

Witness Name: Gaynor Elizabeth Bradshaw-Smith

Statement No: WITN2731001

Exhibits: 0

Dated: 11 February 2019

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF GAYNOR ELIZABETH BRADSHAW-SMITH

I, Gaynor Elizabeth Bradshaw-Smith, will say as follows:-

Section 1. Introduction

1. I live at [GRO-C], [GRO-C], Kent [GRO-C]. I was born on [GRO-C] 1964. I married in August 2002 and have a daughter, Megan Louise Bradshaw-Smith, who was born on [GRO-C] 1997. I make this statement in connection with the circumstances leading to the death of my late father, Leonard Bradshaw. This witness statement has been prepared without the benefit of access to my father's full medical records. If and in so far as I have been provided with limited records the relevant entries are set out in the medical chronology at the end of this statement.

Section 2. How Affected

2. My father was born on [GRO-C] 1932 and died on [GRO-C] 2013, following surgery to remove an aneurysm on his aorta. He suffered multiple organ failure and did not survive the surgery. The cause of death was Hepatitis C and liver cirrhosis.
3. My father had Haemophilia A.

4. He was treated with Factor VIII.
5. He was treated at the Royal London Hospital in Whitechapel, London (" the hospital").
6. I believe he was given infected blood products in the mid-1980s.
7. My father was not given any warnings or advice about the possibility that the Factor VIII would be infected. He was not given adequate information about the infection and he was not given any information about how to manage it.
8. My father found out that he had been infected when he went to the hospital, complaining of night sweats and shivering. Blood tests were performed and, out of the blue, he was informed that he had Hepatitis A Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C.
9. No information was provided about the risk of infection as far as the rest of the family were concerned.

Section 3. Other Infections

10. My father did not receive any other infections, as far as I am aware, but we did suspect that he might have malaria, as his terrible night sweats suggested this.

Section 4. Consent

11. I believe that my father was treated with Factor VIII with his knowledge, but without knowledge of the risk.
12. I believe my father consented to treatment with Factor VIII, but I do not believe that he consented to the risk of being infected.

13. My father was treated without being given adequate or full information. He was tested without his consent.

14. I do not believe that my father was treated for the purposes of research.

Section 5. Impact of the Infection

15. My father's infection had a profound effect on him. He believed that he was a pariah. He worked for the London Borough of Greenwich and the way they treated him made him very depressed. Once they knew of his diagnosis, they stopped him working with other employees. They moved him around so that he was always alone. He would be given jobs like car park attendant. Eventually they gave him "early retirement" and escorted him off the premises. He was physically able to work and had no mobility issues so to lose his job without just grounds made my father very depressed

16. Due to the Hepatitis C infection, my father developed liver cirrhosis, diabetes and heart disease.

17. The course of my father's illness was a gradual process of decline. The Hepatitis C caused liver cirrhosis, which triggered one disease after another. When he had the aneurysm on his aorta, he decided to undergo surgery, but he was too ill to survive the surgery and sustained multiple organ failure, resulting in death.

18. I do not know what treatments or medications my father was offered for Hepatitis C.

19. My mother accompanied my father to all of his medical appointments. As far as I am aware, there were never any obstacles or difficulties when my father needed treatment. He was known at the hospital and the haemophilia team always saw him. He had a good relationship with the doctors.

20. My father's liver was very sensitive, and would flare up from time to time. This would delay any other treatment.
21. My father's Hepatitis C had a big impact on the care he received. His GP would not touch him. He always went to the local Accident and Emergency Department at Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Woolwich, if he had a bleed, and they would immediately call an ambulance and he would go to the hospital for treatment. My father's dental care was at the hospital, because there was always the risk of him bleeding.
22. My parents were very sociable, but my father's infection affected their ability to go out and socialise. They had a close circle of friends who knew about the infection and they would visit us at home. My father was restricted on the number of social activities he could partake in as he had completely stopped his alcohol consumption and could only eat bland foods as anything too rich or spicy affected his liver and would cause him immense pain. The impact on my father's private and family life cannot be overstated. He lived with the fear that he would pass on the infection, and this affected his relationship with his children, and later his grandchildren. He was wary of closeness.
23. The impact on me of my father's infection was that I grew up with a father who was always poorly and struggling with his health. He had his own towel, cup and cutlery. I am the youngest of four children born respectively in 1958, 1959, 1960 and 1964. He did not tell us about his Hepatitis C until I was in my 20s. I did not tell any of my friends about it, because there was so much fear at the time about HIV/AIDS and people were afraid of these infections. I remember Princess Diana trying to educate people about them. I was frightened for myself and worried that I might pick up the infection from some blood on a towel. There was always a sense of fear that my father might pass on the infection. I did not want people to think that I might pass it on. It was an embarrassment, and I did not discuss it outside the family.

24. I believe there was definitely a stigma attached to my father's diagnosis, in particular in the way he was treated at work. He was moved around, isolated, and eventually dismissed.

25. My father had 7 brothers and 2 sisters. Several of his brothers were haemophiliacs. There is only one non-haemophiliac brother still alive. My father also had many cousins who were haemophiliacs and died from HIV/AIDS in the 1990s. As far as my brothers were concerned, the greatest fear was that my father would pass on the infection to his grandchildren.

26. My father left school when he was 14 and worked on the London docks in the 1960s. The docks changed and there were redundancies. My father moved to Greenwich Council and that is where he was working in the 1980s when he received the infection. The financial effects of his Hepatitis C were that he had to retire early and there was no financial package. He was a proud man, but he probably signed on. My mother was a nursery nurse at a primary school, so my parents were surviving solely on her income once my father left work but when my father became depressed, my mother also had to give up work to support him.

Section 6. Treatment/care/support

27. My father was not offered any counselling.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

28. Financial assistance was provided by the Skipton Trust. My father received a payment in about 2011. I found out about the Trust and helped my father with the forms. There was no difficulty applying for the assistance, but we had to have written confirmation from the hospital that my father had liver cirrhosis due to Hepatitis C. The forms were signed off by my father's consultant, Professor Pasi. I have not received any financial assistance myself in relation to my father's infection.

Section 8. Other Issues

29. My father's infection with Hepatitis C completely ruined his life. So many difficulties arose because of it. His health was seriously affected and he was terrified that he would pass the infection to his wife, children and grandchildren. He led a restricted life. He lived to 81, but he was not a healthy man. It was also a struggle for Mum as she had to deal with the limitations on their lives, and she went to all his hospital appointments with him. She eventually developed dementia, but they soldiered on without any help. She has now died. My father was not involved in any litigation relating to his infection.

Anonymity

30. I do not wish to remain anonymous and I wish to give oral evidence to the Inquiry.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed GRO-C

Gaynor Elizabeth Bradshaw-Smith

Dated 28 Feb 2019