

Witness Name: Patrick Harold Campbell

Baxter

Statement No.: WITN3500001

Exhibits: **None**

Dated:

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF PATRICK HAROLD CAMPBELL BAXTER

I provide this statement in response to a request under Rule 9 of the Inquiry Rules 2006 dated 15 August 2019.

I, Patrick Harold Campbell Baxter, will say as follows: -

Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is Patrick Harold Campbell Baxter. My date of birth is GRO-C 1945 and I live in London. My full address is known to the Inquiry. I am retired, having previously worked as a Purser. I am currently in a relationship, and I have one child from my previous marriage.
2. I intend to speak about my infection with Hepatitis C. In particular, the nature of my illness, how the illness affected me, the treatment received and the impact it had on my life.
3. I can confirm that I have chosen not to have a legal representative and that I am happy to provide the Inquiry team with a written statement.

Section 2. How Infected

4. In the late 1980s, I was involved in a car accident and was taken to Mayday Hospital in Croydon. The diagnosis was that I had just cracked a couple of ribs and after a couple of days they let me go.
5. I got home and steadily throughout the week I felt more and more ill. My colour started to change and I went totally yellow. I had agonising pain and was at the verge of collapse, so I tried to get a taxi to hospital but none stopped because they thought I was drunk. I was in such pain the sweat was running down my chin in a stream like a running tap.
6. I went to Whittington Hospital in Magdala Road, London. At the hospital, I was seen immediately and it turned out that I had torn my liver off. I had to have an operation to sort that out; it was a heavy operation and I was bound to have a blood transfusion during it. I think that was when I contracted Hepatitis C, I couldn't think of any other way I could have contracted it. I did have a hip replacement but I think this was after they found the blood they had was infected, so it was probably this first operation that infected me.
7. I was in hospital for about a couple of weeks afterwards. I have no idea how much blood I was given, and I wouldn't have asked because I wouldn't have suspected there to be any problem. I didn't have anyone else with me when I had the operation, and nothing was ever said to me about the blood transfusion; I wasn't informed of any risks of transfusion.
8. More than a couple of years ago, I had a small prostate operation at the Whittington Hospital. This was when I first knew of my infection with Hepatitis C. The Urology Consultant asked me what was being done about my Hepatitis C and my first response was, "What Hepatitis C?" It was a complete surprise to me because I didn't know anything about it, nobody had told me anything about that. The Consultant got this information from the notes he had. At the time, I didn't ask to see those

notes. I would have thought if that came up from a blood test someone would have written to me about it. Nothing else was said by the Consultant to me about the Hepatitis. I cannot remember the Consultant's name.

9. I was then referred back to my GP. I made the appointment with my GP and managed to see him fairly quickly because at the time, my flat was opposite the surgery. After the appointment, he referred me to the Hepatology Unit at the Royal Free Hospital. The GP didn't really tell me anything about Hepatitis C. I don't think there was anything they suspected because I was in a stable relationship at the time.

10. It took a fair while for the appointment to come through at the Royal Free Hospital after the referral from the GP. When the Hepatologist saw me and realised that I had other health issues coming up, they decided not to do anything until that was all sorted out - they seemed quite disinterested. This was due to other health issues which I had. I don't ever recall them telling me how to manage the infection, they basically said, "We don't want to give any other treatment until you've sorted out your other issues".

11. I had to find out myself how to manage the Hepatitis as I don't recall anybody giving me any advice. I have looked it up online as well as several medical books.

Section 3. Other Infections

12. As far as I know, I have not been infected by anything else as a result of the blood transfusion.

Section 4. Consent

13. As far as I know, no one has asked for my consent to be tested for Hepatitis C before I found out that I had it. I consented to the Hepatitis

treatment which I started last year. Otherwise, I am not aware of any other testing or treatment done without my consent.

Section 5. Impact

14. The physical effects of my infection started a few years ago. The one thing I seemed to lack was energy. I used to get really achy muscles and I didn't know the reason why. Also, quite often in the morning I would feel nauseous and would have to lie down for 10 minutes, otherwise I would pass over. However, this did not happen all the time. Sometimes I would go for several days where I would be alright, and then a couple of days where I would get nauseous. Apart from that I didn't feel too bad, I just thought that I was tired.
15. I don't think I felt any mental effects - no one told me they thought I was going bonkers or anything.
16. I have not suffered from further medical complications or conditions as a result of the infection, or there are none that I am aware of.
17. I started treatment for Hepatitis C around the middle of last year - 2018 - when the doctors decided that I was healthy enough. I was initially at the Royal Free and then later at University College Hospital in London ('UCH'). I was given a new treatment which I seemed to have responded to quite well. It was just as well they waited because the old treatment was pretty harrowing, it was the same treatment they used for HIV; apparently, that could have seen me off. The treatment I had was a course of tablets (I cannot remember the name) which lasted about 6 weeks. I did not have any side effects to the treatment.
18. Since I had the treatment my energy has come back, even if I still struggle with my mobility due to other health issues. My appetite improved a little after the treatment. They seem to think I am clear now but I still need to be monitored. The Hepatitis C doctor said he would

arrange an ultrasound for me and I might have to go for another ultrasound every 6 months or so just to keep an eye on my liver.

19. I did have a letter recently saying that my liver was close to cirrhosis but it seemed to have improved because the Hepatitis C cleared up from the treatment. The cirrhosis was certainly not because of alcohol because I haven't had a drink for 30 years – the last drink I had was in 1985, apart from Christmas when I had a bottle of fruit cider. I am not aware of any side effects or complications from the treatment.

20. I did not have any difficulty in accessing treatment for the Hepatitis after my other health issues were sorted out.

21. I have told medical professionals who have been in contact with my blood that I have got Hepatitis C, and there has been no negative impact on my treatment for any other conditions due to my infection. Otherwise, the only negative thing from this is it has made me start smoking again.

22. I have told my friends and family that I have Hepatitis C. Their reaction was more disgust that I wasn't told about it. My partner is not particularly bothered about it.

23. There has been no impact on me due to the stigma connected with Hepatitis C.

24. There was no impact on my education or my work. In terms of the financial impact, it is hard to say if there was any, possibly not.

Section 6. Treatment/Care/Support

25. No one ever offered me any counselling or psychological support.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

26. I am not aware of what or how much financial assistance is available for Hepatitis. The Hepatitis doctor in UCH, which I was referred to, told me there was compensation available and that he could be contacted if I wanted any information, but he didn't tell me specifically what schemes were available. He offered to help but that's it.

27. I applied for my medical records around 6 weeks ago from Whittington Hospital through the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS). I have now received a response by email, which contains a link to my medical records. I am going to ask my Partner to help me access the records on a computer.

28. The Inquiry team have made me aware of the England Infected Blood Support Scheme (EIBSS), which I will look into after I access my medical records.

Section 8. Other Issues

29. I haven't been involved in any litigation.

30. The only concern I have is why I wasn't told. I can only say that it was an oversight that they did not tell me earlier. I would think that if you had a hospital appointment, my GP should have been informed if any blood tests came back.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed GRO-C

Dated 6/12/19