

Witness Name: Dr Philip Whitehead

Statement No.: WITN5308001

Exhibits: None

Dated:

3. May 2021

## INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

### WRITTEN STATEMENT OF DR PHILIP WHITEHEAD

I provide this statement in response to a request under Rule 9 of the Inquiry Rules 2006 dated 11<sup>th</sup> February 2021.

I, Philip Whitehead, will say as follows: -

#### Section 1: Introduction

My name is Dr Philip John Whitehead. My address is

GRO-C

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Bristol

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My Date of Birth is GRO-C 38. I am now 83.

My qualifications comprise my basic medical degree (MBChB) and my Fellowship of the Royal College of Pathologists (FRCPath).

My career history is as follows.

1962 – 1963: House jobs at the Frenchay Hospital, Bristol.

1963 – 1964: Demonstrator in Pathology at the University of Bristol.

1964 – 1965: Senior House Officer in Pathology at United Bristol Hospitals.

1965 – 1967: Registrar in Haematology and Chemical Pathology at Sheffield Royal Infirmary.

1967 – 1968: Senior Registrar in Blood Transfusion and Haematology with South West Regional Blood Transfusion Centre and Bristol Royal Infirmary.

1968 – 1987: Consultant Pathologist and Director of the Haemophilia Centre in Whitehaven, Cumbria.

1987 – 2003: Consultant Haematologist at the Frenchay and Southmead Hospital in Bristol.

I retired in 2003 at the age of 65, and have not practised in any capacity since then.

During my tenure at Whitehaven, I was a member of the UK Haemophilia Directors Organisation.

I have not been involved in any previous inquiries or investigations relevant to the Infected Blood Inquiry.

When my tenure at the Whitehaven Haemophilia Centre came to an end in 1987, and I relocated back to Bristol, I retained no clinical information, policies, or decisions from Whitehaven, or any other information other than that relating to my own employment there. I hold no information from Whitehaven or from elsewhere, of relevance to the remit of this Inquiry, or to which I have referred for the purposes of completing this statement.

For my final 15 years in practice, I worked as a Consultant Haematologist at the Frenchay and Southmead Hospital in Bristol. This involved working with patients in

receipt of blood products – mainly haemophilia and leukaemia patients, but I was not involved directly with the Bristol Haemophilia Centre, which was run by others at that time.

In responding to the questions in the Rule 9 letter, I have been able to provide only very limited responses. These questions relate to matters which, if I had any involvement in them at all, would have occurred at least 34 years ago. I have had no contact with any source materials or literature in the intervening time.

I have reviewed the Centre Directors Meeting minutes from 1975, 1977, and 1978, which have been disclosed to me by the Inquiry. I see that I was present at these meetings, but apparently took no speaking role. They have not prompted any specific recollections on my part in relation to my role at Whitehaven.

My recollection is therefore very limited, and I have intentionally avoided any attempts to speculate. I am sorry that I am unable to provide the Inquiry with more detailed responses.

## **Section 2: Decisions and actions of those treating patients with bleeding disorders at Whitehaven Haemophilia Centre and your decisions and actions**

Throughout my time at Whitehaven, I had responsibility for patients with bleeding disorders, living in Whitehaven and the surrounding district. I can no longer recall the number of patients or the extent to which this fluctuated over the years.

The facilities and staff were limited and comprised myself, secretaries and support staff. I can no longer recall further details as to the facilities and staffing arrangements.

I had no senior colleagues at the Centre. It was a small unit.

My clinical responsibility for patients with bleeding disorders included the provision of blood and blood products. These were obtained from the Regional Blood Transfusion Centre in Newcastle.

I was not clinically responsible for any patients with Hepatitis or HIV, during my time at Whitehaven. By the time of my departure the Hepatitis C antigen had only recently been identified, and the UK HIV epidemic was still in its early stages. I believe any such patients were treated either elsewhere in Whitehaven, or further afield.

Decisions about the selection of blood and blood products were made by me in conjunction with the Regional Blood Transfusion Centre. These decisions were made on clinical grounds, which in turn were dependent upon the clinical presentation of each patient. To my recollection, no commercial or other non-clinical considerations played any part in these decisions.

There was no relationship between the Centre and the pharmaceutical companies manufacturing and/or supplying the products. We obtained the products from the Regional Blood Transfusion Centre ('RBTC'). I have (and had) no knowledge as to where the RBTC obtained products and materials.

The products used were Factor VIII, Cryo-precipitate and von Willebrand's Factor, depending upon the clinical picture.

Decisions as to which products were used for individual patients were made by me on clinical grounds, such as the age of the patient, and or the severity of their condition. I cannot now recall whether or to what extent patients were involved in that decision or offered a choice.

### **Section 3: Knowledge of, and response to, risk**

I no longer have sufficient recollection, or indeed any information, to provide substantive responses to the questions in this section. Whether contemporaneous documentation still exists in the possession of others, I do not know. If it does still exist, it may well assist on these issues.

I kept my medical knowledge up to date by attending local and national meetings, liaison with the RBTC, and reading the British Medical Journal and the Lancet.

To the best of my knowledge commercially supplied concentrates were not used.

I would also re-iterate that I was not involved in the treatment of patients with Hepatitis or HIV. Consequently, I would be unable to respond substantively in relation to questions relating to the management of Hepatitis or HIV, in any event.

#### **Section 4: Treatment of patients at Whitehaven**

The same limitations apply in relation to this section. I am no longer able to provide a substantive response, as I have neither sufficient recollection, nor any documents to which to refer.

Again I emphasise I was not involved in the treatment of Hepatitis or HIV/Aids.

All records were kept at the Whitehaven Hospital. At no stage did I keep any separate or additional records in relation to any patient. I have had no access to patient records at Whitehaven since my departure in 1987.

#### **Section 5: UKHCDO**

I periodically attended UKCDO meetings as the disclosed minutes confirm. Those minutes do not contain any contributions from me, and have not prompted any additional recollections on my part. They appear accurately to reflect clinical opinion and knowledge at that time.

#### **Section 6: Pharmaceutical companies/medical research/clinical trials**

I can confirm that at no stage have I:-

- a. provided advice or consultancy services to any pharmaceutical company involved in the manufacture and/or sale of blood products.
- b. received any pecuniary gain in return for performing an advisory/consultancy role for a pharmaceutical company involved in the manufacture of sale of blood products.

- c. sat on any advisory panel, board, committee or similar body, of any pharmaceutical company involved in the manufacture or sale of blood products.
- d. received any financial incentives from pharmaceutical companies to use certain blood products.
- e. received any non-financial incentives from pharmaceutical companies to use certain blood products.
- f. received any funding to prescribe, supply, administer, recommend, buy or sell any blood product from a pharmaceutical company.
- g. undertaken medical research for or on behalf of a pharmaceutical company involved in the manufacture or sale of blood products.
- h. provided a pharmaceutical company with results from medical research studies that I have undertaken.

**Section 7: The financial support schemes**

I confirm that I had no involvement in any financial support schemes, trusts or funds.

**Section 8: Other Issues**

I am aware of no complaints about me, or any other matters, of relevance to the Inquiry's terms of reference.

**Statement of Truth**

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

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

GRO-C

Dated \_\_\_\_\_

03-05-21