

Witness Name: Samantha Shaw

Statement No: WITN1802001

Exhibits: 0

Dated: April 2020

## INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

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### FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF SAMANTHA SHAW

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I, Samantha Shaw, will say as follows:-

#### **Section 1. Introduction**

1. My name is Samantha Shaw. I was born on [GRO-C] 1989 and I live at [GRO-C]  
[GRO-C] Staffordshire [GRO-C]
2. My father, Stephen Peter Royle, (born on [GRO-C] 1957), was infected with the Hepatitis C Virus (HCV) through contaminated blood products. He died on [GRO-C] 2009, aged 51, having developed end stage liver cirrhosis (to include variceal bleeds and ascites) and liver cancer.
3. My mother has also provided a Witness Statement to the Inquiry (WITN1601001).
4. **This witness statement has been prepared without the benefit of access to my father's full medical records.**

## **Section 2. How Affected**

5. My father had mild Haemophilia A. He was treated at the Manchester Royal Infirmary (MRI) initially, under the care of Dr Hay. After we moved to North Wales in 1993, he was treated at the Glan Clwyd Hospital under the care of Dr Craig in the Haematology Department.
6. My father was informed that he had HCV by Dr Craig at a routine appointment. Dr Craig assumed that my father already knew and I refer to my mother's Statement in that regard. My father was likely to have been infected with HCV from in or around 1982 when he was treated with Factor VIII (FVIII) concentrate after an accident.
7. I was 4 years old when we moved to North Wales in 1993. My brother is 3½ years older than me. I remember that we spent a lot of time at the Children's Department of the hospital for various blood tests in order to establish whether my brother had haemophilia ahead of having his adenoids removed. We may have been tested for HCV at around that time as I now understand that the whole family was tested after my father was told that he had HCV. I have a clear memory of being warned not to touch my father's razor and toothbrush. It was ultimately established that my brother and my mother have Von Willebrand's Disease (VWD). I am classed as an obligate carrier.

## **Section 3. Other Infections**

8. I refer to my mother's Statement. I am not personally aware of my father being infected with anything other than HCV.

## **Section 4. Consent**

9. My father was tested without his knowledge. The MRI knew that my father had HCV. Not only did they fail to tell my father that he was being tested for infection, they failed to tell him of the positive diagnosis.

## **Section 5. Impact**

10. Because I was just 4 years old when my father found out he was infected with HCV, I wasn't told very much. I began to realise that something was wrong later on. In 1996 or 1997 (I was in year 2 at school), I told my teacher that I was worried about my father. I said to her 'My dad is really poorly and I don't know why.' I remember my mother having to come up to the school for a meeting but I do not remember what the outcome was.
11. My father was in hospital a lot. I remember my brother and I making good use of the vending machine there. I began to realise to realise that my father was really, really poorly in my late teens. He would have prolonged stays in hospital and I didn't like visiting him. It was too upsetting for me.
12. My father knew he was in a bad way and became anxious and depressed. He would often seem angry with me and say to me that I didn't love him. In the last few weeks before he died, I took my father to hospital for (oesophageal) treatment in the car I had just bought. I had not long passed my test. I tried to maintain a positive, upbeat outlook and naively ignored what was happening in front of me. I remember my father getting upset with me and telling me that I didn't realise just how poorly he was.
13. My father spent a lot of time upstairs in his bedroom. He only came down to get a drink or something like that. The night before he died he came downstairs and asked us if we wanted to watch something on TV with him. It wasn't something I wanted to see and after initially saying 'no', my mother said 'switch it over' and called my father back down. After we watched the programme together (and I am glad we did) I ended up going to bed (in a bit of a sulk) at around 10 pm. An hour or so later I could hear a commotion from my parents' bedroom. My father was vomiting blood and my mother called for an ambulance to take them to A&E. When my mother returned (alone) from hospital the next morning she talked to me about my father, saying that I

needed to fully realise the severity of his condition and that we might need to think about a future without him.

14. I was just 19 years old and it was a lot to take on board but after visiting my father in hospital that same morning, I left the hospital to go to work in relatively good spirits. My father was stable and comfortable and there was a treatment plan in place with him being taken down to surgery and a 24 hour period of sedation after that. The sister on the ward said that he didn't know we were there and they would call us if anything changed.
15. My colleague answered the phone to my mother just half an hour or so after I had got to work. My mother was incomprehensible on the phone she was so upset. I instantly realised and I was in pieces. The rest of the day is a blur. I had to get a taxi on my own to the hospital to say our goodbyes (my car was at the garage having an MOT) and we spent most of the rest of the day in the hospital side room for visiting family members. My father died that evening.
16. I was in my final year at college studying travel and tourism and I really don't remember finishing the course that summer. Our family fell apart. I moved out to live with my boyfriend because I wanted to get away from the family home. In retrospect I realise that I left my mother on her own at an important time. My brother was suffering and took his anger out on my mum. My mum was upset and bewildered. I was seen by the two of them as the level headed one and ended up as 'a go between' refereeing them from a distance. I thought I was the responsible adult but looking back I was too young to deal with any of it. I didn't allow myself to grieve and I refused to be brought down by anything. I didn't deal with sympathy from others well and I didn't want their attention.
17. I was hugely affected by what happened to my father. I made some bad choices. I found solace in spending time gambling and got into debt. I lost my job and had to return home to live with my mother. It took me a very long time to get back on my feet. My now husband gave me a lot of support.

18. I have been with my husband now for 8 years. What happened to my father has had a huge impact on our plans to have children. We wanted children but I was reluctant to make a decision knowing that I am an obligate carrier. I worried about becoming pregnant and having a boy, fearing he might go through the same thing as my father. How do we know that what was allowed to happen to my father over 30 years ago won't happen again? My son was born in GRO-C 2018 just a few days before my father's birthday. The significance of when my son was born is just one more of those little things that come back to haunt you. I did not want to know the sex of my son until I was at 35 weeks gestation. Thankfully he is healthy and there are no signs of VWD but I still worry.

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

19. We saw a bereavement officer a couple of weeks after my father died but nothing really came of it. It was years later that I realised the full extent of how my father's death has affected my life. I was never offered counselling or psychological support.

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

20. I refer to my mother's statement.

#### **Anonymity**

21. I do not want to apply for anonymity.

#### **Statement of Truth**

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

Signed

GRO-C

Dated

12/05/2020