

Witness Name: Kathryn Reeve

Statement No: WITN1484001

Exhibits: 0

Dated: September 2019

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF KATHRYN REEVE

I, Kathryn Reeve, will say as follows:-

Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is Kathryn Reeve. I was born on the GRO-C 1983 and I live at GRO-C Tyne and Wear, GRO-C.
2. I have a son who is 4 years old and I live with my partner who has a 7 year old. I am currently working.
3. I make this statement on behalf of my uncle, Graham Edward Fox. He was born on the GRO-C 1970 and died on the 23 April 1996 aged 26 as a result of AIDS. He was infected with HIV and Hepatitis C (Hep C) through contaminated blood.
4. My mother, Diane Elizabeth Middleton, has also produced a witness statement for the Inquiry ('WITN1392001').
5. This witness statement has been prepared without the benefit of access to my late uncle's full 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 Affected

6. I wish to rely on my mother's statement in relation to this section.

Section 3. Other Infections

7. I wish to rely on my mother's statement in relation to this section.

Section 4. Consent

8. I wish to rely on part of my mother's statement in relation to this section.
9. I believe my uncle was tested and treated for the purposes of research as it appears to me that they were testing on humans to see what effect it would have when given Factor VIII concentrate (FVIII).

Section 5. Impact of the Infection

10. I wish to rely on part of my mother's statement in relation to this section.
11. My uncle suffered mental effects as a result of being diagnosed with HIV and Hep C but more so the HIV because of the huge stigma that was attached to it at the time. Just knowing he had HIV mentally affected him. It's a topic that was so closed off and we have never been able to talk to anyone about it. Everything was taken from my uncle. He was very active and he used to go for a run and was always out and about a lot before his diagnosis. He used to do activities such as fishing. I was a bridesmaid at his wedding and he had 2 stepchildren. It came to a time that he needed full time care because he was unable to do anything by himself.
12. What happened to my uncle has impacted me physically, mentally and emotionally. It has affected my private, family and social life. My uncle and my mother were very close. He regularly came to see us and he was a big part of our lives. He then started to live with us. I was a teenager at the time and had to become a carer for him. I was not able to tell anyone why he was ill and what was going on. I was very much aware that what happened to my uncle was not accident. Growing up as a teenager, it was difficult not to be able to

discuss what was happening to my uncle with anyone. Had my uncle suffered from another terminal illness, it wouldn't've been as difficult for me as I believe I would've be able to talk about it openly. I dealt with things in a very grown up manner, to the point that I shouldn't have. I had to grow up quick.

13. The hardest thing was the inability to tell anyone anything about my uncle's diagnosis or do anything about it. The media portrayed almost exclusively that it was 'gay men' and 'drug users' who had HIV and they were the likely people to spread it. Back in the 1980s and even 1990s, it was certainly portrayed as a 'dirty' disease. Other people who were dying of the disease were hounded by the press. There was a fear that if the infection was mentioned to anyone it would lead to consequences for the family. The stigma left us isolated.
14. My uncle was admitted to Marie Curie Hospice and even there, he was isolated and everything about what was happening to my uncle was very secretive. At the hospice, we were told to tell people he had Lymphoma and not HIV or AIDS because of the stigma that was attached to it at the time. At the time, it brought about a lot of fear amongst the people. There were known cases where if a particular community found out that someone had HIV, then those families were subjected to bullying, vandalism on their doors or having things thrown at their windows. I was very careful not to say anything and being told not to speak about it added pressure and stress on me. I've kept it quiet right the way through.
15. Some medical professions wouldn't do certain things for my uncle as they were scared of being infected by him, therefore my mother had to do it for him. She took better care of him than the medical staff at the hospitals.
16. My uncle's wife left him and it was because of his infected status. It was too much for her to handle, too much risk. As far as I'm aware, his wife knew he was infected but she left when he started to fall sick and his health started to deteriorate.

17. My younger brother suffered in a similar way to me as a result of my uncle's diagnosis and subsequent death.

18. I managed to get through education at the time. I had to juggle everything around and I would go to school, then come home and look after my uncle. When I was home, I had to switch from school mode and switch to caring mode.

Section 6. Treatment/care/support

19. I wish to rely on part of my mother's statement in relation to this section.

20. I was offered counselling by a third party, I can't remember the name of the company. I accepted it and went along with it. I only had a few sessions, but I wasn't able to open up in anyway to a stranger and therefore the treatment didn't really help.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

21. I wish to rely on part of my mother's statement in relation to this section.

22. I didn't receive any financial assistance from any of the Trusts or Funds that were set up. I believe my mother received some financial assistance and she gave some monies to me and my brother.

Section 8. Other Issues

23. I would like my statement to be another voice to what happened to my uncle.

24. This was something that could've potentially been avoided from the start but it wasn't. There's been so much covered up and to think that he was used for human testing makes it worse for me.

Anonymity, disclosure and redaction

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

26. I do not 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 26/9/19.