

Witness Name: Stuart James Cantrill

Statement No: WITN3369001

Exhibits: WITN3369002-006

Dated: November 2019

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF STUART JAMES CANTRILL

I, Stuart James Cantrill, will say as follows:-

Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is Stuart James Cantrill. I was born on [GRO-C] 1974. My address is known to the Inquiry. I have been married for just over 10 years now. My wife, Vikki and I have a daughter, [GRO-C] who is 9 years old.
2. I am currently working as the Chief Editor of the scientific journal; 'Nature Chemistry' which launched in 2009. I started working there in 2008, but have worked in scientific publishing since 2003.
3. I make this statement on behalf of my father, Barrie Cantrill. He was born on [GRO-C] [GRO-C] 1941 and died on 26 August 1989 aged 48 as a result of AIDS. His death certificate is exhibited at '**WITN3369002**'.
4. 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 infected

5. My father was diagnosed with severe Haemophilia A, but I am not sure when he was made aware of his condition.
6. I was an only child and as I was growing up I was aware that my father was a haemophiliac. He always seemed to have aches and pains in his joints, as well as frequent swelling from, presumably, internal bleeding. He often had nose bleeds which would take a very long time to stop and I remember many of these incidents. Because even a minor injury could be quite serious we treated him as though he was wrapped up in cotton wool.
7. I didn't have a typical childhood. I remember my father going through a number of operations including one in which he had his teeth extracted. As well as his haemophilia, my father also suffered from pilonidal cysts located at the top of the cleft of his buttocks. These cysts would occasionally make it painful for him to sit down and they would also bleed. He was offered an operation for it and had to weigh up whether to proceed knowing that there would be complications because of his haemophilia. He knew he would have an open wound which would bleed for a while, but finally decided to have the operation in 1982. When he came home from hospital, he was lying in bed for weeks and a nurse would have to come home to change his dressings.
8. My father had four brothers and a sister. Including my father, three of the boys were haemophiliacs. I was quite close to some of my uncles; they didn't live far away and so I used to visit them regularly as a child. One of the haemophiliac brothers died relatively recently (in 2013), but the other haemophiliac brother died in 1993 from liver cancer, which may have possibly been as a result of hepatitis C. My father's sister died when she was less than three months old, from causes that I am not aware of.
9. My father grew up in a fairly rural community in the countryside; I'm pretty sure when he was growing up the toilet was an outhouse in the garden. I didn't know my paternal grandmother because she died in 1962 (12 years

before I was born). My paternal grandfather died when I was 11 years old in 1985.

10. Due to his haemophilia, my father was given Factor VIII concentrates (FVIII) as well as numerous blood transfusions. The records suggest that he was first given FVIII concentrate in October 1982, as exhibited by the medical report; **WITN3369003**. I do not know which blood products caused his infection.

11. As a result of the blood products that my father was given, he was infected with HIV. He had his test on 12 December 1985 and was told that he tested positive on 25 January 1986. I believe the HIV developed into AIDS in or about December 1987.

12. My father was also diagnosed with Non A Non B Hepatitis (NANB) in January 1989.

13. I believe my father was infected at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham (QEH) where he was mainly treated. I do not know who his treating consultant was but the medical report prepared for the 1991 litigation was signed by a Dr T.M Tilsley.

14. I do not know whether my father was provided with any information or advice beforehand about the risk of being exposed to infections from the blood products he was treated with.

15. It was only about six weeks before my father died that my mother actually told me what he was dying of, although I did suspect it for a while due to the media coverage about AIDS. I was a fairly bright child and I put two and two together, but it wasn't until I was actually told that my father had AIDS that it all hit me.

16. I do not know what information was provided to my father about the infections.

17. I became increasingly aware of the issues surrounding the infection of haemophiliacs with HIV when I first went to university in the early 1990s and

with the Internet becoming more widely available at that time I was able to track down information more easily. I have also discovered a lot about my father's case from reviewing the paperwork that my mother had kept.

Section 3. Other Infections

18. My father was also diagnosed with Non A Non B Hepatitis (NANB) in January 1989.

Section 4. Consent

19. I do not believe that my father was treated or tested without his knowledge, or consent.

20. I do not know whether my father was given adequate or full information. He never attended school, because of his haemophilia, so I don't know whether he would have understood the information that he was being provided, if it was provided in the first place.

21. I do not think my father was treated and tested on for the purposes of research.

Section 5. Impact of the Infection

22. I do not know what mental effects my father suffered as my parents kept a lot hidden from me in order to try and protect me.

23. My father suffered greatly from the physical effects of the infections. He was taken to hospital in December 1987 with pneumonia. It was unusual for a man in his forties to have pneumonia. I believe it was around this time that the HIV must have developed into AIDS. My father became very thin, gaunt and lean. Towards the end of his life, he became almost skeletal. He also suffered from gastrointestinal bleeds.

24. I had always known my father was on medication, but I didn't know what it was for. My parents wanted to protect me from what was going on and so they used to remove the labels from the medication. However, at some point I did become aware that he was on AZT, but I cannot recall if this was before or after I was actually told by my mother what was happening.

25. I saw my father deteriorate during the 1980s. His last birthday was on GRO-C 1989, and a day after his birthday he fell at home and fractured his hip. He was taken to hospital and he never came out after that.

26. We lived in Staffordshire and he was taken to a hospital in central Birmingham (not QEH). We didn't have a car as my parents were on benefits and they couldn't afford it, but there was an organisation that helped take my father to hospital. He was kept in hospital for six weeks. My mother went to the hospital everyday which was a good 20 miles from home. I didn't go to visit my father everyday and this is something I now regret.

27. In the last week or so of his life, my father was taken to QEH. About two days before he died, his consultant took my mother and I into a room to say that my father was dying. We knew it was happening even before we were told.

28. He was in the same private room for the last two days and became unresponsive. I don't think he knew we were there. I watched my father die and it was excruciating to watch. When he died his mouth was wide open and it looked like a long silent scream (that's how I remember it). You often hear people say that someone died peacefully; this was the opposite of that, my father looked like he was in agony. I remember that day perfectly; what it looked like and what it felt like. I was only 15 years old. There was no real sort of goodbye.

29. I was heavily impacted by my father's diagnosis and subsequent death. I remember the first time my mother told me about my father having AIDS; I ran upstairs and was physically sick knowing that my father was going to die soon. I couldn't quite grasp what was going on.

30. I was told to be careful, not to get close to my father and not to even kiss him on the cheek. It's still tough for me to talk about it now. What happened to my father has stuck with me and has been a major factor of my life. We didn't really talk about the fact that my father was dying but I remember my parents were worried about me and what would happen to me. I remember my father crying in the hospital and not knowing why. It was hard seeing a parent break down when I was only 15 years old. My parents were very keen to protect me and so did not tell me much. My relationship with my father didn't change, but in the last few weeks his condition deteriorated rapidly and he became less engaged and responsive.

31. I've done fairly well in life but what happened to my father destroyed my mother and my relationship with her completely changed. Whilst he was alive in 1987, my mother was sectioned for 28 days. She was terrified of what would happen and began to take antidepressants, which she continued to take for the rest of her life. She smoked and drank herself to death at the age of 58 in 2010.

32. My parents were married on 28th July 1973, when my mother was 21 and my father 32 years old. There was an 11 year age gap between my mother and father and when they married she was quite young. My mother left school as soon as it became an option and during my childhood I only remember her having part-time jobs such as a cleaner or barmaid.

33. She spent her life trying to cope with everything that happened and in the years after my father's death we were estranged for many of them. What happened to my father completely changed her and shattered our family life. An account from my mother has been exhibited at **WITN3369004**.

34. My father's diagnosis and death impacted me significantly. When I was younger, I was socially awkward and shy, but I did have a small number of close friends. After my father died, I was told to go play with my friends to distract me from what had happened.

35. My father didn't really have much of a social life. My parents just went to the working men's club and played bingo with a few friends, but did not take part in any big social activities. My father kept himself to himself. He never really had a large circle of friends. He didn't work either; he just mended people's clocks and watches.
36. There was huge stigma attached to HIV in the 1980s. There was a lot of ignorance related to how a person could be infected with HIV. Fortunately, the conversation never really cropped up with my friends about how my father died. I'm not sure everyone in our extended family knew the truth either.
37. My father had his fall on 9 July and died soon after in August. I was doing my GCSEs at the time and because he died during the six weeks school holiday, I went straight back to school in September. Everyone at school was made aware that my father had died, but I don't know if the school knew of the circumstances surrounding his death. I still did well in my GCSEs. I have always been a relatively bright student, but with my father not being around anymore I felt compelled to study and do really well for him.
38. I went on to study at the University of Birmingham and obtained a chemistry degree in 1996 with first class honours. I chose to go into science because I wanted to better understand how the world worked and learn more about what my father had faced. I started my PHD at Birmingham in 1996 but the person I was working for relocated to Los Angeles in California and so I moved there in July 1997. I completed my PHD in 2001 and remained in America until the end of 2005.
39. Growing up, my family suffered financially as my father was unable to work. He just mended other people's watches and clocks for some cash in hand. When it came to Christmas, my parents relied on money from my grandfather (paternal) to buy presents for me. In the last few years of my father's life, my mother was caring for him. She worked as barmaid at some point and then as a checkout assistant and a cleaner. We lived on benefits in a council house, but struggled greatly.

Section 6. Treatment/care/support

40. I was never offered counselling or psychological support. I got on with my life but what happened will always be there.

41. I do believe if support were offered that it would have benefited me at the time. I felt a great sense of injustice that I had lost my father at 15 - and I was not offered any help to work my way through it. I do not think it even occurred to my mother that I would have wanted to talk about it with someone.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

42. My mother received weekly payments of £20.00 from the Macfarlane Trust in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Letters from the Macfarlane Trust have been exhibited; **WITN3369005**.

43. My mother also received a special payment of £60,500 of which £16,250 was allocated to me as a dependent. These payments were made after my father died.

44. I do not know if my mother received any other payments.

45. I do not remember the ins and outs of the application processes.

46. With the money that my mother received, she bought the council house that we lived in.

47. My mother was involved in the litigation in 1991 with McGrath & Co Solicitors. Correspondence detailing their financial assessment of our case has been exhibited as per **WITN3369006**.

Section 8. Other Issues

48. My mother was lucky that the infection was not passed on to her although the whole experience had a profound impact on her life – she suffered from mental health problems and struggled to look after herself after my father died. She died when she was only 58 years old in 2010.

49. A clear and full account of how this wider tragedy occurred should be made public. Individuals who made decisions that ultimately led to the infection of haemophiliacs should be held accountable.

50. This whole process is taking too long; people are still dying.

51. I would like closure. Someone should stand up and say sorry for what happened.

Anonymity

52. I do not wish to remain anonymous.

53. I wish to provide oral evidence to the Inquiry.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed.....

GRO-C

Dated.....

20/12/19