at some point, however as I was young at the time, I am not aware of exactly when this had happened. My mother told me that my father went for blood tests of his own accord in the late seventies/ early eighties because he didn't feel well and had signs of jaundice. At the time it was made clear by the doctor that an error had been made by the NHS and that Hepatitis was a possibility. He was subsequently advised in or about 1993 that he had issues with his liver functionality and he had probably contracted Hep C in the 1980s.I refer to Exhibit WITN 1192002.
8. As far as my mother and I are aware no information or advice was provided to my father about the risk of being exposed to infection from blood products before being given the blood products and no counselling or psychological support was offered at the time.
9. As far as my mother can recollect no information was given to her or my father about how to manage the infection or the risks of others being infected. I believe this information should have been given when my father was first infected.

Section 3. Other Infections

- 10.I am not aware if he had any other infections.

Section 4. Consent

11. I believe my father may have been tested without his knowledge or consent.

Section 5. Impact of the Infection

12. The mental and physical effects on my father were gradual and it was not until 2000 when he was diagnosed with liver cancer that the effects began to really show. He had would always put on a brave face, and did not let his family know he was in pain; my mother suffered the brunt of it.

13. My brother has suffered a lot of grief from our father's death. It has had a major impact on our lives and my children's lives as they are left without a grandfather, my mother's life came to a halt, she has been unable to move on after his passing. My mother is incredibly angry about the whole situation, she goes through stages of being very upset and her mental health suffers. She gains comfort from her grandchildren; however, this highlights to her what my father has missed out on.

14. My father had to retire early in 2000 after his diagnosis of liver cancer, as by then he had begun to struggle to move around, and his energy levels had dropped significantly, which made carrying out his duties impossible. He was a chief technician at Bath University, and oversaw the laboratory and IT facilities in one of the departments of the University

15. He did not want any treatment for liver cancer, as he had gone through his whole life having injections and tests for his Haemophilia and he did not want anymore. I also believe that he did not receive any treatment for Hepatitis C.

16. My brother has suffered serious effects as a result of all of this, he has deep rooted regrets about not having time with our father, GRO-C
GRO-C but this is something I do not want to go into in any more detail. He is four years younger than me and I believe there is a definite connection with what happened to our father and my brother's mental health.

My father's infection with Hepatitis C and his subsequent death has had a major impact on my family, particularly my brother.

17. As far as I was aware, there was no stigma as such, I was very young.

Section 6. Treatment/care/support

18. There was no substantive treatment provided or suggested to the best of our knowledge after the diagnosis of Hepatitis C and liver cancer nor was any counselling or psychological support offered or taken.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

19. My father retired two years early which had a financial impact on his pension and income and, to my knowledge no financial support was offered at this time.

20. I found out about the right to apply for an ex gratia payment in the news, it had not previously been made known to us that funds were available. I applied for the payments as my mother did not want to, she did not want the money or to be involved. I received £20,000 in June 2011 and £50,000 in September 2011 from the Skipton fund.

21. The process of applying was a challenge in terms of obtaining records and proof; I had to go to the doctor's surgery to obtain my father's records. The government would have already had this information but I had to jump through hoops to obtain it, I am annoyed that my mother was not contacted directly, and informed that an ex gratia payment might be available and, that there was no support available to assist her with applying for payments. It was just a case of 'the money is there' and you need to find out about it and apply for it yourself and you need to produce all this documentation and information which the Government already has.

22. You cannot put value on someone's life, it is not about the money it is about the justice, I do not consider that £70,000 is a large amount of money in the grand scheme of things; you cannot put a price on my father's life.

23. I believe there has not been sufficient financial support, or assistance given to obtain that financial support. Which was available It was left to me to negotiate the many difficulties placed in the way, to gain the financial support my mother needed as she was grieving too much and still is.

Section 8. Other Issues

24. I feel the cover up is appalling; the amount of people who have been affected by this is terrible. I feel that people should be held to account, there must be some closure on this and answers as to how this has happened, it will not bring people back from the dead however it would hopefully provide closure for some and provide an important lesson to be learnt.

Anonymity, disclosure and redaction

25. I confirm that I do not wish to apply for anonymity and I understand this statement will be published and disclosed as part of the inquiry. I would like to give oral evidence to the inquiry.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed

GRO-C

Dated 6 January 2019