

Witness Name: C CRUTE
Statement No: WITN3253001
Exhibits: 0
Dated: October 2023

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF COLIN DERRICK CRUTE

I, Colin Crute will say as follows:-

Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is Colin Derrick Crute of
Surrey My date of birth is 1956. I am married and
work full time for a building services company.
2. I make this statement in respect of my father Derrick Allin Crute who was born
on 1923 and died on 1975. I believe that my father
was infected with Hepatitis as a result of being given contaminated blood
products.
3. I have two older siblings;
4. I was just 18 years old when my father passed away and I was living at home
with my parents at the time. My mum was two years younger than him and
she was 49 years of age when he died.

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

Section 2. How infected

6. When Dad was about 47 he started feeling ill. The medical profession did not know what was wrong with him initially. Eventually he was sent by Guildford Hospital to the Anaemia Unit at Hammersmith hospital. They diagnosed him with Myelofibrosis. Treatment for this was by way of blood transfusion.
7. As far as I am aware, my father was only ever treated with blood products at the Hammersmith Hospital and was under the care of Dr Gordon Smith. His blood transfusions were carried out in the Anaemia Unit.
8. I remember that I was learning to drive at the time and I recall that I drove my father on many occasions to and from the hospital for driving practice.
9. I think it was every 3 to 4 days that my father had to go into hospital for blood transfusions and each time he would be admitted for a couple of days so that the hospital could keep him under observation. There was a constant cycle of blood transfusions. This carried on for nearly 18 months and I believe he must have had more than 200 pints of blood.
10. My father underwent numerous blood tests during those 18 months and I believe he never really understood why or what was happening to him. He always had needles in his arms, or drips and he used to describe himself as a pin cushion.
11. I was not party to a lot of the conversations about my father's treatment but he had been told that there were problems with the blood and that he had been given a bad batch. My father did not discuss his health with me.
12. At the time I expected my father to be cured but he did not get better.

13. My entire family was expecting those blood transfusions to cure my father's myelofibrosis, but he wasn't getting any better. I believe that Dad died from Hepatitis. Whilst this was not cited on his death certificate; he died from bronchopneumonia and myelofibrosis

Section 3. Other Infections

14. I do not know if my father was infected with any other disease.

Section 4. Consent

15. I do not know if my father was tested or treated without his knowledge or consent. He was attending hospital on a very regular basis and I presume for his condition was tested on a regular basis. Unfortunately whilst my GRO-C has attempted to recover all his notes and records from Hammersmith Hospital we have only been able to secure a few scraps of paper which do not show test results only cross matching report forms and requests for transfusions.

16. My mother always believed that my father was treated like a guinea pig.

17. After my father's death, the coroner wanted to carry out a post mortem. My mother refused to give consent as my father had already gone through so much testing. She wanted him to rest in peace. She specifically told them not to go ahead with the post mortem indicating that they had carried out enough trials on him. I understand that the undertaker told mum that a post mortem had taken place against her wishes. Not only did this cause my mother unnecessary stress, but it also delayed my father's funeral.

Section 5. Impact of the Infection

18. Tiredness was my father's biggest issue. He never had strength to do anything. He began to lose a significant amount of weight. This is evident in photographs of my father from which you could no longer recognise him. He

became all skin and bones. He also aged significantly and in appearance seemed to look more like a 70 year old man than a man in his 40s. Despite these symptoms my father never complained and suffered in silence.

19. The blood transfusions helped my father cope. However, having been told that he had been given bad blood, his condition appeared to deteriorate and thereafter, he never really recovered.

20. My father spent his final days in hospital. My mother stayed with him there, but one evening, my father appeared a little better so she went home. Unfortunately the next morning she received a phone call saying that my father had passed away. This was the only night she had come home. My mum was devastated.

21. My father went from a working man working 6 days a week as an GRO-C to having no energy whatsoever and from being a big strong man to a man of skin and bones.

22. My mother never came to terms with what happened. She thought that once diagnosed with myelofibrosis he would be cured by blood transfusions. She was also upset when she found out that the post mortem had been carried out without her permission. I believe there must be records of that post mortem. However we have only received the records referred to above. My mother passed away in the year 2000 and we did not speak much about dad's illness after he had died. We never discussed my father having received bad blood as she wanted to leave it all behind her and move on.

23. I was living at home when dad died and I had left school already and was already working. I looked after mum and I gave virtually half of my earnings to keep the house. I took her wherever she needed to go and did her chores and shopping. When my mother passed away, my wife moved into the same house

24. My father was a heavy goods vehicle truck driver. Due to his illness and severe weight loss, he became extremely weak and was no longer able to work. When my father was still well, he would wake up at 5 in the morning and work right through till night. He would work 6 days a week. He was a fit and healthy man but could no longer carry on due to ill health.

25. Unfortunately, my mother was not old enough to draw from my father's pensions and she was not eligible for benefits, so I had to support her. My dad had supported my mum financially; he did not agree with women working.

26. My father's death affected me hugely. I felt that I could not leave home and I had to continue to support our mother in keeping the house and paying the bills. My sister was about to move out and had my father been alive, I would have probably moved out too and brought my own house. I feel it kept me from moving on.

Section 6. Treatment/care/support

27. I do not believe that counselling was ever offered to my father in consequence of what happened.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

28. As far as I am aware, I do not believe that my parents have received any financial assistance in relation to the contaminated blood.

Anonymity

29. I do not wish to remain anonymous.

30. I do not wish to give oral evidence to the Inquiry.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed.....C. D. 

Colin Derrick Crute

Dated19-10-23

GRO-C