

Witness Name: Colin Norman Morrison

Statement No: WITN2971001

Exhibits: 0

Dated: 29<sup>th</sup> April 2019

## INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

---

### FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF COLIN NORMAN MORRISON

---

I, Colin Norman Morrison, will say as follows:-

#### Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is Colin Norman Morrison. I was born on **GRO-C** 1965. I live at **GRO-C**  
**GRO-C**. I am married with two children and I currently work as a Freelance Consultant in IT.
2. This witness statement has been prepared without the benefit of access to my medical records. If and in so far as I have been provided with limited records, the relevant entries are set out in the medical chronology at the end of this statement.

#### Section 2. How infected

3. I was infected with Hepatitis C as a result of receiving contaminated blood products, following my involvement in a car accident when I was 17 years old.
4. On 21 September 1982, I was a passenger in a friend's car, when we were involved in a serious accident. The car collided with a wall and I went through the windscreen as a result. My injuries included a severed artery in my neck, damage to other veins, -cuts and lacerations to my head and face and serious

damage to the muscles in my shoulder and back. I later developed facial scarring as a result of my injuries. Hospital staff advised that I had come very close to dying. The driver of the vehicle behind us was a district nurse and the driver behind her, was an anesthetist and both were able to provide vital, life-saving medical help at the scene.

5. I was taken to North Lonsdale Hospital, Cumbria, where I was under the care of consultant; Dr M D Allen.
6. Due to the significant amount of blood loss, I am told I was in theatre for 10 hours and received 14 bottles of blood to aid my surgery. Thereafter I spent 6 days in ICU and was discharged from the hospital 3 weeks later. I am able to recall my stay in the hospital post operation and do not believe I had any further blood transfusions.
7. The nature of the emergency meant the care I was being administered had not been consented to. My parents confirm that they only arrived at the hospital some time later following my time in surgery and thus no- consultation took place advising them of the risks involved prior to my emergency treatment. No consent was sought or given prior to proceeding with my care. I was not of legal age at the time of my accident and could not give consent myself.
8. I continued to be under Dr Allen's care over the next 4 years; his final (sign off) report was dated 12 December 1985. My mother may have retained copies of my medical reports (Mr Allen's initial report was written and dated 25 January 1983) ; however I am currently unable to locate these documents.
9. In the late 80s/early 90s, I relocated to London and got married. I had been suffering from terrible back pain and an increasing inability to concentrate on mental tasks and so consulted my GP in Battersea, Dr Julian Churcher.

10. Dr Chucher arranged for blood tests for the symptoms I had presented and upon the results, confirmed I had Hepatitis C. I asked where it would have come from, to which he replied that it was usually from sharing needles (as an intravenous drug user). He then asked whether I'd ever had a blood transfusion and so we were able to attribute the matter to the care I'd received prior.
11. Dr Churcher was honest and admitted he was unable to provide further advice on the matter as he did not know anything about Hepatitis C. He referred me to St George's Hospital in Tooting, where I was placed in the care of their liver unit. Here they performed the first of my five liver biopsies, which was carried out to such an unsatisfactory standard, that damage was caused to my lower lung due to scraping it as a liver tissue sample was extracted.
12. In August 1995, I moved to Biggleswade and my care was transferred to Addenbrooke's Hospital in Cambridge. I subsequently had a further four liver biopsies at Addenbrooke's Hospital and two 12 month bouts of treatment for Hepatitis C.
13. When I found out about the infection I was advised to reduce my levels of alcohol consumption. However at the time, I was simultaneously battling depression and anxiety, thus it proved difficult to do so. I have suffered from depression on and off over the intervening period and believe this to be directly attributable to my infection.

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

14. Once under the care of Addenbrooke's Hospital I was tested for HIV and all other possible Hepatitis infections. I have been vaccinated against Hepatitis B.

### **Section 4. Consent**

15. I do not believe I was tested without my consent whilst under the care of Addenbrookes.

16. Consent was not taken from my parents in relation to the treatment provided, due to the urgency of the care I required following the initial road traffic accident. As stated, I was not of legal age at this time and was therefore unable to provide my own consent.

### **Section 5. Impact of the Infection**

17. Before my diagnosis, I felt flu-like symptoms, fatigue, low energy levels, back pains and sight problems due to the appearance of floaters in my eyes. Although becoming increasingly concerned, I did not make the link between my ill health and any possible infection with Hepatitis C.

18. Living with the knowledge that I was infected with Hepatitis C has been a massive burden to carry. There have been lasting consequences and I still suffer from the physical aspects of being infected. I regularly experience joint pain and fatigue and all medical tests/reports confirm that damage to my liver is severe and irreparable and it no longer functions as it should.

19. Alongside the physical aspects, having contracted Hepatitis C has had a detrimental impact on my mental health too. I am very aware that I have had infected blood as I now have to manage my daily life with extra care. The knowledge has also led to depression and periods of excessive drinking, which in some ways became an attempt to find some sort of relief/release from it all. My family have also been impacted by my infection and subsequent periods of treatment and illness.

20. I have received excellent care from Addenbrooke's Hospital, having gone through two punishing regimes of anti-viral treatments. The first treatment consisted of interferon and ribavirin and lasted for 12 months, however this attempt was unsuccessful. The second treatment in 2013 was similar and

involved a newer drug and this round of treatment has proved to reduce my HepC viral count to the status of undetectable.

21. Although the second treatment was a success, the effects left me "wiped out for a year." I'd lost a significant amount of weight and became almost skeleton-like. I am still very much worried that the infection will return.

22. I have been told I can no longer consume alcohol. Although seemingly a small detail, I have felt the negative impact this has had on my social life and my relationships.

23. Prior to our wedding, my wife and I talked long and hard about the risks to her if we were to start a family. We sought advice from Addenbrooke's Hospital and were advised the risks were minimal. On this basis, we took the decision to proceed and have our children.

24. I was very careful with whom I told about my diagnosis because of the stigma attached. I was particularly careful once our children had arrived; only informing family and close friends.

25. However, whilst I was working at HSBC in Canary Wharf, my skin had become severely affected as a result of the treatment and so I was unable to shave. On one particular occasion, I was pulled to the side by a colleague and asked if I could shave and it was at this point I disclosed details of my infection. In addition to my humiliation of having been accused of not being suitably presentable for my role, shortly after, I was told my contract would not be renewed, which I strongly believe was due to my infected status.

26. Whilst I was undertaking the clearing treatment, I continued to work whenever I could as per my capacity as a Freelancer. I strongly feel however, the infection has held me back. My levels of concentration declined and I feel I

have not been the same ever since. I am still impacted by this ongoing problem.

27. I have been made aware that it is now impossible for me to take out any sort of life insurance policy.

28. My family have taken a pragmatic approach to my situation, but understandably are worried about my going through the treatment programs and have been upset at the toll it has taken.

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

29. Prior to moving to Addenbrookes Hospital I was never offered any support/care/other treatment methods, barring the initial liver biopsy at St George's which I had to undertake as a private patient. Once the infection was discovered, I was advised that there was an urgency for this treatment to be undertaken in order to establish the progression of the disease at that time.

30. I requested a referral for counselling when I began to suffer with bouts of depression. I met with a specialist; however the few sessions I attended did not prove to be helpful.

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

31. I received a settlement sum for the injuries sustained in the car accident only. Payment was made by the third party insurers.

32. I cannot remember how I was informed of the availability of financial assistance from The Skipton Fund but believe that a staff member at Addenbrooke's Hospital must have informed me that I was eligible to apply.

33. I received a stage 1 payment from the Skipton Fund for £20,000 on 7 February 2005. I was advised I would be eligible for a stage 2 payment if I were to develop further complications.

34. I did not face any difficulties/obstacles in applying for financial assistance. Although, further information and confirmation was sought from my medical records regarding the blood transfusion and accepted by The Skipton Fund that this was the sole reason for my infection.

#### Section 8. Other Issues

35. Being infected with contaminated blood and in particular Hepatitis C, has affected my life to a significant negative degree.

#### Anonymity, disclosure and redaction

36. I wish to retain my anonymity in respect of my address only. I would be willing to give oral evidence.

#### **Statement of Truth**

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

Signed,

GRO-C

Dated

30/04/2019

### **MEDICAL SUMMARY**

**(This summary is not intended to be exhaustive but sets out key points in the records relevant to the Statement)**

This witness statement has been prepared without the benefit of access to my full medical records.