

Witness Name: Beryl Partington

Statement No.: WITN3545001

Exhibits: None

Dated: 26<sup>th</sup> March 2021

## INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

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### WRITTEN STATEMENT OF BERYL PARTINGTON

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I, **Beryl Partington**, will say as follows:

#### Section 1: Introduction

1. My name is Beryl Partington. My date of birth is  1946 and my address is .
2. I make this statement as the mother of Nicholas Michael Anderton who was born on  1970 and passed away on 10 November 2012 at the age of 42.

#### Section 2: How Affected

3. Nick was poorly from the day he was born. In those days, the tests used to diagnose all blood disorders were not as developed as they are today and he was 17 months old before he was diagnosed with Von Willebrand's disease at the Royal Manchester Children's Hospital which was then at Pendlebury.
4. When Nick was four years old, he become extremely poorly with internal bleeding which he needed treatment for and was given blood clotting Factor VIII. At this time, he was under the care of Dr D I K Evans at the Royal

Manchester Children's Hospital and at times Nick was in so much pain he could not even tolerate a bed sheet over him.

5. During the time that Nick was being treated with Factor VIII, I was never told about the risk of infection and I would like to point out that 70% of the children treated at this hospital were infected.

#### *HIV infection*

6. To my total and utter devastation, in September 1985, I received a letter in a brown envelope sent by 2<sup>nd</sup> class mail from the Children's Hospital informing me that my son had been infected with HIV and that he had apparently been infected in 1982 but it was not diagnosed at that stage. Dr Evans mentioned to me that they were not overly concerned when testing for HIV began as he did not think it would affect Nicholas and I did not understand at that time the enormity of the situation.
7. My world fell apart. Can you imagine the task of telling your son at 15 years of age that he had been given a death sentence?
8. Nick learned to live with his HIV infection over the years but the stigma attached to it meant that he nor I could tell people what we were having to cope with.
9. At the age of 26, we very nearly lost Nick as, of course by now, his HIV infection had developed in to full blown AIDS. He was under the care of Professor Charles Hay at Manchester Royal Infirmary, a wonderful and devoted man to his patients and who Nick had so much faith and confidence in. By some miracle, Dr Hay put him on a new cocktail of drugs and gave us back our precious son for another 16 years.

### **Section 3: Other infections**

10. Nick was also diagnosed with Hepatitis C (and with Lupus which is an auto-immune disorder) and was extremely ill. To the best of my knowledge, Nick was told by Professor Hay at Manchester Royal Infirmary that he was Hepatitis C positive - Nick relayed that information to me.

### **Section 4: Consent**

11. When Nick was being treated at the Children's Hospital at Pendlebury, I was not asked for my consent in relation to him being tested for HIV or any other infections. Nick was transferred to the Manchester Royal Infirmary at the age of 19 and so from that point, he was able to provide consent for himself.

### **Section 5: Impact**

#### *Mental and physical effects of being infected with HIV and Hepatitis C on Nick*

12. Nick spent many weeks in hospital at regular intervals and became very depressed and tearful at the time. This broke my heart seeing my wonderful son fading away before my eyes and I felt so helpless.
13. Nick was admitted to hospital 10 days prior to him passing away as he had collapsed in the bathroom, he could not even brush his own teeth. On the morning <sup>before</sup> he passed away, he was given a shunt in his liver as a last attempt to drain away the fluid which had accumulated in his body and I held his hand as he was taken down for the operation. This procedure worked for about 2 hours but then he became extremely ill and went into a coma and passed away at 7.45am the following morning.

### *Impact of Nick being infected with HIV and Hepatitis C on private and family life*

14. I had already collapsed twice at the thought of losing my precious son who had been given this terrible disease through no fault of his own. Nothing will ever compare to the reality that he had lost his battle after such a long, brave fight.
15. Nick's brother Anthony who is two years and four months older than Nick will never come to terms with losing his beloved brother, they were so close and he misses him beyond words. I miss him every minute of every day, he was a beautiful person inside and out and was loved very dearly and was an inspiration to all who knew him. Our lives will never be the same as I looked after him for all of his 42 years, he never left home. There is a massive void that cannot be filled, he was the centre of our family.

### **Section 6: Treatment/Care/Support**

16. Nick was not offered counselling in relation to his diagnosis and neither were we offered this support as a family. However, Nick and I confided in Professor Hay who was extremely supportive and still is to this present day with myself.

### **Section 7: Financial Assistance**

17. Nick did get a small amount of compensation from the Government and we received a payment of £50,000 when he passed away but there is no amount of money that could ever compensate my family for the pain or suffering that Nick went through, both mentally and physically, during his life.

## **Section 8: Other issues**

18. I am sure this story will help the Inquiry to understand what this terrible, terrible thing has done to innocent children and adults who unfortunately needed the treatment to survive.
19. I hope that this Inquiry will result in the Government being held accountable for these terrible wrong doings. It should never have happened just to save money for the Government.
20. So many people have lost their lives through no fault of their own and so many families have been torn apart through losing their loved ones in the most tragic and unbearable way.
21. My beautiful son, Nick, will live in my heart forever, but I can never forgive the reason he lost his life. I just hope now, that the lessons have been learned and that the future generation of people with severe blood disorders can at last feel safe that their treatment will do them only good or not eventually kill them as it did my beloved son.
22. This statement has been given through many tears of immense sadness but also to get justice for my beloved son and all the other people who lost their lives in this heart breaking way.
23. I do not want my evidence to be anonymous. This is Nick's story and I, and his family, want the battle and the suffering which he endured to be acknowledged and I hope that my witness statement achieves this in some way.

24. I do not wish to provide oral evidence to the Inquiry.

**Statement of Truth**

Signed:

GRO-C

Beryl Partington

Dated:

26<sup>th</sup> March 2021