

Witness Name: CLAUDIA LOUISE TANNER

Statement No: WITN3266001

Exhibits: 0

Dated: OCTOBER 2019

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF CLAUDIA LOUISE TANNER

I, CLAUDIA LOUISE TANNER, will say as follows:-

Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is Claudia Louise Tanner. I was born on **GRO-C** 1980 and I live at **GRO-C**
2. My mother, Marian Catherine Tanner (born on **GRO-C** 1954), was infected with the Hepatitis Virus from a transfusion with contaminated blood. She died from breast cancer on 16th August 1998, aged 44
3. This witness statement has been prepared without the benefit of access to my mother's medical records.

Section 2. How Affected

4. My mother (mum) had an accident in the mid 1980s. She fell through some patio doors and sustained serious injuries to include severing a tendon in her arm. During the subsequent operation to fix the tendon she was given a blood transfusion. I do not know the name of the hospital but it would have been a hospital in or close to the City of Liverpool.

5. I was very young at that time, possibly just 5 or 6 years old but I remember my mum's arm being heavily bandaged. I also recall my mum being wheelchair bound shortly after the operation and being jaundiced. She was very yellow in colour.
6. I was brought up in a household of three. I lived with my mother and grandmother (nan). When I was much older my mum (and nan) told me that mum had been very ill with hepatitis shortly after the operation and the blood transfusion. They suspected the blood transfusion to be the source of contamination and my mum had in fact gone to see a solicitor about it at that time. My mum was straight laced. She didn't take drugs and she had just one boyfriend (for a relatively short period of time) in 18 years.
7. I do not know whether or not the hepatitis cleared itself because I don't remember it being talked about as an ongoing issue.

Section 3. Other Infections

8. I do not know whether the hepatitis virus mum had was the Hepatitis B Virus or the Hepatitis C Virus. I do not think that mum was infected with any other virus than hepatitis.

Section 4. Consent

9. I do not know if mum consented to the blood transfusion. I do not believe that she was warned of the risk of being exposed to infection from the transfusion. She was upset that she had been infected with hepatitis and went to see a solicitor. I do not think that anything came of that.

Section 5. Impact of the Infection

10. In or around 1988 mum was diagnosed with breast cancer. She battled with cancer for around 10 years before her death. When she died the cancer had spread to her liver and lungs.

11. My mum became a different person after contracting hepatitis and then breast cancer. She lost her confidence. She struggled to work and despite her best efforts (to include her endeavours to train as a drama teacher), the cancer diagnosis in particular knocked her out of the employment market. She was dipping in and out of employment and trying to be a drama teacher but she always ended up being back on benefits. She then became reliant upon welfare benefits.

12. My mum suffered physically and psychologically. She suffered with anxiety and panic attacks and became agoraphobic. My mum had a dark cloud hanging over her from when I was about 8 years old. Before that she was fit and healthy, she worked and was always out and about. I do not believe that she made the correlation between hepatitis and cancer and her life just went off the rails.

13. I lost my mum at the age of 18. I don't have much family and losing your mum is devastating. I had a lot of anxiety myself from 8 to 18 years old because it was hanging over me that my mum was going to be taken away from me. When I lost her I had no idea there could be a connection between the hepatitis and cancer. I am a journalist and have recently researched it.

14. It is devastating to think that my mum was made ill from blood not being checked for viruses during an operation that was intended to make her well after a nasty fall. Hepatitis played a role in her death and stole years from her life.

Section 6. Treatment/care/support

15. Mum was never offered counselling in relation to the hepatitis infection.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

16. Mum did not claim financial assistance through the Skipton Fund.

Section 8. Other Issues

17. There are no other issues.

Anonymity, disclosure and redaction

18. I am not seeking anonymity and I understand this statement will be published and disclosed as part of the Inquiry.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed.....

GRO-C

Dated

20.01.2020