

Witness Name: Kirsty Paterson

Statement No.: WITN3446001

Exhibits: **NIL**

Dated:

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF KIRSTY PATERSON

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

I, Kirsty Paterson, will say as follows: -

Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is Kirsty Paterson. My date of birth is GRO-C 1992 and my address is known to the Inquiry. I am affected by my late father's infection with hepatitis C. I intend to speak about my father's infection with hepatitis C. In particular, how the illness affected him, the treatment received and the impact it had on him and our lives together.
2. I have 2 siblings, a sister and a brother. I am the eldest child.
3. My mother Sharon Campbell (W3445) has provided her own statement to the Inquiry.

Section 2. How Affected

4. My mother has discussed this information extensively in her statement to the Inquiry.
5. From quite a young age we knew that dad was unwell but we didn't know exactly what was wrong with him.
6. It was always explained to us why dad was unwell, that he had the blood transfusion. The only blood transfusion I am aware of dad having is the one he had when he lost his leg. He didn't talk about it much, he didn't go into any details.
7. I remember that dad began to be particularly ill around February 2005. It came on quite suddenly, as far as I know. He was then in and out of hospital for a few months. He passed away in July 2005. I was 12 years old at the time that dad passed away.
8. During this period, dad would be home for a couple of days and then he would be back in hospital. Once he came home in the morning and he was back in hospital by that evening. I don't really remember much else.
9. At that time, I understood that Dad had cellulitis, but other than that I didn't know anything else. I didn't even know what cellulitis was, I just knew that he had it.
10. Everything was explained to us regarding what was happening to dad. I think that because I was the eldest, things were explained to me like I was an adult because I was also a bit more mature for my age.
11. Dad passed away in our family home. I remember the morning that he passed away I had knocked on mum and dad's bedroom door to go in to brush my teeth and I saw that dad's nose was bleeding.

12. I told mum about dad's bleed and she said not to worry, to go to school. Mum went and got the neighbour and sent me to school.
13. As I mentioned previously, dad was always in and out of hospital, but this particular day I thought it was worse. It was just a feeling I had at the time. When I went to school that day people were saying that an ambulance was out the front of my house.
14. I remember that on the day that dad passed away, I was only at school for about an hour or two when mum and my grandad came to pick me up and we went home. People were saying I was in trouble. I knew that something was wrong when mum and grandad came to pick me up, as I knew that mum wouldn't come back to school to pick me up if dad was just back in hospital again.
15. When we returned home, the whole family was there and I knew that something had happened. During the evening, the rest of our family came to the house. I had to get out as everyone was crying and depressing me, I felt like I couldn't cry anymore. So, I went and found my friends to hang out with them. It sounds awful but I am not the kind of person to sit around feeling sorry for myself. I just wanted to feel like it was a 'normal' day.

Section 3. Other Infections

16. As far as I am aware, dad did not receive any other infection from the blood transfusion, besides hepatitis C.

Section 4. Consent

17. As far as I am aware, dad was not tested or treated without his consent, without being given adequate or full information or for the purposes of research.

Section 5. Impact

Physical and mental impact of hepatitis C and the treatment

18. Apart from dad's leg, I remember that physically he looked fine early on when he was diagnosed with hepatitis C.
19. Now and then he would be a bit off colour and as we got older we realised that he looked a bit jaundiced now and then. Other than that, I can't really remember anything else because I was young.
20. I do recall that he was very swollen from the cellulitis.
21. There were times where he would be normal when he came home from the hospital, and then there were times where, because he had deteriorated so quickly, mum would have to help him in and out of his chair to go to the toilet. We knew that was going on so that wasn't very nice.
22. I suppose for me it was normal for dad to not be well, I grew up with it and I did not know anything different.
23. I know that dad had injections of something for the hepatitis C, but I don't know what it was called.

Impact on family members

24. When dad passed away, I think I dealt with it differently to everyone else.
25. I wanted to go back to school the next day. I wanted everything to be normal and carry on like nothing had happened, but mum wouldn't let me, she said it was too soon.
26. It's really hard to say how I was affected. I feel like I had to just sort of get on with it. I just sort of carried on.

27. I think that I was the strong one who had to behave myself and get on with things myself, because the others didn't.
28. Because my brother and sister were younger, and they had problems, it was like get on with it, don't hassle mum with anymore problems.
29. My brother and sister went off the rails after dad passed away. Scott is **GRO-C**, but he wasn't properly diagnosed because at the time the doctors put his behaviour down to my dad's death, then my grandfather's death.
30. It was always put down to something else. Mum was always trying to say it was more than that. I remember mum was always trying to get some sort of help for Scott.
31. I suffered with panic attacks because of Scott's behaviour. I wouldn't say that the panic attacks were a direct impact of dad's death, they were a knock-on effect of Scott's behaviour.
32. I had counselling for my panic attacks, but it didn't help. I felt like the counsellor was belittling me. One time he threw himself on the floor to demonstrate how I would be feeling when I was having an anxiety attack. I told my mum that he was a strange man and I didn't want to go back to him.
33. It is quite hard to say how mum was affected, because obviously she was trying to put on a brave face. She was obviously upset, and she didn't hide that. There were a couple of times where she didn't cook dinner and she just kind of lay down on the sofa.
34. I remember at the time that dad was ill we were going to go on a family trip to Disneyland in Paris, but it was cancelled as dad was too ill to travel. We ended up going to the Florida Disneyland for 2 weeks as a family after dad's passing.

35. Dad's death did affect my uncle (my dad's brother). He contacts us now and then and we speak with him and our cousins on the phone occasionally. Sometimes we won't hear from each other for a few months at a time. It affected the whole family, really, even my mum's parents and siblings.
36. I didn't visit dad a lot in hospital, only on Father's Day and his birthday, which obviously now I think I should of. I wouldn't visit him because I have a fear of hospitals, and he was in and out so much I always thought he would be home in a couple of days. I didn't realise it would be some of the last times I got to see him.
37. That's the thing that really gets me. I wish I had of visited him more in hospital, and seen him more in those last few months, but I always thought that he would be coming out, and I wanted to hang out with my friends. I didn't realise how bad it was. Obviously at 12 years old you prefer to be out with your friends. I feel like I should have been there for him. I sometimes think like, what if he thought I didn't visit him because I didn't love him. Which I know is really silly, I knew he knew that I loved him, he was my dad.
38. I regret this though, especially now that my sister and I have children of our own. It's also like our children are missing out. My daughter is 10 months old but I show her pictures of dad.
39. I would say that the main impact on me is the way it changes your outlook on things. It just changes the way you look at life in general. It is almost like life is too short.
40. I missed out on growing up with my dad around, so did my siblings. Things we should have been able to go to our dad for, we couldn't, like advice and stuff. Who is going to walk me down the aisle if I get married? Our babies are never going to know their grandad. It's not just when you are a child that you miss out either, sometimes even as an adult you think I just want my dad, or what would dad say and do.

Section 6: Other matters

41. I have nothing further I would like to add at this time.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed

GRO-C

Dated 10.1.2020.