

Witness Name: SARAH JANE MATTHEWS

Statement No: WITN1765001

Exhibits: WITN1765002-3

Dated: JULY 2019

## INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

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### FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF SARAH JANE MATTHEWS

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I, Sarah Jane Matthews, will say as follows:-

#### Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is Sarah Jane Matthews. I was born on GRO-C 1975 and I live at GRO-C Oxfordshire GRO-C with my husband and our two sons. I am by occupation a paramedic.
2. My father, Brian Richard Coyle (born on GRO-C 1947), was co-infected with the Hepatitis B Virus (HBV) and the Hepatitis C Virus (HCV) from contaminated blood products. He died from renal cell carcinoma (kidney cancer) on 10<sup>th</sup> July 1996 at aged 49.
3. My mother and sisters have given their own Witness Statements to the Inquiry (Witness Numbers WITN1171001, WITN2894001 and WITN1739001 respectively).

4. This witness statement has been prepared without the benefit of access to my father'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**

5. My father had severe Haemophilia A. He was diagnosed from birth, his older brother, [GRO-C] had also been diagnosed by that time.
6. My father was treated at the Oxford Haemophilia Centre, at the Churchill Hospital under the care of Dr Rizza, Dr Matthews and Dr Giangrande. He was initially treated with plasma and then cryoprecipitate. I believe he was treated with Factor VIII concentrate (FVIII) from 1973 or 1974, after he met my mother.
7. I refer to **Exhibit WITN1765002** being my father's Hospital and Home Treatment Record listing the product/material supplied and used. Sheet No 8 of the Home Treatment Record is missing, being the product/material supplied from end January to the beginning of September 1985.
8. I refer to **Exhibit WITN1765003** being my father's National Haemophilia Database Record from the date of 4<sup>th</sup> January 1978. The record appears to be inconsistent with the data provided under **Exhibit WITN1765002**.
9. I do not believe that there were any warnings from the hospital about the risks associated with FVIII blood products and I understand that my father was unaware of any danger until the mid-1980s and the HIV/AIDS scare all over the media from that time. According to my father's medical notes and records, he had been tested for HIV as many as 16 times by the date of 16<sup>th</sup> March 1987. The test result was negative each time. I am not sure that my father would have necessarily known that he was being tested for HIV every time.

10. I do not know when my father was told that he was HBV and HCV positive as I was a child at the time. According to my father's medical notes and records he first tested HBV positive on 8<sup>th</sup> October 1984 and he first tested positive for HCV on 6<sup>th</sup> June 1990.

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

11. I am not aware of any other infection that my father contracted as a result of receiving contaminated blood products.

### **Section 4. Consent**

12. I am not aware that my father was treated or tested without his knowledge, consent or without being provided with adequate information. His medical notes and records appear to indicate that he was tested on quite a few occasions, more frequently than he was perhaps aware.

### **Section 5. Impact**

13. I am the eldest of three sisters. I became aware of my parents' fears of infection in 1983 when my mother was pregnant with my youngest sister Holly (born on GRO-C 1983). I was only 8 years old but I remember overhearing conversations between them. They were massively worried that my father might have HIV/AIDS. As my mother was pregnant they were worried that all three of them (my father, mother and Holly) could be infected. I remember being very worried about me and my sister Rachel and where we would go, who would have us and how we would manage if we lost our parents.

14. After Holly was born the worry and speculation dissipated because my father did not have HIV. I do not know much about the circumstances in which my father

was told that he had hepatitis. I was in my teens when my father learned that he had HCV. My parents dealt with my father's HCV infection privately, between themselves.

15. My father became very unwell in 1995. My father had a chest infection. He had a recurrent dry cough. He had blood in his urine. I was at University in Nottingham studying Nursing. Rachel would have been 18 years old and Holly was 11 turning 12 years old. My mother is a nurse and I was studying nursing. As the eldest daughter I was her confidant. I had many a telephone conversation with my mother in the halls of residence. It wasn't easy. We didn't have mobile phones and I used the pay phone in the halls.
16. I came home over the Christmas period and my father did not look well. He lost weight and was always coughing. The chest infection hung on and would not go away. My father was a joiner working in a (wood) dusty environment. The doctors attributed my father's chest infection and cough to his occupation. My parents had been back to the Haemophilia Centre on several occasions in the latter part of 1995 about a pain my father had in his back/side and the blood in his urine. My father was told that he had a bleed in his kidneys and they treated him with FVIII concentrate. There was no investigation as such. The problem was dismissed as a haemophilia bleed. There was always an answer. The Haemophilia Centre missed the signs that my father had cancer. Too much time was lost looking at what they thought to be the rational answer when they should have been eliminating the alternatives. You can be a haemophiliac and have other things wrong with you. I believe my father was let down. There was a known link between HCV and renal cell carcinoma (kidney cancer).
17. I believe my father was diagnosed with cancer in around May. I was told over the phone by my mother that my father had cancer. I came home from University for a bit (even though I was told there was nothing I or anyone could do). I came

home again just before he died and would not go back. I did not want to leave my mother.

18. I enjoy my job as a paramedic but missed out on my chosen career as a nurse. I do not regret my decision to discontinue my nursing degree. It was the right decision for me and my family at that time. Moreover the path I took led me to meet my husband and have my two sons. My father's infection with HCV through contaminated FVIII and his subsequent death has however had an adverse impact on my education, career and consequently our standard of living.

19. My father was so proud of me and my sisters, 'his girls'. My father always readily said he was happy with his girls if people asked him if he ever wanted a son. He was an awesome father. As a haemophiliac he often had pain in his joints but did not complain. There were things he could not do for us but he made up for them in other ways. He adapted and was brilliant at what he could do. He worked Monday to Friday and we were in his sole charge at weekends when our mother worked nights and slept all day. I recall our ritual on a Friday night. My father would bath us and then sit in a wicker chair and blow-dry our hair whilst we watched Dr Who and then he would paint our nails. He always made time to give us cuddles and talk to us. He was a thoroughly decent man.

20. My father was a very brave man without an ounce of self-pity or sorrow for himself. He was also very accepting of his lot. When he was dying, I asked my father if he was scared of death and he said "no". I asked if he was scared he would miss out on our lives and he said "of course I will miss you but I won't be here to miss you and you will be fine". He was dignified; dignified in so many ways. It is a privilege to be with someone at the end of their life and not everyone deserves that privilege. My father had friends and family that he had not seen in years and he was not afraid to refuse them a visit when they asked before his death. If they had not taken an active part in his life before he would not let them see him while he was ill.

21. My father has grandchildren that he never knew and I am so sad about that. He would have loved them so much. One of my sons, GRO-C is a haemophiliac. GRO-C asks questions about his granddad and we recently visited his grave together. My father would have been an amazing role model to GRO-C. I can get over the fact that my father has not walked me down the aisle and he does not know where I live or what I do for a living but I am very sad for GRO-C because I know they would have shared a very special bond and GRO-C is missing out on that. There is not a day that goes by when I do not think of my father in one form or another.

#### **Section 6. Treatment/Care/Support**

22. I do not believe that my father was offered counselling or psychological support when he was diagnosed with HCV. When he passed away from Renal Cell Carcinoma our family were not offered any counselling or psychological support.

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

23. After my father's death my mother successfully claimed the £20,000/£25,000 ex gratia payment from the Skipton Trust.

#### **Section 8. Other Issues**

24. There are no other issues.

**Anonymity, disclosure and redaction**

25. 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. I would be willing to give oral evidence.

**Statement of Truth**

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

ANONYMITY

GRO-C

Signed...

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Dated 5/11/19

**Statement of Truth**

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

ANONYMITY

Signed...

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### MEDICAL SUMMARY

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

27.08.1981	'Hepatitis B Antigen not detected'
08.10.1984	'Anti-HBs positive'
08.07.1987	'Mr Coyle has been tested 16 times in all, the last time being on 16.3.87. On all occasions he has been anti-HIV negative.'
20.02.1990	'Anti-HBs detected' 'Hep C Ab Not detected'
06.06.1990	'Anti-HCV detected'
25.08.1992	'Anti-HCV detected, HCV RNA detected'
30.07.1993	Patient informed of HCV status