Witness Name: Andrew Davis
Statement No.: WITN4863001
Exhibits: **WITN4863002 - 008**
Dated: 29 April 2021

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF ANDREW PAUL DAVIS

I provide this statement in response to a request under Rule 9 of the Inquiry Rules 2006 dated 23 April 2021.

I, Andrew Davis, will say as follows: -

Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is Andrew Davis. My date of birth is GRO-C 1970 and my address is GRO-C Birmingham GRO-C I work as a crane operator for a large motor company and I live alone when I am not caring for my parents.

2. I intend to speak about my mother, Chrystine Evelyne Davis, who was infected with hepatitis C ('HCV'). In particular, the nature of her illness, how the illness affected her, the treatment received and the impact it had on her, me, my family and our lives together.

3. I am providing this statement on behalf of my mother as she is too nervous to provide a statement herself. She very rarely leaves the house

and is currently shielding from Covid-19. I have discussed everything within this statement with my Mum; she wouldn't let me leave the house unless she was happy with the contents of the notes I made prior to being interviewed.

Section 2. How Affected

4. My mother is Chrystine Evelyne Davis, born on GRO-C 1943. My father is Leslie Davis, also born in 1943. They met when they were each about 17/18 years old and married in 1964.

5. In 1965, my mother felt very ill so her father took her to A&E at East Birmingham Hospital, now known as Heartlands Hospital. Under examination the doctors found 'chocolate' cysts on her ovaries, so called due to their appearance. She underwent an operation to remove these cysts from her ovaries at East Birmingham Hospital which left her with a large scar.

6. Around 1968 or 1969, my mother and father decided that they wanted to start a family. Their efforts initially proved unsuccessful so they went to a fertility clinic at Birmingham General Hospital. Whilst under examination, the fertility consultant commented on the large scar that my mother had received during the operation to remove the chocolate cysts in 1965.

7. My mother recalls that the consultant stated that the scarring was horrendous and that he 'dreaded to think' what her insides looked like. The consultant asked my mother for the name of the surgeon who performed the operation on her ovaries as he wanted to report him. My mother was unable to remember his name, and still cannot recall now.

8. My mother became pregnant with me in 1969, and I was born on 6 June. 1970 at Marston Green Hospital. A few years later, in 1975, my mother was again admitted to Birmingham General Hospital with symptoms similar to a heart attack, including extreme chest pains. After examination my mother's gall bladder was removed.

9. Between 1975 and 1977, my mother had two miscarriages. This was obviously extremely stressful for her and she decided to give up trying to have any more children. I can recall spending a lot of time at my Nan's house as my mother underwent so many different types of operations and examinations at various clinics.

10. In October 1979, my mother was admitted to Solihull Hospital with severe menstrual problems. She underwent surgery and ultimately had a hysterectomy. This procedure exposed the damage caused during her 1965 operation. The surgeons then had to repair the damage caused to her insides during the 1965 procedure at Birmingham General Hospital. I have enclosed a letter dated 8 October 1979 as exhibit **WITN4863002** that shows my mother was discharged from East Birmingham Hospital after an abdominal hysterectomy operation.

11. My Mum remembers that when she woke up in the recovery room after this operation she overheard the doctors saying that she had 'overreacted' to something and that they had to take her off 'it', though she does not know what this meant. The next day she was told that, owing to the damage caused by the surgeon during her 1965 operation, the abdominal hysterectomy had been much more complex than anticipated and as a result of losing so much blood, she had received a blood transfusion during the course of the operation.

12. My mother has frequently referred to this story over the years, as the doctors who performed this operation in 1979 referred to the surgeon who performed the 1965 operation as a 'butcher'. The doctors in 1979 had opened up her insides and found it tangled and in a complete mess. They assumed that she had not had any children. When she told the doctors that she had a son, me, in 1970, they were staggered and said it was a miracle. I have mentioned that Mum did have 2 miscarriages after having me.

13. After this operation my mother remained reasonably healthy until 1985 when she was found to have high blood pressure. She was put on blood pressure tablets and was checked regularly to ensure that they were not harming her internal organs.

14. At around this time Mum was told that she had a high liver count but I don't think that she really understood because she did nothing about it. Mum's nature is that if she has a medical issue and feels like the NHS is dragging its feet, she will just go private. She has done this in the past but did not react on this occasion because she was told not to worry – the high reading would come down. There then followed nearly 20 years, before her diagnosis with HCV and subsequent liver examinations, during which my mother's liver was being attacked by the virus. This begs the question "why was this liver abnormality not investigated much sooner?"

15. These checks continued until 2003 when, after reviewing the test results, her GP said that they had found something that wasn't quite right with her liver. I believe that they said that my mother's 'liver levels' were exactly the same then (in 2003) as they were in 1985 and that it had gone on far too long.

16. Also, around this time my mother had a cyst on her breast removed following a routine scan. This caused her a great deal of anxiety as the initial attempt to remove the cyst failed. They had to use an even larger needle that finally worked but she was not kept informed by the doctors. They made it sound as though she had cancer and this caused her a great deal of anxiety when coupled with her poor general health and concerns about her liver.

17. During this period, between 2003 and 2005, my mother was seen by both her GP and a private consultant but they couldn't find anything wrong with her. She continued to experience pain and discomfort around her liver and stomach, and she generally felt unwell. When she subsequently saw Dr Mutimer, he told her that her liver would not be giving her those pains.

18. One evening, around this same period, Mum was feeling particularly ill and she asked me to take her to A&E. When we arrived she was in a lot of pain around her abdomen and stomach. She was put in a side room and assessed but the doctors could not identify the cause of her pains. She was put on painkillers before being given a number of blood tests by a trainee doctor. As the trainee doctor put the syringe in her arm, she accidentally left the valve open and this caused blood to spurt everywhere. My mother instantly passed out and she was kept in hospital for 5 days afterwards.

19. Around July 2005 my mother was seen by Dr Baharani, Consultant Nephrologist at Birmingham Heartlands Hospital. Dr Baharani wrote to my mother on 25 July 2005 (enclosed as exhibit **WITN4863003**) to confirm the results of her preliminary blood tests. Dr Baharani wrote that one test result suggested that my mother might have an infection in the liver. She advised that a repeat blood test should be undertaken to confirm this.

20. Dr Baharani told my mother and I that she specialised in kidney diseases and was by no means a liver expert. However, she could see that my mother was really unwell and she knew that by referring her back to my GP to be re-referred to a liver specialist would waste valuable time in diagnosing the cause of my mother's illness.

21. As a result, my mother was seen by a technician from Heartlands Hospital who attended Parkfield Medical Practice, where her GP is based. The technician came to take a further blood test. When my mother asked the technician what exactly he was testing for, the technician replied that he was testing for HCV. This was said more as a passing comment rather than a formal consultation.

22. On 22 August 2005 my mother attended a clinic with Dr Baharani at Heartlands Hospital. The following day, on 23 August 2005, Dr Baharani wrote to my mother to confirm that she had been diagnosed with HCV and that she was being referred to Queen Elizabeth Hospital Birmingham

(enclosed as exhibit **WITN4863004**). Also, within this letter Dr Baharani comments that my mother had a CT scan on her liver and this appeared unremarkable except for a few 'simple cysts' which were not of any concern. This comment in itself is remarkable given that my mother has been diagnosed with cirrhosis and has had an ominously high liver count for years. This may be because Dr Baharani was a kidney specialist not liver and I do not wish to criticise her because it was her who finally started getting things done, when no one else had. However, why was my mother referred to a kidney doctor in the first place.

23. I wish to emphasise that Dr Baharani was exceptionally helpful and caring to my mother. Without Dr Baharani's assistance, my mother's illness would have persisted even longer and I believe her diagnosis with HCV would have been delayed even further. Dr Baharani was very honest with us both. She was by no means an expert in hepatology though she still strived to identify the cause of my mother's liver difficulties despite her being a kidney specialist. I remember her promising that she would find out what was wrong with my Mum and she wrote down everything she could think of that could be wrong with her liver before requesting blood tests for all of these things. I am grateful for Dr Baharani for her professionalism and the care that she showed to my mother.

24. Soon after my mother's diagnosis, she received a letter offering an appointment with Dr Mutimer's liver outpatients clinic at Queen Elizabeth Hospital (enclosed as exhibit **WITN4863005**). My mother's handwriting on the same letters reads; '21 Sept Wed 4.00', which tends to indicates that my Mum contacted this number and made an appointment for 21 September 2005 at 4pm.

25. My Mum attended this appointment with my dad, at Queen Elizabeth Hospital where it was explained to her what HCV is and how they would proceed. I think that this was the first time that HCV was properly explained to my mother, other than what I had researched on the internet, though again I do not blame Dr Baharani, as it was not her area of expertise.

26. I remember being told afterwards, that Dr Mutimer asked my mother about any tattoos she may have, whether she had received medical treatment abroad or whether she had even taken intravenous drugs, all of which she had not. He also asked her whether she had received a blood transfusion at any time. I understand that mum said that she had, in 1979.

27. I also believe that Dr Mutimer advised my mother about infection management and control. I think that he said that she couldn't contract HCV from sexual intercourse, so I believe there was infection management advice given, though I cannot remember exactly what was advised.

28. My mother was offered treatment soon after this first appointment with Dr Mutimer. This was a 12 week course of interferon, injected once weekly, and another tablet, that I do not know the name of, taken daily. I believe that she started this course of treatment on 31 December 2005.

29. My mother initially started injecting 180mg of interferon once a week, which was done on a Monday. For the first three or four weeks I injected it for her but she soon got used to doing it herself. The interferon caused her to experience a number of severe side-effects including depression, mood swings, a sore throat, tongue swelling, a lost voice, vertigo as well as severe flu-like symptoms.

30. My Mum used to attend the liver outpatient clinic every fortnight for check-ups during her treatment. After the first check-up the doctors and nurse could see that the medication was having a severe impact on my Mum, so her dose of interferon was reduced from 180mg to 45mg. Also her check ups were changed to every week.

31. I can recall the staff at the liver outpatients clinic at Queen Elizabeth Hospital said that this medication was all new to them and they were learning about it all the time. They even said they didn't think that 45mg

would be effective and they had never known anyone else respond positively to a such a low dose of interferon.

32. After 6 weeks of the 12 weeks course my mother returned to the clinic for another check-up. She was still suffering from the same symptoms though she did her best to hide these as she wanted to complete the treatment. Although the staff at the clinic knew that she was suffering, my mum tried to make light of it as she wanted to clear the HCV and would not accept the doctors cancelling her course of treatment.

33. At the 6th weekly check-up, the doctors were shocked to find that the medication was effective in reducing my mother's viral load significantly. They were surprised that such a low dose, 45mg, of interferon would prove to be effective against the HCV. My mother's viral load had gone from a six figure number down to around 600 within 6 weeks.

34. At the same appointment, I can recall the doctors saying that the interferon was smashing my mother's immune system to bits. She used to catch everything and also had a serious urinary tract infection that caused her to pass dark red, almost black, blood. They said that she should be in hospital but it would be safer for her to stay at home where she was less likely to pick up an infection with her immune system being so poor.

35. After completing the 12 week course of treatment my mother was told that her HCV was undetectable. She asked when she would be discharged from the liver outpatient clinic and they said never. She has scans on her liver and blood tests every 6 months followed by a consultation at Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

36. As a result of contracting HCV, my mother has been left with cirrhosis of the liver. I do not know when she was formally diagnosed with cirrhosis but I would say it was probably from when she was diagnosed with HCV and had further tests. In July 2020, Mum had to go into hospital due to a separate issue that needed urgent attention. The reason is not relevant

here but in a subsequent letter from the hospital, following this admission, it mentions that Mum has cirrhosis due to her HCV, which it also states that she was 'cured' of. The letter is from Sally Bufton to Mum's GP Dr Budh-Raja and dated 4 August 2020. I exhibit this letter as **WITN4863008***, purely because it identifies my mother's cirrhosis and that it came from her HCV. My mother's scans have shown that she has severe scarring on her liver, which was described to her as being like an old piece of leather.

*The reason that this exhibit number is out of sequence is that I only found this letter last night after my interview with the Inquiry team and so it has had to be slotted in.

Section 3. Other Infections

37. I do not believe that my mother received any infections other than HCV as a result of receiving an infected blood transfusion.

Section 4. Consent

38. I do not believe that my mother was ever treated or tested without her consent.

Section 5. Impact

39. Bearing in mind that the time between Mum's HCV diagnosis and her being effectively cleared by the treatment, was only 7 or 8 months maximum, the impact of the HCV was minimal apart from the HCV treatment. Although she has been left with liver cirrhosis.

40. The greatest impact of my mother's infection with HCV was unquestionably the side-effects of the treatment she received. The interferon caused her a great deal of suffering and she was effectively bed-ridden for most of the week after taking each injection. By the time

she had started to feel a bit better, she had to take another injection that made her worse again.

41. My mother kept her infection within our close family. My parents have always kept things to themselves but they don't care what other people think about them. They chose to do so for personal reasons as opposed to the fear of any stigma associated with HCV.

42. For around 3 or 4 years prior to my mother's diagnosis and with the benefit of hindsight after she was diagnosed with HCV, I remember that she had a slightly yellow complexion.

43. On one occasion a while after Mum's treatment, an old friend of mine bumped into her in the supermarket and remarked to me how much better she looked and she did. This friend did not know anything about my mother's illness or her treatment.

44. I have cared for my parents for a number of years as their only child. My mother has been ill since 2003 and my father has had a stroke, which has paralysed the left side of his body, including arm and leg. I live with my parents for most of the week whilst balancing my work obligations. I currently just go home for a shower or to collect things, clothing etc.

Section 6. Treatment/Care/Support

45. I do not believe that my mother experienced any difficulties in obtaining treatment, care or support in consequence of her infection with HCV. This also applies to dental treatment she has received. I am aware that she has to record that she was previously infected with HCV on the questionnaire when she attends the dentist, even though she is clear of HCV.

46. I do not believe that my mother was offered counselling or psychological support in respect of her infection with HCV. I do not think that she would

have taken it. However, I think that if she asked for it at Queen Elizabeth, she would have got it.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

47. Dr Mutimer informed my mother and I about the Skipton Fund at the very first appointment we attended in September 2005. After this I registered with the Skipton Fund on behalf of my Mum.

48. I applied to the Skipton Fund in November 2005 on behalf of my Mum. I believed at the time that it had been refused. I was later advised by Dr Mutimer that we should re-apply as he believed we had a strong case and he was on the board of the Skipton Fund. Dr Mutimer made it clear that he couldn't influence the decision in any way as a member of the board and that he would be unable to take part in the consideration of my mother's application as there would be a conflict of interest.

49. In 2011 I made a new application on the basis of Dr Mutimers' advice. I then received a letter from Nicholas Fish of the Skipton Fund dated 14 February 2011 (enclosed as exhibit **WITN4863006**). In this letter Nicholas Fish advised that the previous application in 2005 had not been rejected, rather it had been returned with a request for further information. I had not responded to this request in 2005. On application to the fund, Nicholas Fish also enclosed a duplicate form and requested that this be completed again by my GP, who should also confirm in writing that they had no record of my Mum's treatment. He also wrote that if the GP did have records then these should be sent with the application.

50. As a result of this letter, I applied to Heartlands Hospital for my Mum's medical records pertaining to her operation there in 1979. I received a letter dated 14 March 2011 (enclosed as exhibit **WITN4863007**) addressed to my mother in which she was informed that all medical records for 1979 had been destroyed in line with trust policy.

51. After not being able to obtain any medical records from Heartlands Hospital, the receptionist at the GP surgery let me go through my mother's GP records and there was nothing relevant there either. The only document of any relevance was the discharge letter in 1979 from East Birmingham Hospital, now Heartlands Hospital (**WITN4863002**). However, it does not mention a blood transfusion.

52. After being unable to find any evidence I decided not to progress the application to the Skipton Fund as I had no more evidence of a blood transfusion than I had before. I knew it would be unsuccessful so I just left it.

53. In terms of my Mum & Dad's finances; They rely on money saved and state pensions. The only benefit claimed is my Dad's Attendance Allowance.

Section 8. Other Issues

54. My mother's HCV infection lay dormant for over 26 years. It went as quickly as it came thanks to the excellence and professionalism of the staff at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham.

55. I think up until Dr Baharani's determined efforts to diagnose my mother's illness, her treatment since 1965 had been a catalogue of errors. I think my Mum's health problems began in 1965 when they messed up her ovary operation. Had this been done properly, my Mum would not have needed the operation in 1979, which means she would not have received an infected blood transfusion. All of this could have been avoided. I am adamant that she wouldn't have been in that state if the 'butcher' that operated on her in 1965 hadn't messed up.

56. I would like to say that QE Hospital Birmingham have been marvellous since Mum's diagnosis with HCV and the ongoing liver monitoring. They take an interest whenever mum has medical appointments at hospital for

other non liver related reasons and will always alter appointments to suit my ability to take her. They have been very attentive.

57. I hope that my statement might assist the inquiry and maybe changes somebody's life in some way.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed GRO-C

Dated 29/4/21