

Witness Name: Moira Oldfield

Statement No: WITN1443001

Exhibits: 0

Dated: February 2019

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF MOIRA OLDFIELD

I, Moira Oldfield will say as follows:-

Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is Moira Oldfield. I was born on GRO-C 1965 and I live at GRO-C
GRO-C
2. I am not working as I am the main carer of my mentally unwell son. I struggle financially on a day to day basis.
3. I make this statement on behalf of my late husband, Mark Richard Oldfield. Mark was born on GRO-A 1961 and died on GRO-A 1989 at the age of 28. Mark died from cancer in the lymph nodes and I believe it was as a result of HIV.
4. I have two sons with Mark. I also have two sons with my ex-partner.
5. This witness statement has been prepared without the benefit of access to my late husband's full medical records. If and in so far as I have been provided with limited records the relevant entries are set out in the medical chronology at the end of this statement.

Section 2. How Affected

6. Mark was diagnosed with Haemophilia A. I do not know the severity of it. I believe he was given Factor VIII (FVIII) treatment during the late 1970s or early 1980s following a road traffic accident. I believe he was treated at Royal Hallamshire Hospital, Sheffield (RHH) mainly by Sister Marnsworth, who I believe is retired and Dr Markris.
7. Mark worked as a kitchen and cabinet fitter. As a result of his job he had a lot of bleeds. I recall he used to attend the hospital for approximately 4 or 5 days at a time to be treated.
8. Mark was only administered FVIII at the hospital, never at home. He received FVIII for dental treatment and as and when he had a bleed, so mainly as and when he needed it.
9. Mark and I met in or about the early 1980s. He told me he was a Haemophiliac but that there was no risk to me. We never really talked much about his condition and just carried on dating. I was also very young and naive at the time and did not think further about Mark's condition as a Haemophiliac.
10. Mark had check-ups every 6 months for his Haemophilia. In the mid 1980s Mark attended a routine appointment and I believe he was told that he was HIV positive. He came home and told me and I did not know what to think at the time. I do recall Mark telling me to get myself tested, which I did at the time and I tested negative.
11. We later got engaged in the mid 1980s and married in GRO-C Our sons were born in 1988 and 1989 respectively.
12. Mark died in 1989 and it was not until after his death that I found out that he also contracted Hepatitis C (Hep C). There was a possibility that Mark was also told that he had Hep C. However, I believe that Mark and his mother did not tell me everything because they were trying to protect me.

13. I do not believe we were provided with any information about the risk of transmitting the infection through sexual intercourse at the time.

14. I do not know whether Mark was provided with adequate information to help him understand and manage the infections. He may have been told, but he did not tell me and I believe it was because there was a stigma attached to the HIV at the time. It was a horrible time when HIV was all over the news and I believe that Mark would not have wanted to discuss it.

15. I believe information should have been provided to us earlier about the infection to help us understand it better. We got most of our information through the media as the doctors were not being very helpful.

16. I believe in the late 1980s, after we got married the doctors informed us about the risk of transmitting the infection through sexual intercourse. We were warned to use protection as there was a risk. However, I did fall pregnant twice. We wanted lots of children and I did not expect Mark to die only having 2 children with me. Luckily we all tested negative for HIV.

Section 3. Other Infections

17. I do not know whether Mark had any other infections other than a tumour which became cancerous. I believe this was caused as a result of the HIV.

Section 4. Consent

18. I believe Mark was treated and tested without his knowledge and consent, as he did not know he was being tested for HIV. I also believe that he was not given adequate or full information about his FVIII treatments and the infections.

19. Mark was asked to give blood for a research purposes which was in relation to Neurofibromatosis. I am not aware of the outcome of the research or what Mark was told in this regard.

Section 5. Impact of the Infection

20. Mark suffered mentally as a result of the infection/s. He was a very soft and gentle person but when he found out he had HIV, he became angry with everyone around him and became very withdrawn. He was depressed and out of character. Prior to the infections, he was a very loving person and everyone loved him. I get teary and emotional talking about it now and I feel like I still have not been able to get over Mark's death even though it has been many years since he died.
21. In the late 1980s, Mark fell on a radiator and the doctors found a lump on his back. The doctors thought it was just a tumour and therefore told us that they were able to operate on him to have it removed. He had a biopsy and was told it was not cancerous and not to worry about it. At this point I believe I was pregnant with our second son.
22. Mark started experiencing pain and when we went back to hospital again, he was told that the lump was cancerous and that it was terminal. We were really shocked and upset about this. He later died in 1989 of cancer. I remember it as if it was yesterday.
23. I believe when Mark was diagnosed with HIV there was no treatment for it. If there was treatment, Mark was not offered it. I do not know whether any treatment ought to have been given to him at the time.
24. Mark's infected status had a huge impact on the treatment that I received when I gave birth to my first son. The nurses put me in a room on my own with a yellow sign outside the door saying 'do not enter'. They gave me food on paper plates and plastic cutlery. The doctor also came in wearing gloves and the nurses were wearing long robes and goggles, which I was quite embarrassed about. They even removed the shelves, trollies and other equipment out of the room and just left a bed for me inside the room. Everything they could move they moved so that they could clean the room with bleach once I had given birth. This came as a shock for me as I was not infected with HIV and the doctors and nurses were fully aware of this. I

believe they took all the precautions they could to ensure that there was no risk whatsoever to them but this was unnecessary as I was not infected.

25. The doctor who used a stethoscope on me even cleaned it right in front of me which I found shocking and degrading. People were also asking why there was a big yellow sign on the door.
26. When I gave birth to my second son, I went through the same experience that I went through with my first son. I just wanted to go home away from all the humiliation that I was suffering at the time.
27. When Mark died, we were only allowed to see his body at the hospital. We were not allowed to see his body at the funeral home. He was put in some special dressing due to body leakages which was very upsetting. At the time there was only one particular funeral home that accepted people who were infected with HIV. He was cremated.
28. The infections also impacted on our private, family and social life in many ways. We were young at the time and wanted to live our lives but could not go out as much as we used to. When Mark was told about the HIV, it stopped him from getting on with his life completely. We stopped going out and socialising with people as a result.
29. I did not understand a lot of what was happening at the time as Mark tried to protect me and never said much. When I found out about his HIV, I had no one to talk to about it. I knew my sisters would not understand due to the way the media portrayed the infection so I did not talk to them about it. I was unable to talk to anyone. We wanted a big family and because of his infection it all got all taken away.
30. My two sons have only heard stories and seen pictures of their father. They were only 14 months and 1 month old when Mark died. It is just not fair on them. They did not have the chance to know their father. It has ruined their lives as well as my life. If Mark was never given infected blood products, he would have still been alive today and my sons would have had a father to look

after them. It is horrible knowing that they had grown up without a father. It was also a very difficult time for me, raising two young children on my own.

31. Mark was already working at the time and I do not think he told anyone at work about his infection/s. We were particularly very quiet about his HIV due to the stigma attached at the time and the way the media portrayed it. Mark worked right up until he got very sick in the late 1980s.

32. I used to work in a pub but never told any of my colleagues about what happened to Mark. I did not know how they would react, so I kept it to myself.

Section 6. Treatment/care/support

33. I do not think Mark faced any difficulties or obstacles in receiving care and support. In relation to his HIV I believe the hospital did what they could for him at the time.

34. Mark was not offered any counselling or psychological support and neither was I. I believe it would have helped us as we just had each other and could not talk to anyone else about it.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

35. I believe Mark received some money from the Macfarlane Trust but I do not know anything about it.

36. After he died, I received a lump sum payment during the 1991 litigation. I cannot remember exactly how much I received but Mark's mother got half of the money. I also had to sign a waiver confirming that I will not take any further action in the future.

37. I started to receive a monthly payment of £1,250 soon after Mark's death. I now receive this money from the EIBSS. I am not happy with this payment as we have to meet a certain criteria in order to be eligible. It is means tested and reviewed I believe every year. I believe we should receive more financial assistance regardless of whether we are working or not. I do not think the process is fair.

38. I do not think we should have to beg for money. I struggle to support my sons financially. They took away Mark and if he was still alive, I believe we would have lived a comfortable life.

39. I also received the Stage 1 payment in the sum of £20,000 and £10,000 for a bereavement payment from the Skipton Fund. I believe I received the above payments about 3 years ago. I recall the application process was simple and straight forward.

Section 8. Other Issues

40. I am not able to care for my 4 sons as I do not have financial security to do so.

41. I want justice and for those who were responsible to be held accountable. I believe that the people who have suffered as a result of the scandal should receive adequate financial assistance and it should not be means tested. I want to be able to help my sons financial.

Anonymity, disclosure and redaction

42. 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.

43. I do not 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 24-2-19.