

Witness Name: Katherine Morrison Johnson

Statement No.: WITN2300001

Exhibits: None

Dated: 4th June 2021

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF KATHERINE MORRISON JOHNSON

I provide this statement in response to a request under Rule 9 of the Inquiry Rules 2006 dated 19th July 2019.

I, Katherine Morrison Johnson, will say as follows:-

Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is Katherine Morrison Johnson. My date of birth is GRO-C 1969 and my address is known to the Inquiry. I am a part time doctor's receptionist. I intend to speak about my late father Iain Morrison Campbell date of birth GRO-C 1945 who died on 28 May 1996. My father died of liver cancer after contracting hepatitis C. I intend to speak about the nature of my father's illness, how the illness affected him, the treatment he received and the impact it had on him and my family.
2. I can confirm that I have appointed Thompsons solicitors to be my legal representatives. I can confirm that the Inquiry should send all

correspondence regarding me to Thompsons.

3. I am married and have two children, my son is 14 years old and my daughter is 12 years old. We are a very close, loving family. I am also very close to my sister who lives nearby and regularly helps look after our children and is very involved in all of our lives.

Section2. How Affected

4. My father had mild haemophilia A. I don't remember his condition affecting his life in many ways, when I was very young. Although I do have some vague recollections. Particularly after his hernia operation in 1976.

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 We are not aware of any other familial links with Haemophilia. We would be unable to find out as my Great Grandfather died during World War 1.
5. My father contracted hepatitis C as a result of being given contaminated Factor VIII blood products during hernia operations.
6. My father had three hernia operations in total. The first in 1978, the second in 1983 and the final operation was in 1994. All his operations took place at Glasgow Royal Infirmary.
7. I do recall when my Dad had his first hernia operation at Glasgow Royal Infirmary in 1978. I would have been about 9 years old. I remember this because Dad had to return to work in Curacao, Netherlands, Antilles. My mum, sister and I remained in the UK, temporarily. Mum was really worried because she hadn't heard from Dad and it was several weeks until we heard that he was in hospital and had non-A, non-B, hepatitis. We then returned to Curacao. As a 9-year-old I did not really know what this meant but I knew that Dad was seriously ill.
8. My Dad was given Factor VIII blood products on each occasion that he had his hernia operations. I do not believe that he was ever told about

the risks of being exposed to any infection and I am certain that if he had been told, he would have refused it. I believe he was given Factor VIII blood products as a precautionary measure due to his haemophilia but having seen his medical records I am concerned that some of these treatments may have been questionable in quantities if for no other reason. I do remember my Dad saying after his last operation in 1994 that he did not want any more treatment as it always made him feel very ill. If I recall correctly, he was kept in hospital a bit longer on that occasion. I don't really know at that time what he meant about treatment but I now know that he was referring to the Factor VIII blood product.

9. In 1995 my sister and I were sharing a house in Surrey. We were both working as cabin crew and were based at London Gatwick airport. Our parents were living in Northumberland. Mum had the dreadful task of telling my sister and I that our Dad had been told at a Glasgow Royal Infirmary appointment that he had contracted hepatitis C. We did not know much about hepatitis C but I had heard of hepatitis A so I knew that it affected the liver. Dad received alpha interferon injections, he had to inject this near his stomach but this made him feel quite unwell. He lost a lot of weight and became even thinner than he naturally was. Laterally we were told that Dad needed a liver transplant as the hepatitis had seriously damaged his liver. Dad did not have a lot of time from being informed of the hepatitis C diagnosis and all of a sudden needing a liver transplant. I question why it took so long to inform him, as far as I am aware other patients had been advised of this much earlier.

Section 3. Other infections

10. My dad was infected with hepatitis C due to contaminated blood products.

Section 4. Consent

11. I do believe that my dad was treated and tested without his knowledge.

Having read his hospital medical records which would appear to have some information incomplete, they state that Dad received very large amounts of Factor VIII blood products for sometime after his hernia operations. I am no medic but I would have to question if this was absolutely necessary. His records show that his clotting levels were much higher/better than most people living without haemophilia would have had. It must have been known to the medical profession for some time that the blood products were contaminated and that people were infected, yet it took until 1994 for my dad to be informed that he had been tested and advised of his hepatitis C status.

12. Mum told me that no consent was given for this test to be carried out and no information was really given regarding the hepatitis C infection.

Section 5. Impact

13. As a result of being infected with hepatitis C my father developed cancer of the liver. He received a liver transplant in November 1995 however in January 1996 we were informed that the cancer had spread during his transplant operation. Dad died on 28th May 1996.
14. When I look back to my childhood, my dad did suffer physically with the hepatitis C. Following his stay in hospital in Curacao, he seemed terribly tired and I remember him not eating foods that he normally loved. On the weekends we would often go for an ice-cream and Dad wouldn't have one. He would have usually had his favourite mint chocolate chip but he stopped having anything for a very long time. He also avoided eggs, another food he loved but I am not sure whether this was on the advice given by his doctor. He just did not seem himself for quite a while. I would estimate for around a year or more afterwards.
15. My dad did receive treatment for his hepatitis. This would appear to have been too little, too late. Dad was given interferon injections and as I previously mentioned they seemed to make him quite unwell. Possibly,

if he had been told earlier the outcome may have been different. As far as I am aware, it has been the case for some others who were advised earlier, although not without severe implications.

16. My Dad was around 6ft 2"- 6ft 3" tall. I remember him being generally fit and healthy, apart from the initial hepatitis non-A, non-B diagnosis and his final year. His physical health deteriorated quite extensively in the 12 months before he died. He lost a lot of weight and became more skeletal. His cheekbones and facial features were very pronounced and it was quite obvious to see that he was unwell.
17. My dad had an amazing team at the Freeman Hospital, Newcastle and had his liver transplant in November 1995. I took time off work to be with him and offer some moral support to Mum. It was nerve wracking, to say the least. Liver transplants were a relatively new procedure and his consultants had to follow protocols that were being followed from Dallas. There were very few liver transplants preceding Dad's. We were extremely grateful to the donor's family and that the donor liver was compatible. The operation was a success and Dad made a really good recovery.
18. As a family, we were full of hope and thought that all of our hopes and prayers had been answered. Dad said that he felt better than ever. I also remember we were told that because he had a "new" liver that Dad would no longer have haemophilia.
19. In January, 1996 we were informed that the cancer Dad had in his liver, due to the hepatitis C infection, had spread during his liver transplant and although he was given treatment, there was nothing further that could be done for him. As a family we were all completely shocked and devastated. Our whole world came crashing down.
20. I was cabin crew on long haul flights based in London and we had to do regular standby blocks. My standby blocks had been temporarily put on

hold whilst Dad had his transplant but I was advised that I would have to do my block during May 1996. This entailed staying at a hotel near the airport and being called with 45 minutes notice for any long haul destination on the company's network. I was on quick response standby for three days, this was extremely stressful and on day 3 I received a call from home asking me to get to Newcastle, as soon as I could. Dad's condition was deteriorating and he was not expected to live for long.

21. Fortunately, I managed to spend some time with Dad before he died. Mum, my sister and I spent as much time as we could and ensured that Dad was not alone, he always had one of us by his side. On the 28th May 1996 earlier in the day and whilst Mum and my sister were having a rest and I was with Dad, his body just seemed to shut down. He was unable to speak and the nursing staff kept asking if Dad needed more sedation. They were an amazing team, who knew Dad well, from his time in hospital and were trying to be kind but I knew Dad still understood everything and communicated with me by squeezing my hand.

22. Dad waited for us all to be with him and passed away on 28th May 1996. I feel very fortunate to have been with him when he died. The memories of him becoming weaker and his system shutting down in front of my eyes and taking his last breaths will never leave me.

23. The loss of my Dad has naturally had a massive impact on my life. The devastation of losing him, in the manner that we did, will always be with us all. I am still truly heartbroken. My dad was an amazing man. He was kind, patient and funny. Dad was not only my dad he was also one of my best friends. We had the same sense of humour and there was lots of laughter in our house. He was full of mischief. Dad was liked and loved and respected by everyone who was lucky enough to have met him. The only time I ever remember Dad getting annoyed was when he was teaching me to drive and I was not quite getting the hill start, after many, many attempts but even then we ended up laughing. Every time I get to that hill I always remember his facial expression and frustration, it does

make me smile quietly but leaves me extremely sad. I feel cheated and angry that my Dad lost his life so unnecessarily and in my opinion through the careless reckless decisions made by both the State and medical professionals involved.

24. Every memorable event that has happened in my life, good or bad, I have had Dad in my thoughts and wished he could be there. When I got married in 2005 I knew that I could not get married in the UK, without my Dad to walk me down the aisle. I just could not face a traditional wedding without him. My husband never got the opportunity to meet my Dad and this is still of great sadness to me.

25. I have two beautiful children who never got to see their Grandad. He would have been a wonderful Grandad and would have loved them. This is still devastating to us all. The children know all about their Grandad and are aware of what happened to him that he was given infected blood. The children are aware of the changes that have been made in regards to treatments since then.

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26. At the time of my dad's death both my sister and I were living in Surrey. I know this was very hard for my mum, as she was on her own and she was there herself, still working, trying to keep a roof over her head and trying to keep herself going. Mum moved home several times to try and support herself. She had an extremely demanding job, both physically and emotionally. She really had little to no time for herself. Mum has spent the last 25 years working hard and since she has retired, helping my sister and I with our children. My sister and I have watched my mum suffer not only with the financial implications but also with the emotional

aspects of losing Dad. The hopes and dreams that they had were taken from her in such a cruel way and I don't think she will ever get over his death.

27. My mum made a promise to my Dad that she would fight for justice and get answers, as to how he could have received contaminated blood and to find out who was responsible. She has been determined to keep going and she won't let him down. My mum, sister and I can still not come to terms with the fact that after all of this time, 25 years later there has been no admission of guilt and no one has really taken responsibility for this enormous tragedy.

28. I turned 50 years of age at the time of this document being drafted. The same age as Dad was when he died. This has been much harder than anticipated to complete. I knew it would be difficult but there is so much sadness, the other true devastation caused which cannot really be expressed. When Dad died, my attitude to life changed dramatically and I have the attitude that no one knows how long they have and memories have to be made. Life should not be taken for granted.

29. I still feel very angry and bitter about the manner of my Dad's death. I often wonder about whether he was considered to be a medical experiment and was treated like a guinea-pig. Dad had mild haemophilia A and had treatments given to him during his hernia operations. How can people expect us to get over it? We have all become adept at learning to live with it. We have no choice. This is no easy feat. My own feelings have been very deeply hidden as a means of coping but I watch my mum suffer every day and have done so for the past 25 years. It makes my sister's and my own thoughts and feelings pale into insignificance. It really has been mental torture knowing that until now this has not been properly investigated and to add insult to injury nobody has been held accountable. I know the latter is not the job of the inquiry. Getting an apology from all of the Governments who failed their citizens has been far too late in coming and offers little comfort. Words can easily

slip off anyones tongue. I was always taught it has to be meaningful and not just said for the sake of it. In my opinion, the medical professionals involved in this appalling tragedy have a nerve to consider themselves medics. Where were the medical ethics? There are so many questions unanswered for those infected and affected. I am of the opinion that my dad was murdered and nobody has really been held accountable and probably never will be.

Section 6. Treatment care support

30. Our family were never offered any counselling or psychological support. I do think that we might have benefited from some support. Mum was alone after Dad died and I am certain that an offer of emotional support would have helped.

Section 7. Financial assistance

31. This is something that I feel is more appropriate to Mum's statement, not mine.

Section 8. Other issues

32. An immeasurable amount of damage has been done to our lives and the devastating effects will be with us forever. The pain and trauma will forever be in our hearts. All of the people infected and affected deserve compassion, dignity and respect and that is what I am really hoping for from the findings and outcomes of this inquiry. This should never be allowed to happen ever again.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed

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Dated 04/06/2021