

Witness Name: DAVID EDWARDS

Statement No: WITN3888001

Exhibits: 0

Dated: JANUARY 2019

## INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

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### FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF DAVID EDWARDS

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I, David Edwards, will say as follows:-

#### Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is David Edwards. I was born on the **GRO-C** 1971 and I live at **GRO-C** Lancashire **GRO-C**
2. My father, Jack Edwards (born on **GRO-C** 1938), was co-infected with the Hepatitis C Virus (HCV) and the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) from contaminated Factor VIII (FVIII) products. He died from liver failure on 5<sup>th</sup> September 1985, aged 47.
3. My mother and sister have given their own statements to the Inquiry (witness numbers WITN2683001 and WITN0509001 respectively).
4. This witness statement has been prepared without the benefit of access to my father's full medical records.

## **Section 2. How Affected**

5. My father had severe Haemophilia A. He was treated at the Leeds Haemophilia Centre at the St James University Hospital (SJUH) under the care of Dr Swinburne.
6. My father was treated with FVIII supplied from the Armour Pharmaceutical Company. He was infected with HCV and HIV some time between the mid 1970s and the mid 1980s. I believe that he was infected with HCV first.
7. I was just 14 years old when my father died. My sister was 12 years old. I was not aware that my father was dying and his death came as a shock to me. I left home when I went to University at 18 years old. I was not told of the circumstances of my father's death until I was in my early twenties.
8. With the benefit of hindsight, I think I knew that my father had HIV but I was never told. My father spent a lot of time in hospital. He had cirrhosis of the liver and was admitted for liver biopsies and the like. He was always admitted on to Ward 34 (a general ward with four beds to a bay). He was always there and we knew the doctors and nurses quite well. When he was admitted near to the end of his life, he was placed in isolation on Ward 32. I remember there was a fuss with other patients remarking within earshot it was "disgusting" my father was present. A label stating 'AIDS Patient' had been placed by my father's bed, I believe. My father was tested for HIV without his knowledge and consent. He was HIV positive but he did not have AIDS.
9. I was told by my mother that she and my father were never formally sat down and informed that my father was infected with the viruses. The implications were not properly explained to them and consequently adequate and appropriate information and advice was not provided. My sister and I were completely unaware of the gravity of my father's situation and if our parents understood the gravity of the situation, they never let on to us.

10. It only came to light after my father's death that he had hepatitis. My mother initially thought that he had died from AIDS related diseases. My father's death certificate lists (a) liver failure, (b) hepatic cirrhosis, (c) chronic active hepatitis and (d) haemophilia.

11. My GRO-C and I were never tested to see if we too had been infected. My mother administered my father's FVIII injections to him when unwell, dealing with needles and syringes. It fills me with horror my mother was put in that situation, never being told that she was herself at risk of infection. I too (on occasion) used to mess about with my father's sharps needles.

### **Section 3. Other Infections**

12. I do not think that my father was infected with anything other than HCV and HIV.

### **Section 4. Consent**

13. My father was tested for HCV and HIV without his knowledge and consent.

### **Section 5. Impact of the Infection**

14. My father was a hard working man. He also enjoyed caravan holidays and spending time in his garden and tinkering with maintenance to his car. He found out he had HIV shortly before he died. He would have believed that the HIV was going to develop into AIDS and that his life span would be shorter. He handed his notice in at work just a few weeks before he died. It seemed like he was trying to get his ducks in a row. He planned to make some improvements to the house to include double glazing and central heating. He wanted what time he had left to be spent in warmth and comfort. He didn't see any of that. He was still employed and was off sick when he died.

15. I personally had no idea he was dying. He was in and out of hospital with increasing frequency but it became normal to us. It was part and parcel of

life. My sister and I had no idea of the gravity of what was going on as I never heard him complain once. As a teenager, I remember getting into trouble and scrapes. I feel guilty about the additional stress I created for my parents during an already difficult time.

16. My mother was always one to soldier on. She kept the circumstances of my father's death from us in order to protect us from it. The stigma surrounding HIV/AIDS was hysterical. It was through the roof at that time with people being driven out of their homes. Our education was a priority for our parents. My father died during my first week in high school. I had just one day off school and then went back. There was no counselling or help and support. I just had to get on with things.
17. HCV caused my father's death. HCV can now be cured but to be infected with HCV and HIV whilst being a hemophiliac left him no chance. It is hard to think about. I found out my father had HIV by accident after receiving the compensation monies in 1991. I have only ever told a few people who are close to me. It is just not something you want to talk about and you have to be mindful who you tell.
18. I have been deeply affected by my father's early death. I remember the fuss in the household with my mother trying to retrieve my father's belongings from the hospital (I believe his clothes and glasses were incinerated) and the manner in which my father had to be buried. I was a shy boy and had just started at a new school. My father's death put me back inside my own shell. A father is a very important figure to a boy. I was robbed of the opportunity of really getting to know my father and having an adult relationship with him. I might have turned out to be a completely different person had I not lost my father. It should never have happened.
19. My mother had a lot to contend with. Her mother-in-law did not believe she was good enough to look after my father. When he died, she had to bring us up alone with all the financial implications that brings. My father's death

affected her more than anything and I admire her enormously. Incidentally I am the spit of my father. I am almost identical to him by way of physical resemblance.

20. My father's mother died on the exact same day as my father which had another huge impact on our family with two funerals to arrange.

21. My sister is also deeply affected. She was a 'daddy's girl' and my father idolised her. They were very close. I left home when I started my university degree. My sister has never left home and now cares for our mother. The fact that she is in that position creates tension between us. I believe her life would have taken a different turn if we still had our father. GRO-C  
GRO-C I believe my father's infections to have clouded her outlook and deterred her from having a relationship and/or family of her own. She would have never wanted GRO-C experience what my father did.

#### **Section 6. Treatment/care/support**

22. I was not offered any counselling or psychological support after the death of my father.

#### **Section 7. Financial Assistance**

23. I cannot now recall what amount I received through the HIV litigation. It might have been £7,000.

#### **Section 8. Other Issues**

24. It has been awful to hear the accounts of those who have given oral evidence to the Inquiry. I still find it very hard to talk to people about what happened to my own father because of the stigma even though none of it was his fault.

The Inquiry has helped. You hear what every family affected has been through and the implications of it all and it breaks my heart.

**Anonymity**

25. I do not wish to remain anonymous. I do want to give oral evidence to the Inquiry.

**Statement of Truth**

**NOT**

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

Signed..

**GRO-C**

Dated ..... 29/09/20 .....