

Witness Name: Daniel Riley
Statement No: WITN3420001
Exhibits: Nil
Dated: 05.12.2019.

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF DANIEL RILEY

I provide this statement in response to a request under Rule 9 of the Inquiry Rules 2006 dated 5 June 2019.

I, Daniel Riley, will say as follows: -

Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is Daniel Riley and my date of birth is [GRO-C] 1976. My address is [GRO-C] East Sussex, [GRO-C] I live with my long-term partner of 11 years and our baby daughter. I also have a teenage son from a previous relationship. I used to be a performer and entertain people for a living, but I also worked in the care profession.
2. I am the son out Anne Riley (W0202), who was a victim of the contaminated blood scandal. She was infected with Hepatitis C virus ("HCV") as a result of being given blood transfusions after operations on three separate occasions. I say my mother was a victim, but the reality is that my whole family has been victimised by this drastic error. My mother has already provided a written statement to the Inquiry.

3. Following on from my letter sent to the Inquiry on 10 October 2017, I will detail how my mother's infection with HCV has affected me on a personal level.
4. In particular, I intend to discuss the nature of her illness, how the illness affected her, the treatment she received and the impact it had on her and our lives together. My statement is to be read in conjunction with my mothers. I have two sisters, Sadie (W3419) and Angelina (W3494) who will provide their own statements.
5. I confirm that I have chosen not to be legally represented and that I am happy for the Inquiry team to assist me with my statement.

Section 2. How Affected

6. My father died when I was only 2 years old. I have both an older and younger sister. As I am sure you can imagine losing a parent at a young age is incredibly traumatic and it would have been hard for my mother. She was suddenly alone with 3 children to care for.
7. My mother worked so hard to give us children the best in life – what we did not have was made up with love and laughter. She pushed through constant pain and illness, even working up to 4 jobs at once to provide for us all and yet she still had time to love us. She is my hero. The 4 of us are very close – we have always been and always will be.
8. Between 1976-78 my mother needed emergency surgery due to ovarian cysts bursting, which lead to heavy blood loss both times. At the time the NHS saved my mother's life by giving her blood transfusions and for that we are grateful, however little did my mother or anyone else realise this would potentially be a death sentence.

9. My mother contracted HCV from the contaminated blood given to her. This blood was sourced from prisoners in America and Russia, many of which we could assume were drug addicts, rapists, murderers and worse. In what world would such individuals be deemed suitable blood donors? To make matters worse, this blood was not even screened.
10. For over 30 years this virus had been festering inside her body, causing a long list of health problems that still impact upon her today.
11. Life moved on and my mother had to learn how to cope with continuous health issues, but it was not until late 2011 that real problems started to occur. She was bloated, tired and in constant pain.
12. In December 2011 she was rushed into hospital because she had difficulty breathing. As it happened I was on my way up to visit mum in Lincolnshire, when I received a call from her saying that she could not breathe. It was terrifying to hear her struggle to talk and I told her to call an ambulance. I was still 3 hours away from Lincolnshire.
13. After I dropped my son and partner to my mum's home, I rushed over to Grimsby Hospital – terrified that mum was in so much distress.
14. When I arrived it was horrible to see my mother attached to so many wires and wearing a breathing mask. She was in so much pain trying to breathe that I broke down. I could not contain my fear and the possibility that I could lose my mum – my hero.
15. What followed seemed like forever – mum would have litres of fluid drained from her lungs daily. She would have regular blood tests, biopsies and CT scans. It was over 5 weeks of testing before we were told that she had HCV and severe cirrhosis of the liver.
16. Mum stayed in hospital for a further 5 weeks to receive drains and for more testing.

Section 3. Other Infections

17. Mum did not contract any infection other than HCV as a result of being given infected blood.

Section 4. Consent

18. Please refer to my mother's statement (WITN0202001) in relation to consent.

Section 5. Impact

19. Life was really good until mum became ill and I had been travelling with my partner around India, Goa and Thailand. We had a further holiday booked to Sri Lanka, but I had to cancel this when mum's health deteriorated. I felt that I should stay at home and be there for her. I could not enjoy myself on holiday knowing that she was unwell. This put a strain on my relationship with my girlfriend, she still went on the holiday but it was not same as she anticipated. I still worry about whether my mum will be ok and I do not want to be too far away from her in case anything happens.
20. I used to travel abroad with work and have performed in Japan, Germany and America. I took roles in acting, pantomime and participated in circus skills.
21. Without performing I would have not been able to live properly, because work in the care profession pays so poor.
22. My family is everything to me. My father died when I was a baby and my mum has been there for me ever since. I have always found the thought of being an orphan terrifying and do not know what I would do if I lost my mum.

23. When mum first became unwell and could not breathe, my son was with me when I drove up to Lincolnshire. He could see that I was panicking and scared. I dropped him and my partner to mum's house before driving to Grimsby Hospital. During the drive on my own, I nearly crashed twice because I was panicking.
24. When I walked into the hospital, I was shocked to see my mum. I had never seen her like it before – she was hooked up to so many machines, she had a breathing mask on her face and her breath was short and shallow. She did not look like my mum at all. It destroyed me there and then to see her in that way. We both started crying because we were both scared. None of the hospital staff gave us any answers because it was still early days.
25. I felt completely helpless and I just had to sit back and watch mum deal with everything going on. I was emotionally overloaded as I had my own personal issues at the time, but mum's illness became the tipping point.
26. Can you imagine what it is like to feel so helpless? I just wanted to take the bad away and wanted to tell my mum that everything would be ok, but it reality that was not possible. I have already lost one parent and to lose another was a great fear. I know that people die, but to know that mum's ill health was caused by the failings to screen blood, it is not fair,
27. I cannot begin to imagine what was going through mum's mind at the time. I recently had a cancer scare and it blew my mind completely. I was very lucky and it did not turn out to be what they thought it was, but I did flashback to how mum must have felt when she was ill.
28. I always try to be empathetic, but I never really knew the extent of fear mum was going through and the idea that she may potentially leave behind everything that she loves. My cancer scare was just the tip of the iceberg, but it did change my perspective on everything.

29. Mum was in hospital for a long period of time and she would regularly have her lungs drained. I found this intense and seeing her all wired up and being cut into was not nice. I was living in Brighton at the time and my sisters were both in London, yet we were all regularly travelling up to Lincolnshire to visit her in hospital and to look after her dogs and her house. I had no choice but to stop working because of the travelling and staying up North.
30. I found it expensive travelling up to visit mum and I was away from my son for extended periods of time. I do not have the most amicable relationship with his mother, so this did not help at the time and became an added stress.
31. It came as a shock to be told that mum had been infected with HCV. She was not a heavy drinker or drug user and had not been promiscuous. We all kept questioning how she had become infected, because at the time nothing was mentioned of infected blood. Again I felt helpless – mum had been diagnosed with a virus and none of us knew where from.
32. My sisters and I decided that we needed to move mum down south, so that she could be closer to us. She had no money, as she had been declared unfit for work since 1991. As a family we pooled together and made the move happen – at a great financial and emotional cost.
33. Constant visits to the local hospital and Kings College Hospital, London followed as mum's health deteriorated. I found myself watching my rock slowly dissolve, losing her power, her confidence and her life to an illness forced upon her by a simple failing to screen blood – the infected blood of prisoners.
34. The fact that she did not know that this virus had been thrust upon her and that she was slowly rotting away for over 30 years is not acceptable.

35. Looking after mum became my immediate priority. My sisters felt the same way and we wanted to help as much as we could. We managed her care between us, yet because of circumstances I would spend the most time in hospital.
36. We only found out about contaminated blood later on, so until this point I was angry that my mother was infected and we had no explanation of how she contracted the virus.
37. At the time I knew that the virus was bad and dangerous, but I had limited information. I had previously read an article about HCV being rife in Brighton because of drug use, so I had a little insight about the virus. Whilst I did not know about the severity of HCV, I knew that it was bad and we had to do something about it.
38. I felt the need to independently research HCV, so that I knew what was going on. It was then that I found out it was a potential death sentence.
39. Everything clicked into place when we found out about contaminated blood. Mum told me. From this point I focused my anger on the NHS and towards the people who decided to administer unscreened blood. Although I could now blame a group of people, I could not blame one person for making that decision and I still do not know who was responsible to this day.
40. Finding out the cause of mum's infection provided some peace of mind, but it exacerbated my anger because I could not believe unscreened blood was given to patients. At the time of finding out, I did not realise how many people have been affected by the contaminated blood scandal.
41. Whilst mum was on the waiting list for a liver transplant, she received a call from the hospital on three separate occasions, informing her that they may have a suitable liver. Every time I came round to sit with my mum and I kept thinking how this could be our last conversation. I know the

hospital has a procedure to follow when patients are on a transplant list and that not every organ will be suitable, but to go through that 3 times was very hard. It involved a lot of energy and emotion and I had nowhere to put it all.

42. It was such an uncontrollable and unpredictable time and I just wanted to have something to exert control over. I am not a control freak but I needed some sort of order in my life. It is not normal for your parent to require a liver transplant. I was there for my mum during this period, but I am a physical person and like to remove problems. Not being able to help her drove me insane – I felt lost, useless and I was absolutely terrified that I could lose her.
43. On the day of the operation our family spent the day talking on the sofa. I do not know if anyone mentioned it, but we all had an underlying fear that it would not be successful.
44. I am eternally grateful for the operation and to the donor that provided mum with a liver, but it was hard for me to comprehend that someone had to die so that my mum could live. This was a huge headache in itself.
45. After the liver transplant we were told how the state of mum's liver was horrific. It was very badly damaged by the cirrhosis.
46. I have always been a slightly anxious person, but the anxiety has increased since mum's illness. I do not sleep very well and I am constantly worrying about her health, particularly because there are many side effects to the medication she is prescribed. One known side effect of the table Azathioprine is skin cancer and she has already had lumps from her skin removed. For me this is an on-going worry that goes round and round in my mind that creates another level of stress, anxiety and fear. I know that she requires this medication to stop her liver rejecting, but this would have never been an issue had she not been infected with contaminated blood.

47. In the absence of a father, I felt the need to step up and to be there for my mum. I wanted to protect out family as much as I thought I could.
48. I found dealing with mum's illness overwhelming and I struggled just to think about each day. I got to the point where I could not stop feeling useless and I felt like a victim myself. I recall that on one day I was so scared and overwhelmed about mum that I could not think straight or put anything in order.
49. I was always there for mum and helped her, but I always felt that I was not doing anything constructive. The thought of being useless was hard to deal with and got too much for me. I seriously considered not being here, but images of my son, my mum and my family flashed into my mind and I realised I would be unable to help them if I was not around. If it was not for them coming into my mind, I would have not been alerted to the fact that I was needed. This incident happened shortly after we found out about the HCV infection.
50. Due to high stress levels, both my physical and mental health has suffered. I was not looking after myself or eating properly because I was worried about my mum, so things that were physically demanding became impossible.
51. I first sought counselling not long after my mum moved down to GRO-C. I was advised to go and seek help, so I applied for sessions through the charity 'Mankind' I went for a couple of interviews with them and they agreed that I needed some counselling. The counselling took place in Brighton and I had 12 sessions initially.
52. It was a year or so before I found that I needed help again. I found that the first round of sessions helped a lot, but I required more support. I reapplied for further counselling through 'Mankind' and eventually they offered another round of 12 sessions.

53. Over the years I have had 4 different blocks of sessions, but not always with the same counsellor. Going over the same thoughts and emotions with a different counsellor can be hard when you have already built a rapport with someone else.
54. During the sessions I presented what happened to mum, along with other personal issues in my life. Suddenly everything came out and a lot of things within myself came to life.
55. Around 2015/16 I went through a bad time, so I limited my interaction with others and avoided social situations. I isolated myself away from my friends, as I did not want them to see me in that way. Consequently my world became a lot smaller and I felt safer in my own company – I did not want to get angry around other people, or risk lashing out at someone.
56. I have a lot of anger from childhood abuse, but my mother's illness intensified the anger. I am not an angry person by nature, but this all went out of the window. I kept hitting objects because I could not hit out at anything else and if I thought I was being looked at in a strange way, I would want to hit out at that person.
57. Helping mum made me feel worthwhile and was the only positive thing I could do at the time – everything else became distorted.
58. I had 24 sessions of counselling during this time, but towards the end something happened with mum. I recall saying to the counsellor that I could not commit to the last sessions because of her health, to which he said that he would have to stop the course there and then. For me this was the worst thing that could have happened, because I did not wind down to the closure of the final session.
59. I really struggled after the sessions stopped, because I had lost my constant support. There are certain things that I could not open up to my

family about, but with the counsellor I felt that I could say anything without being judged.

60. Some time after my partner told me to seek further counselling, because we were not getting on well and I had so much anger. She was worried that I would lash out at someone. Once again I applied for further counselling sessions and I was sent to the same counsellor. I had another 24 sessions that coincided with my partner being pregnant. I also had anxiety about becoming a father again because of what had happened with my son's mother. This course of counselling finished on the **GRO-C** **GRO-C** 2018 – the day after my daughter was born.
61. Counselling saved my life and without the assistance of 'Mankind' I do not think I would be here today. I have had amazing counsellors that have helped me to speak about everything. Beforehand I would keep all my emotions and thoughts deep inside, but I have now found it cathartic to talk about things. I am now past any suicidal thoughts and I try to have coping strategies in place.
62. I have been clinically diagnosed with PTSD, anxiety and depression because of everything that has happened in my life, along with my mother's infection with HCV.
63. I was prescribed Sertraline and I still take this now. I am also on Zopin which is a strong pain killer and Quetiapine which is an antipsychotic. At night I'm on Amitriptyline which is an anti depressant and painkiller. I have been on these medications for several years and to be honest worry about the long term effects on my body and the dependency.
64. What happened to mum was the catalyst for everything coming out of my mind that I had not previously dealt with. I would wake up and have sweats during the night and even when I managed to sleep, I would not be asleep for long.

65. I am lucky if I manage to get 4 hours sleep a night now, because of my stress, anxiety and other health issues.
66. In all honesty I think that I am in need of further counselling, but I worry that I am being a burden on what is a strained service. I question whether I am making mountains out of molehills, but they are not in my mind. It is my reality. I have reapplied for further support, but the charity has said it will be a few months before I will have another session.
67. I find it difficult to vocalise how I feel at times and I just want to lash out. I have always recognised the anger within me, but it has now been there so for long. I have never acted upon this anger because I never wanted to be taken away from my children.
68. I was the first out of my siblings to have children and I was 26 years old when my son was born. Becoming a father was the most amazing experience and I desperately wanted to be the father I imagined my dad would have been.
69. I split up with my son's mother when he was one. The relationship had been strained for some time and [GRO-C] I have since had to do a lot of things to continue to be part of my son's life and I even [GRO-C]
70. After the break down in the relationship, my mum was there as a constant support and she helped to care for [GRO-C] She would look after him so that I could go to work. When she moved up to Lincolnshire we would visit during the school holidays and everything mum planned revolved around [GRO-C] She was always there for him and he knew that.
71. I am very lucky to have an incredible relationship with my son. He wants to become a forensic psychologist.

72. I am lucky to have two healthy children and I find I am happiest when around my family and the people I love. If it were not for my children, my mum and my sisters I would have a very different story to tell. My children have become a positive distraction.
73. My mum loves being a grandmother. I distinctly remember the joy in her face when I told her that my partner was expecting my first child. It brings me joy that she is still here to spend time with all of her grandchildren.
74. I can see how my mother's infection with HCV has also affected my son. When she became unwell, he was at an age to understand what was happening – that she was very ill and could die. He understood from day one what was going on and that his granny was unwell. He knew that she required a liver transplant, so was waiting for someone to die in order that she could live.
75. My son is very intelligent and speaks very openly, so I had to be honest with him about his granny. I felt the need to protect my family and I did not want to put too much stress on my son, but I could not lie to him about what was happening. I have never lived with my son on a permanent basis, but we talk all the time and he would always ask how his granny was doing.
76. I knew that mum's illness affected my son because I could see the worry in his face and I saw a change within him. I felt bad because something was forced upon him that he should not have had to deal with as a young teenager. I could not stop imagining how a young boy would cope with seeing someone he loves pass away.
77. I have not worked on a regular basis since my mother became ill and I have not had a full time job since. This has placed me under huge financial strain and stress.

78. When Mum became unwell, I was working full time as a teaching assistant providing one to one support to a young boy. This would have been in 2013. He had a very sad childhood and would lash out at school as a way of getting attention. I would have to restrain him regularly. It was an intense period of time as I looked after him 5 days a week, whilst having the constant worry about my mum. I stayed within the role for as long as possible, but I handed in my notice, as I could not look after him in addition to my mum. My priority was to care for my mum.
79. I did not take the decision lightly and I felt as though I was letting the boy down when he required help – to me this was another failing of mine. I saw a lot of myself within him, so every day I would come home and be a wreck. I stayed within the role for as long as I could function, but I did not want to go back to the dark place from where I had come from.
80. I am on benefits and currently receive ESA payments of £200 every fortnight. I am terrified to apply for Personal Independence Payments (PIP) because it sounds horrifying how they analyse people as part of the application process.
81. My partner is very patient around my working situation and she works to support our family. I am the main carer for our young daughter and I run the home. I find this set up rather tough because I feel terrible for not providing for my family, but I am also grateful that I get to spend so much time with my daughter because I missed out on so much with my son.
82. My relationship with my partner has been affected because of how I have been and consequently we have nearly split up on a few occasions. She is an amazing woman and mother but she can be rather black and white, which was a bit of a head-butt when I had my personal issues. GRO-C
- GRO-C
83. We used to live in a two-bedroom apartment, but when I could no longer work, I could not afford to keep up with the rent payments. This caused a

lot of problems within our relationship because we had to move out of our home. We now live in [GRO-C] in a very small one-bedroom apartment. As I am still not working, we do not have enough money to afford a bigger property. My son continues to come round and stay, but he has to sleep in the living room.

84. I struggle financially everyday, but I do not feel good enough to return to work yet. I constantly argue with myself that I need to get back into the world of work, but I find the idea overwhelming and I struggle to see where I fit in and belong.

85. As a performer, I used to network within a regular group of people but I am now out of this loop. I no longer feel relevant in this field because I was a skills based performer and the time out looking after my mum prevented me from improving my skills. A few years out of practice does make the skills disappear and you do not keep up with new ideas. I did love performing and found it one of the best feelings in the world, but it is an environment I no longer fit within.

86. I did turn down a lot of performing gigs and opportunities because I was looking after my mum.

87. I have dipped in and out of performing over the last few years and went back to do some stilt walking, but it requires so much self-confidence. I felt overwhelmed because of what happened to my mum and other issues in my life, so became rather anxious about performing. I like the anonymity of being an act or a character for a period of time, but during the build up to the performance I stress and become anxious about how the performance will come across to the audience. I no longer think I am good enough to perform. I never had these feelings before and instead I would get a buzz out of performing.

88. I do struggle to see myself in the workplace, but I would love to do something creative.

89. Had mum not received contaminated blood, I think I would have pursued doing what I loved, travelling and performing. I certainly would have had much more confidence in myself.

90. I know that as a family we are lucky, compared to other victims of the contaminated blood scandal, but my mum still has a foreign liver in her body and there are many side effects to the anti-rejection medication. We could still lose her and I do not think we will ever come to the end of this emotionally.

91. Mum has always worked hard for our family, but all of her health issues have been in consequence of the HCV infection.

92. The contaminated blood scandal has damaged the lives of my family and still continues to affect them to this day.

Section 6. Treatment/Care/Support

93. I was never offered any counselling or psychological support in relation to my mother's illness, but as detailed in section 5 I sought counselling independently.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

94. My mother Anne Riley (W0202) has detailed the financial assistance she received in her statement.

Section 8. Other Issues

95. I hope that through the work of the Inquiry, I find out who was responsible for the contaminated blood scandal.

96. I would like the Inquiry to establish the truth and for those responsible to be publically recognised and held accountable. I understand that blood was imported to save lives, but it should have been screened before being used. You expect a certain level of care from the NHS. They put death sentences on so many people, when a simple test could have prevented this. Someone needs to stand up and take responsibility for this.
97. I know imported blood was used because we had low stocks at the time, but it baffles me that it was administered without any guidelines and the need to ensure it was safe before being used. It does not make sense and there has been a major cover up.
98. I count our family lucky because there are individuals that have lost everything to contaminated blood, but there has still been a knock on effect because someone made the decision to use bad blood. What our family has gone through has been awful.
99. My heart goes out to all of the other families that have lost loved ones due to this terrible error. It makes me so angry that this was allowed to happen and that in consequence, lives have been taken, families have been broken and it has created pain, stress and suffering for so many people. Someone has to be held accountable for this.
100. Justice and compensation needs to be met for all the families affected by the contaminated blood scandal.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed  5/12/19