

Witness Name: Terence Pooley

Statement No: WITN3406001

Exhibits: WITN3406002

Dated: October 2019

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF TERENCE POOLEY

I, Terence Pooley will say as follows:-

Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is Terence Pooley of GRO-C
GRO-C My date of birth is the GRO-C 1950. I am currently married and have been for 46 years. I have 3 grown up children, all married and not living at home. My wife and I are Company Directors of separate companies.
2. I make this statement in relation to my late father, Cyril Walter Thomas Pooley, who was born on the GRO-C 1922 and passed away on the 24 July 1980, aged 58 as a result of receiving contaminated blood products. I believe he was infected with Hepatitis B (Hep B) and Non A Non B Hepatitis (NANB).
3. When my father passed away he had 10 children. Our ages at the time of his death spanned from about 35 to 20. I am the fourth eldest. Whilst some of my siblings were at home at the time, I was not. I was living in Manchester at the time.
4. This witness statement has been prepared without the benefit of access to my late father's full medical records. Our GP Surgery, which relocated after my father's death, put us in touch with the Primary Care Support Group who

informed us that all my father's medical records had been discarded, 10 to 20 years after his death.

Section 2. How Affected

5. In or about the 1970s my father was involved in a Road Traffic Accident which resulted in hospital treatment at Kent and Canterbury Hospital (KCH). Whilst he was there he received two emergency blood transfusions. I recall he also had a problem some years earlier and was in KCH and may also have received a transfusion then. I am not entirely clear whether it was on both occasions or just the once.
6. Various members of the family visited my father whilst he was in hospital and surprisingly he was taking longer to recover than anticipated. One of my brothers recall that, when he went to see our father later that week, my father joked about having been told by a nurse that he had been given 'Black Man's Blood' in the blood transfusion. We all laughed as my father innocently joked, and said that "Maybe the blood is Pele's or Cassius Clay's." My father loved his sport. He was then told that his body had rejected the initial blood transfusion and he was given another transfusion. My family believe that it was this blood that contributed to my father's death.
7. I do not believe that any information or advice was provided to my parents beforehand about the risk of being exposed to infection. Only after receiving my father's death certificate did my father's infections become more apparent. This was approximately 4 or 5 years ago shortly after my mother passed away.
8. I believe that my father was infected with Hep B and NANB Hepatitis as a result of receiving contaminated blood products. Whilst he was never informed of this, in the 1970s/1980s, nobody knew anything about Hepatitis at all, neither did people question nor doubt the medical authorities because they were so well respected.
9. Of course, the records we have sought to produce that provide evidence of my father's infections through his doctor's surgeries and hospitals have all

been destroyed so it is our collective view that our very fit father was tragically killed by the health service at the age of 58 due to having received contaminated blood transfusions.

10. I have exhibited at WITN3406002 a copy of our father's death certificate, which states that the cause of death was 'Hepatic Failure' and 'Chronic Active Hepatitis'.

Section 3. Other Infections

11. I do not know if my father had any other infections other than those stated above.

Section 4. Consent

12. Dad must have been told he would be having a blood transfusion if he was conscious at the time. If he was not conscious then he did not provide consent to having a blood transfusion.

Section 5. Impact of the Infection

13. My father was an extremely active man. He played football at a high level until he turned 40 and carried on managing local teams until his death. He hardly ever drank alcohol. In terms of his build, he was a solid man, not weak or skinny. I had moved away from home so I hardly saw him in the latter years of his life. When his health first started to deteriorate and I went home to visit, I couldn't believe it, he was completely different to how I remembered him.

14. He used to have a fantastic head of hair, but after the transfusion it went completely flat. He also suffered massive weight loss. He was completely disorientated and when I was speaking to him, he could not relate to the conversation at all.

15. In the final few months of my father's life, his mental state of mind was severely affected. We used to say that he went 'doolally'. This was my mother's expression which was a slang phrase used by the British Army to describe a soldier who went mad whilst waiting for ships to return back to

Britain after finishing their tour of duty. He was not compos mentis and, as a person, he wasn't there anymore.

16. Towards the very end of his life, my father's body clock was all over the place and he was bedridden. I recall that my mother and I had to lift him out of bed to take him to the toilet. I didn't realise how light he was then, I could have lifted him on my own. My mother became his main carer and she too was devastated to have lost her husband.

17. I do not know of any treatment my father received. In the end, my father was sent home from hospital only to have to be taken back just prior to his death.

18. Since my father never knew about his infection, I do not know the impact of being infected on his private, family and social life.

19. It devastated me when I lost my father, as I was so young at the time and so was he, young in mind and body.

20. I don't believe there was any stigma attached to Hepatitis at the time as it was not recognised in the public domain. As stated above I didn't know of the real cause of my father's death until his death certificate came to light about 5/6 years ago.

21. As stated above, we are a family of 10 children, born over the period of 15 years. We were exceptionally close due to our age gaps and looked out for each other. The only impact I can recall is the obvious one of losing our father at such a young age.

Section 6. Treatment/care/support

22. No counselling or psychological support was made available to my parents or any family member in consequence of what happened. In those days services were not available and either way we would have only been requiring them to deal with a "natural" death as we thought.

23. I do not believe an offer for counselling would have kept my father alive any longer.

24. Personally, I'm not a believer in counselling, but it may have helped. I was very close to my father and was a bit of a favourite of his so it affected me greatly. It broke my heart, especially as it wasn't my father's fault by any means that he was given infected blood products. The effects have never worn off.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

25. I have not received any financial assistance from any of the Trust and Funds that were set up as a result of my father's infected status.

Section 8. Other Issues

26. I have no further comments to make.

Anonymity, disclosure and redactions

27. I do not wish to remain anonymous.

28. I would like 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 11th Oct. 2019.