

Witness Name: DJ Hancox
Statement No: WITN1270001
Exhibits: WITN1270002-8
Dated: March 2019

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF DANIEL JOHN HANCOX

I, Daniel John Hancox, will say as follows:-

Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is Daniel John Hancox and I live at GRO-C
GRO-C. My date of birth is GRO-C 1983.
2. I have been employed in the sale of plumbing equipment since I left school.
3. I got married to Kerry in August 2018.
4. I make this statement as an affected person in relation to my late father, John Hancox (Jack) who passed away on 24th July 1993 as a result of receiving contaminated blood products.
5. **This witness statement has been prepared without the benefit of access to my father's full medical records.**

Section 2. How Affected

6. My father had severe Haemophilia A and received Factor VIII. Exhibit **WITN1270002** is an extract from my father's National Haemophilia Database records which evidences the blood products he received from 1977 to 1993.
7. My father was infected with Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C and HIV as a result of receiving contaminated Factor VIII. He may have also contracted Hepatitis A.
8. My father was treated at the Royal Victoria Infirmary (RVI) in Newcastle-Upon-Tyne and his consultants were Dr Peter Jones and Dr Peter Hamilton.
9. My father was not given any information about the risks of receiving contaminated blood products by either of his consultants.

HIV

10. My mother told me that my father was told by Dr Peter Jones at a routine appointment on 7th June 1985 that he had HIV. Exhibit **WITN127003** is an extract from my father's medical records which records this appointment and states "*Fit and well, good count, told HTLV III antigen positive.....*". Dr Peter Jones also said to my father "*If you have the antibody it means that you won't get AIDS, you will be fine*". He told him that he must practice safe sex. My father had attended this appointment alone and had taken the bus. Upon his return he said to my mother "*Peter has told me that I have the AIDS antibody*".
11. Dr Peter Jones certainly did not provide my father with sufficient information to allow him to either understand or manage his infection. My father had no idea what HTLV III was but he knew what AIDS was and the significance of this.
12. My mother had told me that it was a very worrying time because I was only aged 4 and she received a letter from Dr Jones which invited her for testing for HIV. This letter was dated 10th June 1988 and it also stated "*I think John has been infected in 1982*". If this was the case then the doctors knew that

my father was infected with HIV when she was pregnant with me and both of us could have been infected. It is wholly unacceptable that they put both mine and my mother's lives at risk by simply not telling us facts that they were aware of.

13. Furthermore, the contents of this letter do not sit congruently with the contents of **Exhibit WITN1270004** which is a letter dated 22nd February 1985 from Dr Peter Jones to my father's GP, Dr Fletcher which states "*..he has clearly been very concerned about the AIDS problem on which he had been fully counselled*". My father had had no discussions regarding AIDS with Dr Peter Jones prior to 7th June 1985 and at no point was he "*fully counselled*".

Hepatitis C

14. My father was never told that he had been infected with Hepatitis C. However, my father was told that he would need a liver transplant in the future because the blood products had damaged his liver.
15. The first time I found out about my father's Hepatitis C infection was by way of a letter dated 1st March 2011 which was from the RVI and the envelope was addressed to me. This letter stated "*...we have therefore sent this letter to relatives of all patients who we know could potentially have been exposed to Hepatitis C through the use of plasma products and died before 29th August 2003..*". The letter is attached at **Exhibit WITN1270005**. The Skipton Fund paid out because my father had been infected with Hepatitis C and I deal with this in Section 7 below.
16. **Exhibit WITN1270006** is an extract from my father's medical records, specifically a testing card, dated 17th April 1980 which states "*Possible ...with abnormalities in hepatic function*" which suggests that he could have been infected with Hepatitis C (Non A non B Hepatitis) as early as 1980.

Hepatitis B

17. I do not know when my father was infected with Hepatitis B but he was told that he was Hepatitis B positive in or around June 1992. Dr Jones was very worried because my father was so contagious and he therefore wanted my mother and me to be vaccinated against Hepatitis B. My mother and I were both vaccinated against Hepatitis B shortly after the June of 1992.

Section 3. Other Infections

18. **Exhibit WITN1270002** confirms that my father was put at risk of vCJD and was not notified of this. The date of assessment was 20th November 2007 which was after my father's death. However, I vaguely recall my father telling me that he was notified that he had been placed at risk of vCJD and his comment, to my mother, to this news was something like "*Have we not been through enough already?*".

Section 4. Consent

19. **Exhibit WITN1270007** is an extract from my father's medical records which states "*First positive 14.2.1985, since confirmed*". My mother told me that firstly my father had no idea he was being tested for HIV on this date. Secondly the fact that it says "*first*" must imply that tests had been conducted prior to this, of which my father had no knowledge.

20. I strongly suspect that my father was also being tested for Hepatitis C without his knowledge and therefore impliedly, without his consent. I refer to **Exhibit WITN1270006** which confirms that blood was taken, in all likelihood, to test for Hepatitis C (Non A non B Hepatitis) without my father's knowledge or consent.

21. The doctor patient relationship was very different when it came to haemophiliac patients which was in part due to the sheer volume of times that they came into contact with the medical professionals. Dr Peter Jones was

always “so lovely” to my father and my father trusted him implicitly and he really looked up to him because he was a consultant.

Section 5. Impact

22. I was aged 9 when I lost my father. When I was very young I did not understand what was wrong with him and when he died I thought that it was as a result of his Haemophilia. As I got older and learnt the truth, the anger and upset has increased.

23. Mentally I have really struggled with what has happened to my father and this manifests itself in my short fuse. Kerry has been a phenomenal support to me and because I can't lose my temper with her due to her traumatic background, it actually helps me manage my anger and I am learning to control it. She has been an enormous asset to our family and my mother loves her too. I have taken my anger out on my mother for most of my life but she knows how much I love her and I have so much to thank her for.

24. My father was the best father any boy could have wished for and everyone I meet who knew my father said that he was the best person that they had ever met. If I grow up to be half the man that my father was then I would be doing well.

25. My father used to let me put boxing gloves on and we would have a pretend fight and unbeknown to me he used to have to inject himself with Factor 8 after our matches. It breaks my heart that he put himself through this just to be such an amazing father to me.

26. My father used to let me beat him at pool and I got really angry as I wanted to beat him properly. I feel so sad that I will never be able to have another game of pool with my father. He was really good at pool.

27. My mother has told me that I was the centre of my father's world and it must have been so hard for him to know that he was not going to live long enough to see me grow and mature.

28. I have photographs of my father at home and I think about him all the time. There is one of him in his 30's, the same age as I am now, holding a snake and I see such a strong physical resemblance between us.
29. My mother and I did not really tell anyone about what my father died of due to the fear of stigma. It makes me even angrier to think that we were the ones who would have been subjected to the stigma when the NHS and the Government basically gave the Haemophiliacs these viruses and effectively murdered them.
30. I was with my father on the night he died and I remember him being put in a side room at the RVI. I was quite traumatised by all of this and I remember my mother and I being in the room with him and I remember putting a toy soldier and a note that I had written to my father in his pocket after he had passed away.
31. The RVI put my father in a bag and that was the last time I have ever saw him.
32. **Exhibit WITN1270008** contains two extracts written by my father, one which was in response to the monthly bulletin of the Haemophilia Society in or around 1990. My father stated "*...like most of my fellow suffers I have a family including a six year old son who is not yet old enough to understand nor strong enough to carry the burden of a father who has HIV...*" This article encapsulates the lengths which my father went to in order to protect me.

Section 6. Treatment/Care/Support

33. My father was admitted to the West Cumberland Hospital, Whitehaven, under the care of Dr West. He was placed in an isolation room and the medical staff left his food tray outside because they were not prepared to touch him for fear of catching HIV.

34. The RVI put my father into a body bag when he passed away and would not let anyone see him. This was barbaric and wholly discriminatory.

35. Following my father's passing Pat Latimer got in touch with my mother and arranged to see us both. I was too young to understand or appreciate any help at this time. I have never been offered any counselling or psychological support since.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

36. My mother and father received £60,500 as a result of the 1991 litigation and I think that we may have received a further £2,000 for me but I cannot remember.

37. My father received monthly payments from the Macfarlane Trust but I am unsure as to the amounts.

38. My father also received a couple of grants from the Macfarlane Trust which he used to purchase a washing machine and a motorised scooter which gave him so much independence and allowed him to visit a secluded hamlet beyond Keswick where he could fish to his heart's content.

39. My mother told me that the application procedure for obtaining the grants was easy as all my father had to do was write a letter to them setting out the reasons why he required the requisite items.

40. Following my father's passing, my mother received his monthly payments for a period of about 9 months.

41. My mother then had to fill out a form to apply for support for the two of us and we received a small monthly payment which ceased once I started school.

42. Upon receipt of the letter at **Exhibit WITN1270005** my mother telephoned Linda McBride at the Haemophilia Centre who then directed her to the Skipton

Fund. Following completion of the relevant forms my mother then received the stages 1 and 2 payments of £20,000 and £50,000.

43. My mother received one further payment from the Skipton Fund which was the widow's payment of £10,000 on 3rd February 2017.

Section 8. Other Issues/Conclusion

44. I want justice for my father. He had to endure so much and I am brought to tears every time I think about the strength of character and resilience that he displayed in such horrific circumstances.

45. I want everyone to know what happened and why it happened and I will not rest until I have answers for my beloved father.

Anonymity, disclosure and redaction

46. I do not wish to apply for anonymity and I don't 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 *D. HANCOX*

Dated.. *17/3/19*