

Witness Name: Dr William Cash

Statement No.: WITN3178002

Exhibits: WITN3178003-12

Dated: 6th November 2019

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

EXHIBIT WITN3178008

Cash, Johnny

From: McCurley, Annelies
Sent: 05 December 2018 22:29
To: Cash, Johnny; McDougall, Neil; McCorry, Roger
Subject: Fwd: FTAO DrCash,Dr McDougall, Dr McCorry

E-mail from patients family...Please see below.

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Sent from Samsung Mobile on 02

----- Original message -----

From: Christina McLaughlin [GRO-C]

Date: 05/12/2018 17:16 (GMT+00:00)

To: "McCurley, Annelies" [GRO-C]

Subject: FTAO DrCash,Dr McDougall, Dr McCorry

For those of you who are not aware, my name is Christina McLaughlin,

I am the sister of Seamus Conway and Eddie Conway. Seamus and Eddie are severe haemophilic A, who both contracted Hepatitis C through contaminated blood in the 1980s. They were never alerted to the danger of hepatitis C in fact they were always told not to worry it was the best virus you could get.

So unfortunately they listened to this cruel advice and never worried about it, believing that if their health/lives were in danger their Doctors would contact them immediately. November 2017 Seamus aged 44, went to his GP with pains in his stomach, she was extremely concerned and referred him to hepatology Belfast (who in fact should have been monitoring him for years) for a liver scan. Seamus had one liver scan ten years before, Seamus like us all was under the impression that the his doctors would be doing everything in their power to keep him safe and healthy but no this was far from the case, in fact they ARE going out of there way to stop them him and other haemophilics from check ups, scans and new treatments, for hepatitis.

Even though Dr Gary Benson their haematology consultant monitors all haemophiliacs liver functions through clinical bloods. he systemically and deliberately fails to act on these results.

Further to that, Dr Benson and the hepatology consultants Dr Johnny Cash and Dr Neil McDougall frustratingly continue to report that my very vulnerable brother Eddie hadn't turned up for appointments and made know further attempts to access him even when I myself had asked with great concern, DR BENSON on five occasions from December 2017 until October 2018 to have Eddie referred for a liver scan, I was told" Dr McDougall was organising this", when in truth Dr McDougall and signed Eddie off his

list, completely manipulating the situation and cancelling appointments because the scanner was broken etc.

There was a huge obvious avoidance by hepatology and haematology to identify and treat Eddie as there was only bogus attempts at appointments in the last year, that made it impossible by them for Eddie to attend, none of the referrals I had requested ever materialized, and there was never any attempt made to get him into the hepatology clinic in the years before that, as these Doctors are all very aware Eddie to date has not missed an appointment in ten years, also Eddie has NOT DRUNK ALCOHOL IN OVER TEN YEARS his is another thing the consultants want to comment that is causing the health issues Eddie is experiencing,

HEPATITIS C IS RESPONSIBLE FOR EDDIE'S HEALTH ISSUES
Sadly Eddie treats appointments as a day out he hasn't got much of a life because of haemophilia, memory loss (HEPATIC ENCEPHALOPATHY DR CASH) hepatitis and everything else that is affecting his health.

It seems to be a common theme making back handed comments about lifestyle, even as Dr Roger McCorry send my young brother Seamus home with the horrendous diagnosis, of death within 3/6months from hep c related liver cancer, he couldn't even let him go without insulting him by telling him that his lifestyle was to blame, **SHOCKING AND AGAIN HEPATITIS C, COUPLED WITH THE DELIBERATE NEGLECT SHOWN BY HAEMOTOLGY AND HEPATOLOGY BELFAST** was the direct result of Seamus's premature death, devastatingly so many opportunities were ignored that could have prolonged his life even saved it, even in the last few months, he could have had the new wonderful hep c treatments this could have supported the health of his liver, while his Cancer treatments were given. Had these consultants used their master manipulating skills and put them to better use by trying to heal and care for their patients, instead of trying to keep statistics low or to save money, maybe in light of the blood contamination inquiry to save face (in other words do your job) this would have been a whole different conversation. Devastatingly sad really.

Seamus was given advice to follow by Dr McCorry hepatology and when he went home he followed this advice to the letter, to him Dr McCorry's word was gospel, Dr McCorry gave Seamus his card and told him to call night or day if he needed him, so it was awful when Seamus was having problems accessing the correct pain relief in Altnagelvin hospital as they were offering him paracetamol and tramadol he was horrified as these pain killers would have depleted any remaining liver function.

So he asked me to call Dr McCorry and ask for his help I phoned that day seven times and a further five times the next day (I'm still waiting for the call back). Even more devastating to watch was the sheer panic by Seamus when on admission to ward one Altnagelvin he asked for a dietitian, as last attempt to keep his liver alive.

No support was given by hepatology and only after a strong worded email to haematology we had a few phone calls from Dr Benson.

However when Seamus went home TO DIE no specialist support was given to help deal with the lead up to his death.

(Actually the silence was deafening), more failings.

On the 28th November 2018, we finally got Eddie an appointment in hepatology Belfast a full year after asking, after the failure of the five referrals I had requested from Gary Benson through the year, I had to email everyone at the Belfast trust and the hepatology liver unit I could think of, voicing our concerns for (their patient whom they were knowingly over looking).

HOWEVER, Eddie was first sent for an ultrasound scan on level 6 RVH at 12 noon, told during the scan by the sonographer that he had a number of gallstones.

We then attended a consultation with hepatology, at the liver unit with Dr. Johnny Cash, who told Eddie that all looks very good on the scan and commented that there was something there but nothing to worry about and that he has a great treatment for hepatitis that would pretty much cure him and he would put him on it today, obviously Eddie and myself were delighted with this information, a bit concerned about side effects, as Eddie had taken part in the interferon trials years before and they had severe side effects.

But no he was assured that there is next to no side effects from the new treatment and it rids the body of hepatitis in 95/98% of patients (brilliant news).

I then asked Dr Cash, about a CT scan for Eddie as we are all very concerned about the affect the HEP C is having Eddie's brain for the last 6/7/8 years. As we believe it could be (hepatic Encephalopathy).

This request was met with great discontent boarding on anger quoting "there is no scientific evidence that hepatitis affects the brain" I was a bit taken aback at this response, as I am very aware of (brain fog and more seriously Hepatic Encephalopathy) to which I said "sure here is the evidence right in front of you" Eddie, I also pointed out that he is now Eddie's doctor surely he must be concerned about all the symptoms he's experiencing.

I then asked for a copy of the morning ultrasound and the last two years bloods, this request was met with a very irritate response "what do you want that for" I explained we are sending it to another experienced doctor to make sure they are not missing anything in Belfast.

IN OTHER WORDS I was telling him I don't trust them to do the right thing. after telling me that he can't give this, reluctantly he printed off the both the bloods and the scan. Dr Cash then sent Eddie down stairs to speak about the treatment with the Hepatitis C nurse Karen Patterson and have his bloods done and to quote Dr Cash "maybe I will do another wee scan or something".

Nurse Karen Patterson called Eddie and said "Eddie I am going to do a fibroscan on your liver and take some bloods. So I waited in the reception for Eddie to return. However Karen returned about ten minutes later, and called me in as Dr McDougall was in explaining stuff to Eddie.

When I entered the consultation room Dr McDougall introduce himself and before I had actually sat right in the seat, he said "I've just been explaining to your bother the there is advanced cirrhosis in the liver," I was noticeably very shocked and ask what he meant by advanced as we had been told not more than an hour before by Dr Cash that all looks good with the liver, Dr McDougall went on to explain that 3/8 is considered a normal, 8/12 is not we don't like but it is can be worked with, and then 12 and above we consider serious, I ask what Eddie was and he said 15. I was totally dumbfounded not

least that this scan was only done as a second thought.(Again this shows why I don't trust these Doctors)

Dr McDougall immediately said we have an amazing treatment that can rid Hepatitis C again saying that Eddie could be cured, already aware, I asked surely this can't cure advance Cirrhosis in the liver. He said no only the Hepatitis C but will stop the progression of the cirrhosis.

Sadly I asked if this was something that my brother Seamus could have had and why he didn't, I was told they only have it twelve months Ironically this was Seamus's six months anniversary and he only lived six months after diagnosis, so maybe it could have given him a bit more time, Dr McDougall said as with Seamus they couldn't offer the treatment with larger tumours like his.

"But Eddie with these smaller tumours we can" I couldn't believe what I was hearing (did he just say small tumours) unable to react or respond because I was worried about Eddie, Dr McDougall went on to say they would be scanning Eddie every six months and they would do it at Altnagelvin hospital, our local hospital, I told him that there was no need I would happily bring Eddie to the RVH as often as needed as we make a day of it for him. But he was very insistent that they would do it in Altnagelvin.

After this we spoke with the nurse Karen and had bloods taken again I couldn't get an opportunity to speak about the comment about tumours in the liver.

We left the hospital and collected my daughter from Queens university to go for dinner, when Carla got into the car Eddie told her he was at the hospital "and do you know I have cancer in my liver" Carla.

I shockingly asked him who told him that, and he said Dr McDougall told when doing the fibroscan, but he said for me not to worry it's only a wee bit of cancer nothing to worry about. (Astounding).

Today Eddie received a copy of the report that has been sent to Altnagelvin to Dr Ferguson, this report is very misleading no mention of cancer no mention of tumours, and again comments that Eddie didn't turn up for past appointments this didn't happen, no mention of the five referrals I had asked for, Dr McDougall seems to be given Dr Ferguson direct instruction not to scan Eddie until May 2019 when in fact we are worried Eddie may not be alive come May, But the most worrying thing about this report is Dr McDougall makes reference if Dr Ferguson sees signs of decompensated cirrhosis in May giving the impression that Eddie has compensated cirrhosis get back in touch. (There is actually no words) these Doctors a law unto themselves I honestly think they believe they can play God with people's lives.

On Wednesday past 28th November 2018, I told both Dr cash and Dr McDougall Eddie's symptoms, brain issues memory loss confusion

(Hepatic Encephalopathy) swelling of his abdominal,

and lots more. A complete disregard has and is being shown for the life or health of my brother Eddie as was shown to my brother Seamus and before that my lovely cousin Michael Birtles, who after fighting HepC liver cancer from contaminated blood also severe haemophilia A, Michael was found dead on the floor of his home on the 9th March 2018 again completely ignored at end of life from hepatology and haematology belfast, Michael was 10days off his 60th birthday a gentle man who would have turned himself inside out was it asked of him.

Haematology and hepatology have a opportunity to identify, contact, scan and treat every haemophilic in Northern Ireland, in the next fortnight if they don't avail of this opportunity, I fully intend to contact every blood contaminated haemophilic in Northern Ireland and make them aware that their Doctors are not only turning a blind eye to their plight, making no honest attempt to save them from(even death) from contaminated blood related issues. But also withholding an amazing treatment for hepatitis that could possibly rid them of the virus. Possibly saving or at least prolonging their lives. If they decide to ignore this ultimatum I will take all the information I have to the Police and the media,

I will be passing this information to the public inquiry team.

Regards

Christina McLaughlin