

Witness Name: N Evans
Statement No: WITN2747001
Exhibits: 0
Dated: July 2019

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF NICHOLAS EVANS

I, Nicholas Evans will say as follows:-

Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is Nicholas Evans and I live at [GRO-C]
[GRO-C] Australia. I was born on [GRO-C] 1969.
2. I make this statement as an affected son of my late father, Meirion Evans, who was born on [GRO-C] 1939, and passed away aged only 52 on 2nd March 1992, as a result of receiving contaminated Factor VIII concentrates.
3. My late father was infected HIV, Hepatitis C and Hepatitis B via his use of contaminated Factor VIII concentrates.
4. This witness statement has been prepared without the benefit of access to my late father's medical records.

Section 2. How Affected

5. My father was born with severe Haemophilia A in Llantrisant, South Wales and I am his only child. I recall his condition impacting the family throughout my childhood, almost always negatively, as one would expect.
6. He had taken a job in Banbury and one of the main considerations was location and, in particular, proximity to the Haemophilia Treatment Centre at the Churchill Hospital in Oxford. I have vivid memories of visiting and playing outside this Hospital while my father was treated for his latest bleed, invariably to his shoulder or elbow.
7. My father regularly infused himself (or with help of my mother) with Factor VIII concentrates using an on-demand regime. I cannot recall the name of the product.
8. I don't know if he was given any advice regarding the risks of infection associated with Factor VIII concentrates.
9. My father was administered with the tainted Factor VIII concentrates whilst he was a patient at the Haemophilia Treatment Centre at the Churchill Hospital in Oxford. I am unaware of the names of his consultants.
10. He also had a number of hospital stays associated with blood borne viruses. I recall him being at the Slade Hospital in Oxford and being treated for Hepatitis A. He had a particularly bad bleed to his lower back/hip in the early 1970s; which progressively rendered him unable to walk and wheelchair bound by the mid-1980s.
11. I am unsure as to exactly when my father was infected with HIV, Hepatitis C (Non-A Non-B [NANB] Hepatitis) or Hepatitis B.
12. In 1986 he became aware of the HIV and Hepatitis C viral transmission. I believe that my father was given this news by his treating physician at the Churchill Hospital and I believe that my mother and father were given

sufficient information to allow them to manage and understand my father's infections. This news was a devastating blow and one that caused him to take early retirement and move with my mother back to South Wales to enjoy what he realised would be his final days.

13. I am unsure as to how or when my father was told about his Hepatitis B infection.

14. Upon his return to South Wales, he became a patient of Dr H Dasani at the University Hospital of Wales.

15. After narrowly avoiding passing away around Christmas 1990, he eventually died on 2nd March 1992 at the Heath University Hospital in Cardiff.

Section 3. Other Infections

16. As far as I am aware my father was not exposed to any other infections such as vCJD.

Section 4. Consent

17. I do not think that my father was tested, treated or used for the purposes of research without his knowledge and therefore without his consent.

Section 5. Impact

18. My father suffered an impossible journey. The mental effects of being infected with HIV in the late 1980s are hard to describe. My father had been plagued with a genetic condition since birth and had missed many days of school due to being bedbound with his swollen joint elevated. However, my father had risen to these and to many other challenges and emerged the other end. To then be diagnosed with a terminal illness at the age 46 was devastating.

19. Furthermore, the stigma attached to HIV at that time (in that most of those infected appeared to be homosexuals and drug addicts) meant that my father (and the family) had to suffer in silence. The worst thing was that he had been avoidably infected by the very medical treatment that was supposed to enable him to live a "*normal*" life.
20. He underwent a number of medical interventions arising from his compromised immune system.
21. He was also taking AZT in the latter stages of his life until his death in 1992. This treatment gave him bouts of nausea and diarrhoea and he often lost his appetite.
22. When facing such uncertainty as HIV treatment provided then, life becomes very short term but was also compounded by having an illness that can be contagious especially during those ill-informed times.
23. My father would rarely leave the house in his later days and became something of a recluse after his diagnosis. Sadly, he was quite a gregarious and outgoing man in his earlier years and had many friends, but this changed almost overnight. Embarrassment and shame would be the two words to describe how he felt but my father should never have had to experience either.
24. It is hard to put into words how it feels when your father is diagnosed with a terminal illness. Many go through the trauma of cancer affecting them or their loved ones and that doesn't seem fair. That feeling of "*unfairness*" is even greater when that illness has been caused by others.
25. The impact was profound and has been so at every family milestone that my father missed since his death.
26. I was aged 17 when my father was diagnosed. I was studying for my A Levels and had University and all of life's trials and tribulations ahead of me. I

realised that he wouldn't be there for most of that. Gladly he survived his close call in late 1990 to be there for my University graduation in June 1991. I am quite sure he didn't expect that he'd make that himself.

27. I do recall one time when I was driving home from University to stay with my parents in 1989 and as I neared their home, I noticed that someone had spray painted words on a road sign. They read "*Evans has AIDS*". I doubt that these words referred to my father but I stopped and did what I could to scrub them off. Luckily, I managed to make it unreadable but it was a stark indication of the attitude towards the disease in 1989 and an occurrence that that I could not share with my family

28. My father took early retirement soon after his diagnosis. I think he wanted to return to South Wales and ensure that my mother would be set up in her old age. Clearly him stopping work had a financial impact upon the family.

29. I completed my A Levels and University degree between the time of my father's diagnosis and death. I passed both but I probably should have done better. It is hard to tell what impact my father's diagnosis and death had on these results but the answer is I'll never know and frankly I don't care now!

30. Since then, I got married and have two boys of my own; neither of these experiences could be enjoyed by my father. My career has had mostly ups (with some downs) and I know that my father would have been an excellent counsellor to me if he was still here.

Section 6. Treatment/care/support

31. As far as I am aware my father's infected status did not impact upon either his medical or dental treatments.

32. I don't think my father was offered any counselling or psychological support.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

33. Neither my father nor any of our family received any financial assistance from any of the Trusts.

Section 8. Other Issues

34. I would like this Inquiry to establish the truth and provide some long overdue answers.

Anonymity

35. I do not want to apply for anonymity and I don't 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

Dated.....

12th JULY 2019