

Witness Name: Andrew Patrick

Statement No: WITN2792001

Exhibits: WITN2792002-5

Dated: February 2019

## INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

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### FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF ANDREW PATRICK

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I, Andrew Douglas Patrick, will say as follows:-

#### Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is Andrew Douglas Patrick. I was born on GRO-C 1963. I am single and live at GRO-C
2. This statement is made without the benefit of access to my full medical notes and records.

#### Section 2. How infected

3. On 15<sup>th</sup> June 1981 I had a very serious motorcycle accident. A car was overtaking coming towards me on the wrong side of the road. I swerved to avoid the car and hit a tree at speed. I suffered multiple injuries snapping my right wrist and sustaining a crush injury to my left leg resulting in bone fragmentation where the bone was smashed into about 30 pieces and severe laceration to the calf muscle which was split in two.
4. I was taken to Harrogate District Hospital and went into surgery later that evening. My leg was operated on and during that operation I believe I

received a blood transfusion. I was not aware of this at the time but many years later I learned that I received 4 units of blood during that operation although this is denied by the hospital. I will return to this later in my statement. I was operated on by Dr Igpini.

5. Following my accident I became addicted to prescription painkillers. Eventually this led to further substance abuse, including the use of intravenous drugs. As a result of this I was tested for HIV in 1986. The results of this test came back negative. I was not tested for any other infections at the time.
6. In 2004 I met GRO-C who wished to have a baby. I wanted to help them by giving a sperm donation. I was honest with them and told them of my past use of needles. As a consequence of this they asked me to do a blood test. I was happy to do this for peace of mind. I was initially told in a telephone conversation that the blood tests result was ok but almost immediately they then said "hold on a minute, there is something resulting" and I was informed that I had Hepatitis C. I was specifically told by Dr Chave Cox that I was not a suitable candidate for sperm donation because of the Hepatitis C.
7. I was not provided with any information on how to manage or understand my infection. I do not recall if they provided me with any information about the risks of infecting others. I was given no advice.
8. Due to my infection the couple did not want to proceed with my sperm donation as they said they did not want to risk becoming infected. Fortunately, they did some research and realised that the chance of infection by transmission from sperm is almost impossible. GRO-C  

GRO-C
9. In 2009 my father suggested that I find out from the hospital if I had had a blood transfusion during my surgery in 1981. I asked them and on 25<sup>th</sup> September 2009 the hospital responded saying "We can confirm that you

received no blood products during your admission to Harrogate District Hospital". I attach a letter from the hospital dated 25 March 2009 as Exhibit WITN2792002.

10. Some time after this, I was at the post office and I ran into Dr Igpini, the surgeon that operated on my leg in 1981. I reminded him that he operated on me thirty years ago, but he obviously did not recall the surgery. I informed him that my leg had been shattered and I asked him whether I would have had a blood transfusion for such an operation. He said that people do not understand that bones bleed and I would have been bleeding profusely, so I would have required blood and that it would have been absolutely necessary to have a blood transfusion. I asked my GP and on 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2016 they confirmed that I had received a blood transfusion during my operation in 1981. I attach to this statement as Exhibit WITN2792003 a copy of the letter from Harrogate and District NHS dated 22 April 2016.

11. I believe that it was from this blood transfusion that I contracted Hepatitis C.

12. However, subsequent to this I received a letter from Harrogate Hospital dated 8 July 2016 after I queried the position and this letter is attached as Exhibit WITN2792004. In this I am told that I did not receive a blood transfusion during my operation in 1981. However, I believe that some of my records are missing. The units of blood that were cross matched for me appear to have been used but the hospital has indicated that they were used for other patients. There is documentation to show that 3 units were available although there is another document to show that 4 units of blood were issued. I have not seen the original documentation in this regard and I still believe that at the time of the accident I required, and did receive, a blood transfusion. I attach a copy of my notes Exhibit WITN2792005 which indicates that "if my blood pressure drops to have a unit of blood". The hospital indicated that the blood which had been cross matched for me was used for other patients. However, they have said that the bag which had the expiry date of 17/6/1981 was not documented as used, and was most likely destroyed once it had reached its expiry date. I do not believe that they have provided any evidence to show that it was actually destroyed.

13.

NOT RELEVANT

### **Section 3. Other Infections**

14. I am not aware of, nor have I been told of any other infections that I may have contracted as a result of receiving contaminated blood products.

### **Section 4. Consent**

15. When undergoing the blood tests in 2004, I was aware that I was being tested for all infections. As such, I do not consider that this was done without my consent or knowledge.

### **Section 5. Impact of the Infection**

16. I did not suffer from any physical symptoms from my infection. However, I have had a difficult life and I do suffer from depression. It is possible that my depression may be attributable to my infection but I cannot say. I also suffer from lack of energy and I sometimes feel quite lethargic.

17. When I was diagnosed with Hepatitis C, I gave up on sexual relationships. It was the nail in the coffin for my love life and I became celibate, because I did not want to start a relationship by deceiving somebody but I also did not feel comfortable listing my health issues. Now that I have cleared the virus I can try to meet someone, but I am nearly 60 years old and feel I have missed my chance.

18. I worked at the Harrogate District Hospital as a hospital porter in or about 2015, I had to see an occupational therapist to check on my Hepatitis and my depression. I have very low self-esteem which I attribute to my Hepatitis and not being able to be in a sexual relationship. It is also upsetting noting that Hepatitis C comes under the same guise as HIV, so when you have to declare medical conditions you have to tick the same box that says you have 'HIV/HCV'.
19. I stopped using drugs in 1985 and since then I have tried to look after myself and do a lot of exercise, drink a lot of water and live a healthy lifestyle. I know that I have benefitted from this which I think may have assisted in preventing my HCV from affecting me so much.
20. In September 2010 I had a liver biopsy. This was so painful. They stuck a large needle into my side first of all for the painkiller and then an even larger needle into my liver. As a result of my HCV, I am supposed to undergo a liver biopsy every five years. I have not and do not wish to repeat the procedure as it was a horrible and painful experience.
21. The hospital kept offering me treatment for my Hepatitis C but I was aware of the terrible side effects that people were experiencing. I was told that I could take it but that it would likely make me want to jump off a bridge to my death. As I already suffered from serious depression, I did not want to affect this even more so I decided not to go ahead with any treatment.
22. In 2016, a Haematologist from York Teaching Hospital informed me of a treatment that had zero side-effects and a 99 per cent chance of success. I underwent this treatment which consisted of one tablet a day for three months. Each tablet costs £800 so the total cost of the treatment was around £48,000, which was fortunately funded by the NHS. I was tested a number of times over this three month period and I cleared the virus within the first few weeks but had to continue taking the course. I have not been tested since I cleared the virus.

## **Section 6. Treatment/care/support**

23. I have not been offered counselling or emotional support, for my HCV. However, I have independently sought counselling for my depression and low self-esteem. During these counselling sessions I have spoken about my Hepatitis C (HCV) and the effect it has had on my life.

## **Section 7. Financial Assistance**

24. In or around 2015, I heard about the Skipton Fund whilst I was on other business at the Houses of Parliament. Once I was informed that I had received a blood transfusion, I attempted to access financial assistance from the trust. I was unsuccessful in my attempts and did not receive any payments from the Skipton Trust.

25. In 2016 the Haematologist that treated me for Hepatitis C tried to help me access financial assistance. He wrote a letter explaining my circumstances including information about my blood transfusion and informing them that I had a brief period of needle use. Unfortunately, this history prevented me from receiving any financial assistance. As such, I have not received any financial assistance from any of the funds.

## **Anonymity, disclosure and redaction**

26. I confirm that I do not wish to apply for anonymity and that I understand this statement will be published and disclosed as part of the Inquiry.

27. I wish to give oral evidence at the Inquiry.

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**Statement of Truth**

I believe that GRO-C stated in this witness statement are true.

Signed.....

ANDREW PATRICK

Dated..... 04/03/19.....