

From: Gregory Murphy [REDACTED]  
Subject: Re: Hepatitis C - Haemophilia  
Date: 17 April 2008 at 7:44:00  
To: Ian Gilmore [REDACTED]

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Dear Sir,

Thank-you for your response.

It is reassuring at least, then, to glean that my father's suffering will continue to be remembered by some (sic) of those who should never, ever forget it. Let that continue to be so.

Yours, somewhat cathartically,

Mr G Murphy

On 16 Apr 2008, at 14:11, Ian Gilmore wrote:

Dear Mr Murphy,

Thank you for your message. I can understand that the quotation about the MORI poll looks hubristic but was not intended to be so. MORI conducts this poll every year to see how the general public view different professions, but I can assure you that we are not complacent. Many things still go wrong in the NHS and we are involved in many aspects of standards of quality and patient safety. I fully appreciated that your father was not well served by the NHS or the medical profession overall.

Yours sincerely

*Ian*

Professor Ian Gilmore

President

Royal College of Physicians

[REDACTED]  
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**From:** gregmurphy [REDACTED] [mailto:gregmurphy@rcphysicians.net]  
**Sent:** 14 April 2008 19:21  
**To:** Ian Gilmore  
**Subject:** Hepatitis C - Haemophilia

Dear Sir,

IN CONFIDENCE

I noted, over the weekend, that, given your esteemed position, your name was in the news yet again as a respected voice of authority and clinical expertise (this time relating to UK licensees offering supersize measures of alcohol to clients).

During the course of subsequent web browsing I then ironically discovered the following RCP/Ipsos/Mori press release dated March 5th 2008: "Doctors still top poll as most trusted profession."

It was interesting to note your supplementary quote:

"Ian Gilmore, President of the Royal College of Physicians, said: 'I am delighted that once again the public rates doctors as the most trusted professionals.

'This fits with the work we have done, and continue to do, on medical professionalism. With patients having access to an increasing range of facts and figures and other information about their health, it is reassuring to know that the doctor/patient relationship is still highly valued'."

If I may share the following with you - purely as food-for-thought ahead of the next time you may choose to indulge in such a highly hubristic exercise - as to why I may not exactly share your sentiments.

For I once knew of a patient, now deceased - he was my late father in fact - who died after being infected, during treatment in 1981 at the Royal Liverpool University Hospital, with Hepatitis C (then NonA-NonB as you know) as a result of being administered contaminated NHS blood products (he had, incidentally, previously been infected with Hepatitis A and B).

As if that wasn't injury enough - what with the resulting cirrhosis and the consequent episodes of varices, encephalitis and other gruesome hepatic complexities - a considerable insult was added to this patient, described by physicians at the Newcastle Freeman Hospital as a "charming man" (which he was), when a combined haem/hepatology team at the Royal Liverpool University Hospital in mid August 1994 despatched him to the north east for work-ups ahead of a prospective liver transplant but had completely failed to spot an existing liver tumour some 7cms in diameter (this despite the fact that medical records showed a significantly positive alpha fetoprotein reading from early July 1994).

I know, barely believable isn't it?

Of course, all progression towards a liver transplant was summarily and heartbreakingly curtailed and as was to be expected in a haemophilic patient with such an array of illnesses, not to mention a then battered psyche, the said tumour burst only a matter of weeks later causing a massive and fatal haemorrhage.

Strangely, though, as well as my family fighting the UK government for it to recognise the injustice regarding the initial infection with HCV (and HAV, HBV), the General Medical Council was curiously unable to see any case of negligence, which we alleged, regarding my father, who actually wasn't even referred to a hepatologist for the first two-and-a-half-years after he had been simultaneously diagnosed - in a post operative phase - with both HCV and the end stages of cirrhosis in January 1992 and was given a frighteningly accurate timescale of just two-and-a-half-years of remaining life expectancy (he previously had no idea that he suffered from any lasting hepatic disorder). Then again, I hardly think the fact that a sizeable element of my father's medical records had gone missing from the archives at the GRO-D helped our case.

All in all, then, a tragic story, a view with which I'm sure the RCP would concur?

Nevertheless, despite the anecdotal evidence, it is a case that, now you know of it, I hope you continue to bear in mind. Always, in fact.

My father's name, by the way, was William Murphy. He died aged 59.

I will continue to watch the College's media output with interest.

Yours sincerely,

Mr G Murphy

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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]