

Witness Name: P O Smith
Statement No: WITN1524001
Exhibits: 0
Dated: October 2020

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF PATRICK OWEN SMITH

I, Patrick Owen Smith, will say as follows: -

Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is Patrick Owen Smith of GRO-C
My date of birth is GRO-C 1977. I live with my parents Colin and Janet Smith.
2. I make this statement as the brother of the late Colin Smith who was born on GRO-C 1982 and died on 13 January 1989, aged 7, having been infected with HIV and Hepatitis C as a result of treatment with contaminated Factor VIII concentrate.
3. I am one of 4 siblings. My mother, father, and brother (Janet, Colin, and Daniel Smith) have also made witness statements to the Inquiry.
4. **This statement has been prepared without the benefit of access to Colin's full medical records.**

Section 2. How Affected

5. GRO-C Colin was diagnosed with severe Haemophilia A as a baby. He was treated at the Heath Hospital in Cardiff (now the University of Wales Hospital).
6. He received Factor VIII blood products and was infected with HIV and Hepatitis C.
7. My parents were informed of Colin's HIV status when he was 10 months old.
8. We did not learn about his Hepatitis C status until 3 years after he had passed away.
9. My parents were not informed about the risks associated with Factor VIII or where it came from. Once Colin was diagnosed with AIDS, my parents told my brothers and me not to touch his blood. My parents were honest about Colin's diagnosis; but none of us understood the extent of his infection or what it meant because we were too young.

Section 3. Other Infections.

10. I am not aware of any other infections Colin had.

Section 4. Consent.

11. Colin was too young at the time to be told. All information had to be relayed to my parents because of his age. I believe that Colin was treated and tested without my parent's knowledge.
12. My parents were not aware that Colin was tested for HIV. They could not therefore consent. My parents would have requested to be given full details about these treatments and tests before giving their consent.

13. I believe that Colin was tested and treated for the purposes of research. This is stated in the medical records. It states that the chimpanzees were too expensive to use because Colin was already infected with HIV. They wanted to monitor Colin very closely to research his blood and see how the virus developed. I believe he was infected with a test batch of Factor VIII which was, and which came from a prison in the USA.

Section 5. Impact

14. When we were children, all we knew was Colin was a haemophiliac, when he was young, he would bruise and bleed so we couldn't play fight and things like that with him.

15. Colin was unaware of his infection, he was not particularly aware, he was still quite young don't think they really told us that much about it because of our ages. All we knew about AIDS back then, was from the adverts on TV.

16. Colin's death has had a massive impact on me. I was about 16 when I first had some sort of a mental break down. I went into a deep depression. I was on so many tablets and this has been pretty much the same for the last 20 odd years. I had counselling for 22 years, all relating back to what happened to Colin. I wasn't at home when he passed, and this affects me. I came home and he had already passed. I had gone camping with some friends, I think my parents knew the time was close and did not want me to be there.

17. I haven't been to counselling for a couple of years. I continue to suffer with severe bouts of depression. I have been diagnosed with psychotic depression, this was diagnosed when 18 or 19 years old. I have been on so much medication, I really couldn't say all the different ones over the years. I have probably been on 20 different anti-psychotics, depressives, and sedation. Now, I am just on anti-depressants, I take loxitane.

18. I am not under a Mental Health team as such now, although I am on call with them, but not since covid, the people I knew there have all changed jobs. I can call them if need them. I have been an outpatient at the local mental hospital for 2 years maybe.
19. As a child I used to live outside, I was never home, I was always out and about, but now I don't go anywhere. I suffer with anxiety and stress and have had two strokes, so I am not really mobile anymore. I don't know what caused them, I did have a big bout of alcohol abuse, so it was probably all that drinking. I was drinking anywhere up to between 6 and 8 litres of cider a day. It made things easy to cope with, it was a complete coping mechanism. It all relates back to Colin. I would drink to take the memories away although sometimes it would do the opposite and make me remember.
20. It was the strokes made stop drinking to excess. I still have a couple of beers but decided myself not be an alcoholic. My strokes were only 5 years ago, and I am back living with my parents as my flat was on first floor and I can no longer do steps.
21. I do not work and have never been able to because of my mental health problems. I used to have outbursts and used to hallucinate. I was looking for work whilst mentally ill, but the DWP said I was not suitable for work, I think I was probably uninsurable. I am on ESA; I get no other benefits at all.
22. What happened to Colin had a massive impact on my wider family, although in some respects it has made us closer, we are all pissed right off with what happened. It made it worse when the evidence came it was deliberate. As a family it has made us more supportive, not day goes by when we don't mention Colin.
23. In the estate where lived we were called the gay family, even though Colin was a child. We had the house spray painted with 'AIDS Family' our family car was painted with 'AIDS' and 'Gay'. Even in school as a child, I had gay

slurs, although I was a big kid no one said to it to my face, it was all second hand. All people knew about AIDS were the adverts didn't know anything about it really.

Section 6. Treatment/Care/Support

24. My parents arranged counselling for me through the Haemophilia society. I was not offered any counselling from the hospital.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

25. My parents received assistance with Colin's funeral costs, but I am not sure where the assistance came from. My parents had their roof and gaffing replaced by the Skipton Fund. My parents did not receive any other funds or monthly payments.

Section 8. Other Issues

26. My parents were not involved in any class action. They followed was the Penrose inquiry (Scottish one) which was 4 or 5 years ago. It did not end well. None of us got the outcome that we wanted. People referred to it as a 'whitewash'. There was a massive uproar when Lord Penrose announced his findings.

27. My parents have been into Parliament with billboards and have been heavily involved in the contaminated blood community. We trusted these people with our lives, and mistakes happen but not these many times and not to this extent.

28. They had their whole lives ahead of them and the stigma we all suffered was horrific.

29. I have found the whole situation and what happened to Colin devastating. It feels like it is a murder case.

Anonymity, disclosure and redaction

30. I do not wish to remain anonymous.

31. I do not want to give oral evidence to the Inquiry.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed.. GRO-C

Dated..... 5 - 11 - 22