

Witness Name: HELEN BRADSHAW

Statement No: WITN3510001

Exhibits: 0

Dated: APRIL 2020

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF HELEN BRADSHAW

I, HELEN BRADSHAW, will say as follows:-

Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is Helen Bradshaw. I was born on GRO-C 1975 and I live at GRO-C Nottinghamshire GRO-C.
2. My father, Alan Garner (born on GRO-C 1941), is infected with the Hepatitis C Virus (HCV) from contaminated Factor VIII (FVIII) concentrate.
3. This witness statement has been prepared without the benefit of access to my father's full medical records.

Section 2. How Affected

4. My father has mild haemophilia A with a clotting factor of 25% at the time of infection. Clotting levels can increase over time and his levels are now in the low normal range.

5. My father was treated at the Sheffield Haemophilia Centre at the Royal Hallamshire Hospital, Sheffield under the care of Professor Preston and Professor Makris (Professor Makris exclusively from the 1980s when Professor Preston retired).
6. As a mild haemophiliac my father had very little (hardly any) treatment. He had cryoprecipitate at Sheffield and a dose of the FVIII product BPL on just one occasion at the Queens Medical Centre (QMC), Nottingham in 1979. On that occasion the ambulance was diverted from Sheffield to Nottingham after an accident wherein he had put his hand through a caravan window. It was never confirmed but it is his belief that he became infected from the BPL treatment that he had in 1979 at QMC.
7. My father was informed by Professor Makris in or around 1988 that he was infected with HCV from FVIII.

Section 3. Other Infections

8. I do not believe that my father received any other infections besides HCV.

Section 4. Consent

9. My father was not told that he was being tested for HCV.

Section 5. Impact of the Infection

10. Being told your father has got a potentially terminal illness at the age of 15 was pretty hard to swallow. It was the unknown of it all that was the hardest bit for me. I just didn't understand what this meant for him and our family. This was at a time when I was about to embark on my A-levels and, on reflection, the emotional side of it did impact me much more than I realised at the time and I went through quite a difficult period.

11. I really think that it hit my mum the hardest of us all. She would often break down in tears and would close down and not want to talk to us about it. My grandmother had come to live with us and my mum was faced with the prospect of having to raise two children and look after my grandmother on her own. I am sure the lack of information about what might happen had the biggest impact on her. She needed support and didn't get it from anyone. Looking back now I think she was **GRO-C** and with no one to talk to about it. She has had no one to talk to about it for the last 30 years.

12. My mum actually **GRO-C** and ended up leaving work prematurely. She has lived a life of concern about their financial situation and understandably worried about my dad and the family. I also remember my mum having **GRO-C** in the late 1990s which I am sure was **GRO-C**.

13. My mum and dad struggled to openly talk about their feelings to each other and kept their worries and concerns to themselves. I am sure this was driven by the lack of information given to them and the nervousness of talking about the unknown. This did not help my mother's state of mind. I feel frustrated that my mother, in particular, was not supported more. On the other hand, my father always praised the work of the individuals at Sheffield Hallamshire Hospital and the emotional support he had from the team there.

14. My father was great at explaining things to us in layman's terms and keeping us informed of what he was going through. He was so brave but I felt he lacked the right information and has been incredibly let down by the NHS. As my brother and I grew up, my dad went through numerous treatments in an attempt to clear HCV. You could see the physical and mental impact that the treatment had on him despite him trying to keep positive. I saw my father drained and lacking in energy. There were occasions when I heard his pain as he was continually injecting himself with the drugs. On several occasions he nearly gave up saying 'what's the point!' The last lot of drugs were the

worst and you could see him struggling on a day to day basis. It was heart-breaking to see.

15. During the early detection of the illness my father was visibly weaker and lacking in energy. When he was given the opportunity to take early retirement from work he took it. He had always been a good planner financially but his early retirement was unplanned and meant he made lots of personal sacrifices. It was clearly a worry to him. He had two children that he was adamant to send to university and support throughout their university years.

16. I am 100% convinced that what kept my dad stronger over the years was his own reading and research into natural and herbal remedies. He would eat all the super foods relating to the health of your liver. He has taken thousands of pounds worth of supplements over the years to include Milk Thistle and just about every new health supplement relating to liver health. We would laugh that he could rattle with the amount of tablets inside him. He also moderated his drinking massively (not that he was ever a big drinker). He would drink just 2 or 3 small glasses of wine at the most when he occasionally had a drink and always ensured he had at least 3 or 4 days without wine (which was something he loved).

17. The other element of worry to me was whether my father could pass HCV on to any of his immediate family members and then in later years to my children (his grandchildren). It was never made clear about how the disease could be passed on or what precautionary measures we should and could take as a family. This has always played on my mind yet none of the family were offered advice or offered testing. I half expected that HCV would be detected during the tests I had whilst pregnant (so it has clearly played on my mind during the years).

Section 6. Treatment/care/support

18. For me, the lack of support for our family (especially my mum) was unacceptable. I feel that we have all been let down in terms of our health and our (financial and psychological) quality of life. It was bad enough being given infected blood but the total lack of support is unacceptable.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

19. I am unable to comment on the financial assistance my father has received through the various Trusts and Funds set up to distribute payments. As stated, having HCV has seriously impacted my father's financial situation as it was instrumental in him retiring early.

Section 8. Other Issues

20. There are no other issues.

Anonymity, disclosure and redaction

21. I have no concerns with regard to anonymity and I understand this statement will be published and disclosed as part of the Inquiry. I do not wish to give oral evidence.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed .. GRO-C

Dated ... **25TH MAY 2020**