

Witness Name: Norman Graham

Statement No: WITN1749001

Exhibits: 0

Dated: January 2019

## INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

---

### FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF NORMAN GRAHAM

---

I, Norman Graham will say as follows:-

#### Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is Norman Graham. I was born on GRO-C 1962 and I live at GRO-C  
GRO-C Mersey Side, GRO-C
2. I have been with my current partner for the past 23 years. We have no children together but I am step father to her children. I am currently unemployed and my partner is my carer.
3. This witness statement has been prepared without the benefit of access to my full medical records.

#### Section 2. How infected

4. In May 1982 I was admitted to Ormskirk & District General Hospital following a terrible road traffic accident. I required two blood transfusions because I was bleeding profusely. I was also given clotting agent to help.

5. In November 2016 I suffered from pains in my stomach. I had an ultra sound scan and I was told that I had an enlarged spleen. My GP referred me to a haematology specialist nurse, Chris Ward, at the Royal Liverpool Hospital (RLH). I had blood tests and I was told I had Hepatitis B (Hep B) but it had cleared although the core antigens were still present. I asked the nurse how I was infected and he told me that it could either be by drugs use or by receiving blood products such as a blood transfusion or clotting agents. When he mentioned blood transfusion and clotting agents that was when I realised that I was infected in 1982 after the road traffic accident.
6. On 25/07/2017 I had a fibroscan and I was told that I had cirrhosis and it was at the end stage. I was shocked and in disbelief when I was told. I was told that there is a possibility that I may need a liver transplant in the future.
7. I was later referred to a liver specialist who told me that the cirrhosis could be as a result of my diabetes. However, the doctor that treated my diabetes contradicted this and told me that you can not get cirrhosis from diabetes. He explained that the only way I got cirrhosis was if I was a heavy drinker, or from an infection such as Hep B or Hepatitis C (Hep C). I told the doctor that I did not drink and never had. I then realised it was the Hep B infection that caused the cirrhosis.
8. Prior to the infection, I had a really good job and I was lived a normal life. Approximately 2 years ago, after I was told about the infection, I have not been able to work.
9. When I was told that I had cirrhosis, I recall receiving a letter in the post and it asked me to confirm whether I had injected needles, had same sex relationships, was a drug user, drank heavily or had any blood transfusions. I did none of the above other than had a blood transfusion and was given clotting agent. At this time no other information was provided to me.
10. I believe I was not given adequate information to help me understand and manage the infection. I was just told I had Hep B in the past and that I am risk

of also contracting Hepatitis A (Hep A). I was therefore given a vaccination against Hep A.

11. I believe I should have been provided with more information about the infection so that I could have managed it better. The doctors used a lot of medical jargon and I did not fully understand what they told to me.

12. I believe I was not provided with any information about the risks of others being infected as a result of the infection.

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

13. Following my diagnosis of cirrhosis, I was referred to the gastro team to arrange an endoscopy. I was then diagnosed with stage 2 Esophageal Varices. I believe this was as a result of Hep B.

14. I believe the infection has also caused my teeth to start crumbling.

### **Section 4. Consent**

15. I do not believe that I was treated or tested without my knowledge when I had an emergency admittance following my accident.

16. When I was treated for the accident, I had broken my leg and had 44 stitches to my face and chin. My jaw was broken and so I had no clue what was happening. In that emergency situation I was treated without my consent but I was not in a position to provide my consent.

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

17. The Hep B has had a huge impact on me both mentally and physically. When I told my friends that I had Hep B, they looked at me in a different light. Then when I told them about the cirrhosis, they looked at me as if I was a heavy drinker. A couple of friends told me that the only way I could have got the

cirrhosis was by drinking a lot of alcohol. The infection is constantly playing in my head.

18. The physical effects of Hep B were the enlarged spleen and flu like symptoms. I also lost a lot weight and lost my appetite for a while. I now suffer from 24 hour pain and because of the ongoing pain, I have an appointment to see a pain specialist in April 2019.

19. I recall a liver nurse had told me that having cirrhosis meant that the body was getting rid of toxins in the blood, which could ultimately lead to Alzheimer. I was really shocked when she told me and it terrified me. Sometimes I can not express myself properly, I get tongue tied and frustrated but previously I was always a confident and outgoing person. I believe the symptoms are as a result of the Hep B.

20. I was not given any treatment for Hep B at the time because it had cleared by the time I was tested.

21. I currently take 20 tablets a day for the cirrhosis and the diabetes. I am also low in vitamin D and iron and therefore take tablets for them and I believe this is as a result of the Hep B.

22. I believe that I should have been offered of a liver transplant when I was diagnosed. I currently have scans and ultrasounds to check for cancer cells in the liver. The only outcome for me is a transplant no matter how many years I wait. The doctors will not let me have a transplant as I am not yet eligible. They want me to be on my death bed first and be very ill before I am eligible for a transplant.

23. The infection has impacted on my social life. I am now always tired and my mobility is limited. My stomach looks like I am 8 or 9 months pregnant and it causes pain when I walk. As a result, I only go out if it is necessary. My partner helps me with my day-to-day care, as I find it hard to bend and wash.

24. The infection has had a work-related affect on me. I left my job on 2 February 2016 just before I was diagnosed with cirrhosis as I could no longer cope due to the pain. As previously stated, I was constantly tired and my stomach was always in pain. I was on sick leave for a long time prior to that and I believe it was because of the Hep B. I had to retire because I was unable to continue.

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

25. I have not faced any difficulties or obstacles in obtaining treatment, care and support in consequence of being infected with Hep B. However, I do want to have the liver transplant now as I believe my recovery will be quicker.

26. I was not provided with any counselling or psychological support when I was diagnosed with the infection.

27. In August of last year, I wanted to end my life and had suicidal thoughts. I approached my GP for this and told him about my thoughts. My GP referred me to a mental health specialist. I had 2 sessions of counselling which really helped me. I also have a very close knit family support and they have kept me going through this difficult time.

#### **Section 7. Financial Assistance**

28. I did not receive any financial assistance because no such Trust or Fund was set up for those infected with Hep B. I approached the Skipton Fund in order to ask about any financial assistances that may be available to me and I was told that since I did not have Hep C, I was not able to apply for any financial assistance.

29. Currently I am receiving income support (ESA) and carers allowance.

**Section 8. Other Issues**

30. I believe it is unfair that there is no financial support for those that had been infected by Hep B because both Hep B and Hep C affect the liver.

**Anonymity**

31. 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.

32. I am prepared to give oral evidence at the Inquiry if I am fit enough and it is required.

**Statement of Truth**

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

Signed...

GRO-C

Dated

31/01/19