Witness Name: Molk Raj Heera
Statement No: WITN1283001
Exhibits: 0
Dated: January 2020

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF
MOLK RAJ HEERA

I, Molk Raj Heera, will say as follows:-

Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is Molk Raj Heera of GRO-C GRO-C. My date of birth is GRO-C 1968. I am married with 3 children and 4 grandchildren. I am currently living with my wife and our youngest child who is aged 12.

2. **This statement has been prepared without the benefit of access to my medical records.**

Section 2. How Infected

3. I have severe Haemophilia B and have been taking Factor 9 concentrates since I was 2 years of age (approximately 1970). I believe that was from the early 1980s onwards that the Factor 9 concentrates that I received were contaminated.

4. I was treated at the Royal Hospital in Wolverhampton under the care of Dr Allen. This hospital has been closed for many years and is no longer in practice.

5. Neither my parents nor I were given much information about the risks of infection arising from blood products. I am of the view that the information about the risk should have been provided to my family and I which would have afforded us the opportunity to decline treatment with Factor 9 concentrates.

6. I was diagnosed with Hepatitis C around the mid to late 1990s. I don't have much recollection of how I was told about this infection. I can only remember a very brief discussion with the hospital consultant who stated something about being infected but nothing was explained to me in detail.

7. I was given insufficient information and advice to enable me to understand and manage Hepatitis C. I was given absolutely no information regarding the risk of transmission of the virus.

Section 3. Other Infections

8. I do not recall receiving a letter where I was told that I had been put at risk of vCJD.

Section 4. Consent

9. I believe that I was tested and treated without my knowledge and without being given adequate or full information. I was therefore treated without my consent. I also believe that I was tested and treated for the purposes of research.

Section 5. Impact

10. Hepatitis C has caused me to develop cirrhosis of the liver and I suffer with hypertension.

11. In terms of the mental effects I can confirm that Hepatitis C has caused me to develop severe depression. I suffer with chronic fatigue, weakness and lack of motivation.

12. I received Interferon Treatment in or around 2009 for a period of 6 months. I was also given Ribavirin alongside it. The treatment cleared my Hepatitis C but by this time the damage to my liver was too far advanced. The side effects of this treatment were awful. It has even been likened to the side effects that cancer patients go through when they are having

chemotherapy. I was weak, suffered with severe fatigue, had headaches, experienced weight loss, paleness of the skin, dizziness, nausea and vomiting.

13. Living with an illness like Hepatitis C is like living a life with a looming death sentence. It has vastly affected my mental health because I have had to watch others that I shared a hospital ward with die as a result of receiving the same infected blood products as myself.

14. I have also heard of many other deaths through social media of others that were also given infected blood products. This has been very emotional for my family and me to witness.

15. The biggest impact of being infected with Hepatitis C has been the constant worries that I have for my children and grandchildren. Hepatitis C has ruined my relationship with them as I fear being too attached to them in case I die.

16. Being infected with Hepatitis C has caused great distress to my parents who had no knowledge of what it was. It was a huge concern for them and made them feel guilty and that they had failed as parents. My wife was worried as to whether she would be infected and this caused a strain on our relationship. Having Hepatitis C also took some of the joy out of the birth of my children as I was deeply worried that I had passed Hepatitis C to them.

17. During the 1980s and 1990s there was a lot of stigma attached to these types of infections. I could see fear in those who had to treat me as they reacted as though I was contagious. It was also really difficult having to explain having Hepatitis C to my family and friends.

18. In terms of the educational effect, the Haemophilia B caused me to miss a lot of school. This resulted in me leaving school with no qualifications. I have never been able to work due to a combination of the illnesses.

Section 6. Treatment/Care/Support

19. Being born as a Haemophilia B patient has always made hospital treatments, surgery and dental care more complicated. Having Hepatitis C on top of this has made it even more difficult to receive treatment.

0.I have never been offered any counselling or psychological support in consequence of being infected.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

21.Dr Wilde, Haematologist at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham told me to contact the Skipton Fund (SF). I received the Stage 1 and Stage 2 Payments from them and I now receive monthly support from the EIBSS.

Section 8. Other Issues

22.I have written this statement, as I want justice for all the families that have lost loved ones due to the contaminated blood products. I have had to live a life with so many uncertainties about my future. It would act as closure and be of satisfaction for me to receive compensation so that that I can have financial security for my family and their future because I am not sure how long I will be here for.

Anonymity, disclosure and redaction

23.I do not wish to apply for anonymity and I do 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 ....

Dated..03/02/2020...........