

Witness Name: ML Fuller
Statement No: WITN1224001
Exhibits: WITN1224002-4
Dated: January 2019

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF MICHELLE LOUISE FULLER

I, Michelle Louise Fuller, will say as follows:-

Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is Michelle Louise Fuller. I live at GRO-C
GRO-C. My date of birth is GRO-C 1985. I got married last
year and I live with my husband and my 14 year old daughter.

2. This witness statement has been prepared without the benefit of access
to my father's full medical records.

Section 2. How Affected

3. My late father, Ian Stephen Hall, was infected with HIV and Hepatitis C as a
result of receiving contaminated blood products, which he received from the
age of 17 until when he passed away aged 38. **Exhibit WITN1224002** is an
extract from my father's medical records evidencing some Factor VIII
infusions. **Exhibit WITN1224003** is a copy of my father's death certificate
confirming that he died on GRO-C 1993 and that one of the causes of
death was HIV.

4. My father had Severe Haemophilia A and was under the care of Dr French at The Queen's Medical Centre in Nottingham. He was also treated at Nottingham City Hospital.
5. My mother has confirmed that my father was provided with no information or advice in relation to the risks of receiving Factor VIII.
6. My father received a letter from The Queen's Medical Centre, in or around 1985, requesting that he attend the hospital regarding some recent blood test results. My mother has advised me that my father told her that he did not remember having any blood tests. My father attended the hospital alone and Dr [GRO-D] told him that my father was HIV positive. This bombshell was imparted to my father in a very direct and matter of fact way. Dr [GRO-D] then briefly mentioned that if my mother and father wanted to continue to have sex then they must use protection.
7. My father was extremely worried because my mother was already pregnant with me. [GRO-C]
[GRO-C]
8. My mother and father were extremely disappointed with the way in which Dr [GRO-D] imparted this news and the fact that he provided no correct advice or indeed any helpful advice regarding what HIV was and what it meant to my father.
9. However, my father's GP, Dr Rapaport, was fantastic and she said of the HIV *"It is something which is new to me but I am prepared to learn about it and help you in every possible way I can"*. She got in touch with the Terrence Higgins Trust who supported my father.
10. The Hepatitis C news did not come until very much later; I recall that it was in or around 1992. My father had attended The Queen's Medical Centre for his monthly treatment and when he came out of the consulting room, he said to my mother *"You'll never guess what; I have something else now"*. This something else was Hepatitis C and my father was provided with no

information regarding this virus or how it could be transmitted. My father was dead within a year of receiving this news.

Section 3. Other Infections

11. My mother has no recollection of my father mentioning anything about any other viruses or infections.

Section 4. Consent

12. My father was regularly tested without his knowledge and therefore without his consent. My father was not advised that he had been tested for HIV, Hepatitis C or Hepatitis B. **Exhibit WITN1224004** is an extract from my father's medical records, dated 27th February 1985, confirming that he was antibody positive for HTLV3. This evidences the fact that he was tested without his knowledge or consent.

Section 5. Impact

13. I was aged 7 when my father passed away so a lot of my memories are based on what my family has told me about him. And also the family videos and photographs.

14. My father was usually behind the camera filming our family videos and whenever I see him in front of the camera it is a really special moment, particularly when he poses with a smile or a grin. I am so grateful for these memories.

15. I do recall that my father was often sad and this upsets me as I now know why he was sad.

16. I recall him as a tall, strong man who used to lift me up with just one hand. He also used to let me get away with everything.

17. My sister, Leila recalls the moment when we were both told that our father had passed away. I was sat next to Leila and apparently I shut down completely. I had always been my father's little girl and Leila told me that I never really spoke about my father's death once he had passed away. I never really cried openly in front of others. I was only 7 and did not really understand grief.
18. I assumed that my father would be coming back. My mother told me that she found me polishing my father's shoes. She asked me what I was doing and I replied "*I was getting them ready for when Daddy comes home*".
19. My father used to hide his toothbrush from us and he kept all of his bathroom items separate from our things. Of course I never understood why at the time but now I understand that he was afraid of passing his infections to us.
20. I remember that my father often bled profusely when he was on the toilet. I recall trying to get into the bathroom on one occasion and that my father shouted at me. I was really upset at the time but now I realise that he was just trying to protect me from the awful sight of the bloodied bathroom.
21. My mother and father did such a remarkable job of protecting Leila and me from what was actually happening and they ensured that we had as normal a childhood as possible.
22. I recall our last family holiday together in 1993; my father was so poorly that he was unable to fly out to Spain with us and he remained at home, looked after by our neighbour. Second week into our holiday I was asleep on one of the sofas in our holiday apartment, when I woke up I saw my father's jet black hair; he was lying on the sofa opposite me. I was so excited to see him.
23. When I look back at the photographs from this holiday I realise just how poorly my father was. He had lost so much weight; he used to be such a broad man.

24. My father had to deal with so many worries and anxieties and it must have been awful for him when he found out that he was HIV positive as my mother was carrying me at the time. He clearly went through so much pain. He must have felt so alone and it really saddens me.
25. My father missed out on seeing my sister and I growing up and meeting and being involved in his grandchildren's lives.
26. I recently got married and it was a time in my life when my father should have been there to walk me down the aisle.
27. My parents did such a fantastic job shielding me from what was actually happening. They managed to hold everything together and to give my sister and me such a normal childhood.
28. Growing up without a father had a negative impact on me and I think that this has been borne out in my first intimate relationship. I craved a male role model so I latched onto the first male that paid attention to me.
29. I met my first partner when I was aged 14; he was much older than me. I was with him for 8 years and suffered domestic violence; GRO-C
GRO-C If my father had been around I honestly don't think that he would have let us be treated in this way; he would have done something about it. My father was such a good and honest man; he was always there for us when he was alive, despite the terrible personal and health battles he was having.
30. I feel sad that my daughter and my sister's children have had to grow up without their grandfather. My father would have been such a wonderful grandfather and a brilliant role model for them to have in their lives. My father was taken from us at the tender age of 38 which has robbed so many of our family of so many things.
31. My mother and father chose not to tell people about my father's infections due to the stigma which surrounded HIV. My mother's family knew about my

father's infections; they were hugely supportive. My father's family did not find out about his infections until six months before he died and upon finding out they completely disowned us.

32. On the surface, I can appear fairly hard faced and I can put on a show. However, this is not really me at all. I do believe that my father's passing has had an effect on how I present to others and that I consider myself an introvert. I tend to keep myself to myself although I have recently found much pleasure and solace through my employment. I have recently formed a lot of new friendships at work.
33. I work in adult social care but previously I worked for my local Women's Aid as an outreach worker. I was in this role for 7 years. I started out as a volunteer to give something back after the support I and GRO-C received from experiencing domestic abuse. There I was able to draw upon my own experiences and help others.
34. When things go wrong in my life I really struggle to pick myself up again. I always try to please everyone and I want everyone to like me. I have always thought that I was not good enough in general and not good enough to have friends or partners who cared about me.
35. My father's infections have definitely affected my relationships and friendships throughout my life, and I feel like I am only just beginning to find myself. I have always doubted myself and my mother says that I take after my father because we both wanted things to be absolutely perfect and organised. My husband is extremely supportive of me and encourages me in everything I do.
36. I have never really confided in anyone about what happened to my father. I was never ashamed to tell anyone; it was just that, as I was quite quiet, I did not really put myself out there and openly discuss it with people. Now, I actually like to correct people on their views and in particular about HIV being a homosexual disease. I became very vocal and passionate about issues

pertaining to contaminated blood as a result of my father's suffering and his story.

37. In my eyes, my father is my hero and he is also a hero to GRO-C

GRO-C. My father's generation of Haemophiliacs were guinea pigs although they never knew this at the time. Due to their extreme suffering, the younger generation of Haemophiliacs have had their safety guaranteed.

38. I miss my father every day. I miss knowing little things about him and finding out things about him for myself. I know that people can tell me what his favourite colour was and what he felt passionate about; but I want to be able to learn these things from him. I often wonder whether my father and I would have been close as adults. I wonder how he would be with my daughter, how loudly he would laugh if we would go to the pub together and whether he would enjoy going for walks as a family.

39. I remember my father fiddling with electronics, ripping things apart and often not being able to put things back together. He was an electrician and a "*Jack of all Trades*". I wonder whether he would have taught me the trade, and I wonder what everything would be like if he were here today. I wish I could know all these little details, but I will never know. I only really have the rare video and photograph of him; and the memories that my mother and Leila have of him and share with me.

40. I do not recall experiencing much stigma but my mother did not tell me how my father died until I was aged 13. I think that by then, people's attitudes were changing, albeit slowly. I always accept others for who they are. Maybe there was more stigma than I was aware of; I may have shut my eyes to it.

41. When we were growing up, my parents did a wonderful job of protecting my sister and me from my father's infections and they never let on that we were struggling financially. My mother did a fantastic job of keeping everything together after my father died and I know that she blames herself for certain things but she did the most stellar job.

Section 6. Treatment/Care/Support

42. I recall that counselling was arranged for me by the Macfarlane Trust. I met a gentleman counsellor who was HIV positive and I talked to him about my father. However, I found the whole experience very traumatic. I thought that it would help but it did not. I could not continue with the counselling and I felt extremely bad because I did not want the gentleman to feel that I had rejected him.

43. There used to be such a stigma surrounding counselling but this is not the case today. I have since sought out further counselling which I have found beneficial.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

44. My mother told me about the Macfarlane Trust.

45. I have received a number of grants from them which have been extremely beneficial. I received £500 for my beauty therapy course when I was aged 16. I also received about £160 towards my first driving lessons.

46. The Macfarlane Trust contributed towards the cost of some white goods to help me set myself up in my new home after I suffered domestic violence and was living in a refuge.

47. My support worker at the refuge assisted me with the application process.

48. Since then, I have applied for further help with driving lessons and funds to purchase a new car which were all of the things that my father would have been able to help me with if he was still here today.

49. I was assisted by a lady called Roz who worked at the Macfarlane Trust; she helped me with the application procedure and I supplied her with supporting evidence.

50. I felt fortunate for the support which I was given by the Macfarlane Trust. My father was not around to help me and I was trying to stand on my own two feet. I could not have managed financially and I am therefore grateful to this Trust for what they have done for me. In my view, the Macfarlane Trust was fit for purpose.

Section 8. Other Issues

51. I sometimes feel guilty that I have not actively campaigned or looked into matters further. I feel like an amateur and it is only now that I am starting to learn about what happened to my father's generation. I do watch documentaries about the tragedy but I find these very upsetting.

Conclusion

52. I want the truth and justice for my father and for those who have suffered including their families who have been affected so tragically.

53. I want people to be better educated about the contaminated blood scandal and I want our children and our children's children to understand what has happened.

Anonymity, disclosure and redaction

54. I do not wish to apply for anonymity and I do want 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... 13/01/2019