

Witness Name: Craig Patterson

WITN1461001

Exhibits: 0

Dated: June 2019

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF CRAIG PATTERSON

I, Craig Patterson will say as follows:-

Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is Craig Patterson of [GRO-C] London [GRO-C] [GRO-C]. My date of birth is [GRO-C] 1968. I have no children. I have one sister.
2. I make this statement on behalf of my late father, George Dennis Patterson who was born on [GRO-C] 1931 and passed away on [GRO-C] 1986 aged 55.
3. My father was infected with Hepatitis C as a result of being treated with Factor VIII concentrate in order to manage his Haemophilia.
4. My mother requested a post mortem and the death certificate states that my father died from cirrhosis of the liver.

5. My father died on my 18th birthday. He never discussed his health with me presumably because of my young age. I have limited personal knowledge about his health and my mother has been able to help me with some further details. My mother is currently 83 years old and lives by herself as she never re-married after my father died. I am hoping that my mother will be able to make a statement.
6. This witness statement has been prepared without the benefit of access to my late father's medical records. If and in so far as I have been provided with limited records the relevant entries are set out on the medical chronology at the end of this statement.

Section 2. How Affected

7. My father suffered from mild Haemophilia A. I do not know when he was diagnosed with the condition. My father always went into hospital for treatment and he only needed it for tooth extractions or operations. My father was employed as a window dresser and he occasionally bruised when he lifted heavy items and again he would attend the hospital for treatment. On these occasions he would receive Factor VIII products. My father never self-administered at home and I think it is fair to say that my father was actually able to live a relatively normal life.
8. My father's cousin also suffered with Haemophilia and I do not know of anyone else in the family that suffers with the condition. My father's cousin died last year this was not as a cause of infected blood.
9. My father initially attended the Haemophiliac Department at Sheffield Royal Infirmary. This hospital was knocked down and replaced by the Royal Hallamshire Hospital in Sheffield. He was under the care of Mr [GRO-D] (who was his consultant), Professor [GRO-D] and Professor Makris. I understand that my father was first treated with Factor VIII (FVIII) blood products in the early 1980s. My father continued to attend the Royal Hallamshire Hospital until his death.

10. I am not aware that my father was provided with any information or advice regarding the potential risk of being exposed to any form of infection. If he had been told I cannot imagine that he would have consented.
11. In the early 1980's, my father went to the Sheffield Royal Infirmary to have a tooth removed. Whilst at this hospital, the doctors noticed a lump under his right arm. After having tests he was diagnosed with Hodgkin's disease and he had to undergo radiation treatment. I understand that part of his treatment involved an operation to remove his spleen. Before and after the operation he was given large amounts of FVIII. The radiation treatment was successful and my father made a full recovery and was clear of the Hodgkin's disease.
12. My father attended the Western Park Hospital for regular cancer check ups. It was at one of these appointments that my father went to a room and the doctors were wearing masks and rubber gloves because they did not want to be near my father. It was at this stage he was informed that he had been infected with something.
13. My mother told me as soon as she found out from the doctors. I do not know what type of hepatitis it was because the doctors did not say. At the time, I was 16 years old and too young to fully appreciate the seriousness of his condition.
14. I do not know what information was given to my father about managing the infection. The doctors made it clear they were unable to do anything except monitor my father's condition. My father went for regular check-ups at the hospital but we were never told what caused the infection.
15. My parents were never told about the process involved or whether the treatment was safe. My father and mother were given absolutely no advice regarding the risk of transmission or any information about sharing toothbrushes, razors or through sexual intercourse.
16. I do not know what information was given to my father about managing the infection. I understand that the doctors had merely advised him that they would monitor his condition and they did nothing else.

Section 3. Other Infections

17. I do not believe my father contracted any other infections.

Section 4. Consent

18. I am not aware whether my father consented to be tested for Hepatitis C, but this matter will be addressed in my mother's statement.

19. I do not know whether my father was being tested for the purposes of medical research and it is difficult for me to say without reviewing his medical records.

Section 5. Impact

20. In 1984 I do not know whether my father knew the seriousness of the infection or how it would affect him. I think he gradually became aware that he was going to lose his life. At no time did he reveal his true feelings to me because he did not discuss his emotions with me. I guess he just did not know how to tell his 16 year old son and my sister that he was going to die.

21. My father was naturally lean and he had a small frame. However over the course of his illness he lost a lot of weight and I would say his weight went down to approximately eight stone. However during the last 12 months of his life my father's stomach gradually bulged and in the very end he looked heavily pregnant. The doctors carried out a Nasogastric Intubation procedure to drain excess fluid from his stomach. During this procedure he was diagnosed with lesions on his liver.

22. My father looked much older than his real age as the illness began to take hold but I never heard him complain about his illnesses despite the terrible pain he must have endured. He continued to work until the week before his death. One morning as he was leaving for work he collapsed on the porch. The GP sent him to Grimsby Hospital where his medication was stopped and this caused him further pain. He had been taking the medication since he contracted

shingles. He was then transferred by ambulance to Sheffield Royal Infirmary where he was given morphine to manage his pain. My father died shortly after that on GRO-C 1986.

23. I believe the hospital accepted they were responsible for causing my father's infection. It appeared that the general attitude was that he had been infected and there was nothing they could do to help him. They told us that they would monitor the infection and see what happened. Our family felt that our father had been handed a death sentence and the hospital certainly showed no sympathy towards us. The Hodgkin's disease had cleared long before my father died and it had nothing to do with his death.

24. After his death, we were all very angry and we wanted answers as to how and why our father died in that way. We all went to see the treating consultant. I do not know which consultant was responsible at the time, but I remember he said to my mother *"he was a heavy drinker, wasn't he?"* I remember my mother's reaction to this comment. She immediately shrieked and responded *"No, he wasn't"* It was clear that the hospital attempted to cover its mistake which ultimately cost my father's life. We also remember being told by Professor GRO-D that *"he would have died anyway"*.

25. We were disgusted at the manner in which the hospital dealt with our concerns. We have had to deal with this as well as trying to cope with our grief in losing such an important person in our lives.

26. We were also told that my father would have to be buried in a sealed coffin and there were difficulties in where his body could be stored before his burial because of his infection.

27. In 2014 we contacted Professor Makris who reviewed my father's medical records and he told us that there was no doubt in his mind that all the symptoms experienced by my father indicated he had Hepatitis C.

28. In 1984 I did not appreciate the seriousness of my father's illness. However, when the doctors told the family that he had cirrhosis of the liver I began to understand the consequences. My mind turned away from my own life and I began to think more and more about what would happen. I believe this was at the same time the hospital told us that they could not do anything to save my father's life.

29. We could not go on family holidays and lost the substance of a normal family upbringing and a normal family life.

30. I was at Grimsby College doing a business studies course when my dad's health deteriorated. I spent so much time caring for my parents and there was so much going on at home that I was unable to concentrate at college and I did not do as well as I could have in my exams. I had to drive my mother and father from Grimsby to the hospital in Sheffield whenever my father had appointments. The frequency of these visits increased when my father had contracted the infection.

31. A few days after my father's funeral my mother was taken to A&E. They discovered she had bowel cancer and she was in intensive care for weeks. Having to deal with that so soon after the death of her husband was extremely difficult. I therefore spent a long time caring for Mum. My sister has never really come to terms with the death of our father. She was already married at the time of his death and I was largely left to deal with my mother alone.

32. I had wanted to become a dentist but with everything going on at home I just wasn't able to focus and I am sure that my career would be very different had I been able to study to the best of my ability. After I finished college I stayed in Grimsby for 12 years working for a shipping company. I am now working for a hotel group at their Head Office and doing well for myself however I do believe that my life could have been very different if I had pursued what I wanted to do.

33. My father and I shared the same birthday and always when I have my birthday it reminds me of him. I miss his support and there was a financial impact on the household income because the mortgage still had to be paid.
34. My mum used to work in factories before my dad died but afterwards she took up work as a social carer where she looked after the elderly. She had to do this because she no longer had my father's income. We lost the main bread-winner in the family and at the time we needed financial support there was no one to help us.
35. My mother struggled since my father passed away over 30 years ago and she never re-married. She was meant to be sharing her life with her husband, instead, she has had to manage by herself for all these years without him. Both my parents were only in their 50's and it is heart-breaking for my mother to manage without him.
36. I do not think that any money can really replace the loss of a father and husband.

Stigma

37. I avoided discussing the cause of my father's death with others because typically a liver infection is associated with alcoholics and that was not the cause of my father's death. However, I do not really believe I have suffered from the stigma of my father's infection.

Section 6. Treatment/Care/Support

38. I was not sure what treatment was available at the time to treat my father.
39. Our family was in effect told that the hospital had made an error and that it could not do anything.

40. No counselling was ever offered to my mother, sister or to me to deal with the loss of our father.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

41. My father never found out about any payments that were available at the time. I do not know whether he ever looked into it. We did not receive any money shortly after our father passed away.

42. It wasn't until 2014 when my auntie told my mother that she could apply for a payment from the Skipton Fund. Professor Makris who was my father's treating consultant at Sheffield Royal Infirmary helped us answer the medical questions on the application forms and in 2014 my mother received the first payment in the sum of £20,000. A few months later my mother received the second payment in the sum of £50,000. Once we realised that my mother was entitled to a payment we didn't encounter any issues with the payments.

43. I think that my mother and all the victims should have been made aware that they were entitled to financial support as she had to wait almost 30 years to find out help was available. If my auntie had not informed her about the Skipton Fund it is highly likely that she would never have received any financial support.

Section 8. Other Issues

44. I want to know why the blood that was received from America was not screened and why patients were not told the truth about where it came from. I really believe that patients should be able to receive treatment from the NHS without worrying that it will make them 10 times worse. I want to know why this was allowed to happen.

45. We have tried to seek the help of our local Labour MP, Austin Mitchell, but he has not assisted us at all. I feel that he has brushed us to one side just like the hospital did all those years ago. He was totally uninterested in helping.

Anonymity, disclosure and redaction

46. I confirm that I do not wish to apply for anonymity and that I understand this statement will be published and disclosed as part of the Inquiry.

47. I do wish to be called to give oral evidence.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed.....
GRO-C

Dated..... 18/02/19