

Witness Name: Marion Louise Green

Statement No.: WITN2146001

Exhibits: **none**

Dated: 10<sup>th</sup> September 2019

## INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

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### WRITTEN STATEMENT OF MARION LOUISE GREEN

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I provide this statement in response to a request under Rule 9 of the Inquiry Rules 2006 dated 25<sup>th</sup> June 2019.

I, Marion Louise Green, will say as follows: -

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

1. My name is Marion Louise Green, I am known as Louise. My date of birth is the GRO-C 1968. My address is known to the Inquiry. I am married with two children and run an Air BnB. My husband is a builder. I intend to speak about my mother Marion Christine Clarkson Law, whose date of birth was the GRO-C GRO-C 1935 and her infection with hepatitis C. In particular, the nature of her illness, how the illness affected her, the treatment she received and the impact it had on her and our family. Mum passed away on the GRO-C 2016.
2. I have appointed Thompsons Solicitors to represent me for this matter. I do not wish to be anonymous.

## **Section 2. How Affected**

3. Mum was really hardworking and very outgoing. When I was growing up, she was full of energy and full of life, she kept very well and was a wonderful wife and mother. It was only when I was in my thirties, around 1998, did I notice that she no longer had the same energy anymore. My parents had a massive garden and she used to do all the gardening herself. It got to the point where she was no longer able to manage it anymore, which was the first sign. My sister's children would visit her and she stopped having the energy to play with them and Dad (James Law) started to help out more.
4. I understand that Mum had a miscarriage in 1964 and needed a blood transfusion because she was bleeding very badly. I don't know how many units of blood she received or how her recovery was afterwards. I understand that this treatment was at the William Smiley Maternity Hospital in Lanark.
5. Mum was registered with Lanark Health Centre. She was treated at Law Hospital before it closed and later on at Wishaw General Hospital.
6. After Mum started to decline, she went to her GP for tests. At first they thought she was an alcoholic because of her LFT results, which was laughable to us because she didn't drink at all. They retested her and she was told she must be a secret drinker, again this wasn't true. It was looked into further and what was clear was that her liver was not functioning properly. They did further tests and it was then confirmed that she had hepatitis C.
7. While I don't know the full details around her diagnosis, from my memory, it is the way she was treated that was disgraceful. Mum was a gentle lady and the presumption was that she must have been using drugs, sharing needles and prostituting. She didn't know initially how she had been infected and the nurses appeared to want to believe, that she had contracted the illness in a way that was not true. She was really upset and felt humiliated by the way the nursing staff treated her.

8. Mum was sixty four or sixty five when she was diagnosed. Dad was a vet so he knew about hepatitis. Mum had the attitude that she had to keep going. I am not sure how Mum worked out that the infection had come from the blood transfusion. The way the nurses spoke to her would have thrown her off because they were assuming the worst rather than considering all the possibilities.
9. Information should have been provided to Mum much earlier, the moment they realised or had an inkling that the blood transfusion she had received, could have contained hepatitis C. They should have checked and told her much earlier than when she was. I was a bit scared when I found out what was going on. I was scared for Mum and then for myself, however I have donated blood for many years and nothing has ever been raised with me, as being a potential problem.
10. I was living in London when she was diagnosed and I had to go to an STD clinic and give an anonymous name to be tested myself. This was because Mum was infected when GRO-C. We were told to do this on the quiet, because at the time, it would have affected my insurance and mortgage. Even if someone didn't have the virus, the fact they were tested, was registered. It was a bit like HIV at the time. The test result for GRO-C and I were negative but it was troubling that we couldn't have a quick test at our own doctors because of the social implications.
11. Mum wasn't given practical information straight away but I think when she saw a consultant, they were more informative. She always described them as being very nice, in comparison to how the nurses treated her.
12. I think the advice she was given was to not share toothbrushes, no sharing of razors etc. This wouldn't have happened anyway, but I remember as a child pretending to shave with Mum's razor and cutting myself, so I can understand why this advice was provided. Dad was also tested and he didn't have the infection either.

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

13. I am not aware of Mum having contracted any other infections other than hepatitis C from the blood.

### **Section 4. Consent**

14. I am not aware of Mum being tested or treated without giving her consent or without her knowledge. I am unaware of if she was used for research purposes either. This would be something that my father James Law's statement would cover.

### **Section 5. Impact**

15. Mum was emotionally down after her diagnosis, but she wasn't a person who would let things get to her, she was generally sad, but she got on with things was her attitude. Physically, the hepatitis C was causing her fatigue and she was becoming more run down. When she was first diagnosed, she did have a biopsy done which showed that her liver function was poor. She was told she was lucky because had she been a drinker, her liver would have deteriorated quicker.

16. After mum was diagnosed she went through treatment for hepatitis C for several years, which left her very unwell and with a poor quality of life. She was prescribed interferon which Dad had to inject her with, in her stomach. It made her feel very unwell and in the end, her treating consultant told her that the particular strain of hepatitis that she had, wasn't going to be cured by the treatment. For her quality of life, they advised her to stop taking it. I can't remember how many years she was on it exactly.

17. The hepatitis C treatment had horrific side effects, it was like chemotherapy, she had nausea and was tired, she also lost a lot of weight. After the treatment stopped, she was never offered any further treatment. She was told by the consultant that she would live with the virus and that she would die from

something else, not from that. That information did help her process things a bit. They monitored her liver when she was first diagnosed and then in the last few years of her life, there was no monitoring.

18. She stopped treatment but never returned to normal. Dad then realised that something else was going on because all of a sudden Mum couldn't cook anymore. She was an excellent cook and she could no longer co-ordinate timings with cooking and amounts.

19. It was then discovered that she had developed dementia. This was about 2005 when she was about sixty nine or seventy. As Dad had picked this up quickly, she was put on medication to slow down the process. I have spoken to others and I understand that there is a belief that the drugs that Mum took for treating hepatitis C, can bring on conditions like dementia or Alzheimer's disease. This ruined Mum and Dad's retirement and all the plans they had together to enjoy things. Dad ended up being Mum's carer. By the time I had given birth to my children, she wasn't able to look after them or interact with them the way she had been able to, with her other grandchildren.

20. It was subtle changes at first, slowly as time went on, she deteriorated and she turned into a shell. People would visit Mum and Dad and she would go and hide in her room because she knew she was on the decline. She couldn't hold a conversation anymore, it was a struggle. She was also embarrassed, she didn't want people to know. Things went down and down until Dad couldn't cope anymore without carers coming in to help with her daily needs, like getting dressed. Treatment was never offered again, probably because of the dementia. It wouldn't have been kind to have put someone in a confused state through that treatment again.

21. Mum wasn't able to help with my older sister's children anymore and there was a noticeable difference between her and her husband's mum, who was the same age as her. My own children, GRO-C and GRO-C, only ever knew Mum with dementia. Mum didn't play with them, she didn't like the noise when they were around, and she didn't like any changes in her routine. She would love to

see them but she would get really agitated with them jumping around, which meant that Dad didn't get to spend that much time with them either.

22. My brother in law is a dentist so he started looking after her teeth, but once she developed dementia, she went to a local dentist and her treatment was fine. No one treated her differently because of the hepatitis C, except the nurses in the early days.

23. The main financial effect on them was things around insurance. They couldn't go on holiday because it was really expensive to get travel insurance. Dad had fears that it would cost thousands of pounds if Mum died while they were away and her body had to be flown back to the UK.

24. Mum's infection ruined their retirement. Dad had worked so hard throughout his life and all the holidays they should have gone on, all the plans, never happened. He ended up being her carer. She began to have trouble walking and balancing towards the end of her life as well which is the normal course for people with dementia.

25. In 2016, Mum collapsed one day, while out on a trip to a local dementia group in Lanark. Her hip was crumbling and while she was standing, waiting for Dad to get the car, she just crumpled and was admitted to the local hospital in Lanark. Her hip had just disintegrated and with her dementia, the hospital didn't know how to look after her. They would take her food and drink and just leave it by her bedside, she couldn't feed herself or drink at that point, it was useless.

26. She went into respite care with the plan being that she would stay there until she could get up and walk, but it never happened. She developed pneumonia and it became a waiting game from there. The people in respite care were lovely and couldn't do enough, but the state she was in, when she passed away, it was the kindest thing. From the point her hip crumbled and to her passing away, events unfolded over about four or five months.

27. After she died, Dad was devastated. He gets on with things, but he just feels so sad that her final years were so hard for her. They were married for about fifty seven years when she passed away.

## **Section 6. Treatment/Care/Support**

28. Once mum was diagnosed with dementia, he was able to go through social services assessments and he received ten hours of support for her. Dad then paid for support for all the rest. Once you get through the system, you can get appropriate support from them. It is not an easy system to navigate until you know what to do though. It was not appropriate that Dad had to go through all these hoops. If the hospital had been able to support him with this, that would have been good.
29. Mum never had counselling and Dad didn't have counselling until she passed away. He received bereavement counselling from his local church.
30. Counselling about what to expect, about what the stages would be with hepatitis C treatment, would have helped both Mum and Dad because I don't think they knew about what would happen and certainly they didn't realise that it wouldn't cure the illness.

## **Section 7. Financial Assistance**

31. Dad has received money from one of the support schemes. My sister GRO-C  
GRO-C and she will know details of this, which should also be contained within Dad's statement.
32. I don't know how you put a monetary value on someone who has had so many years of their life wasted.

## **Section 8. Other Issues**

33. I don't have any further issues to raise with the inquiry.

NOT RELEVANT

5

**Statement of Truth**

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

Signed

GRO-C

Dated

3/3/20