

Witness Name: Janice Tarttelin

Statement No: WITN7232001

Exhibits:0

Dated: November 2022

## INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

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### FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF JANICE TARTTELIN

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I, Janice Tarttelin will say as follows: -

#### Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is Janice Tarttelin. I was born on GRO-C 1960, and I live at GRO-C.
2. I make this statement in relation to my late father (dad), George Dennis Patterson, who was born on GRO-C 1931 and died, aged 54, on 18 May 1986 as a result of being infected with Hepatitis C (HCV) following treatment with contaminated Factor VIII concentrate to manage his Haemophilia. The cause of death is recorded on the death certificate as "*cirrhosis of the liver*".
3. I refer to the witness statements of my mother, Margaret Paterson (WITN3661001) and my brother, Craig Paterson (WITN1461001) in relation to background and factual matters.
4. This witness statement has been prepared without the benefit of access to dad's medical records.

## **Section 2. How Affected**

5. I refer to the evidence in WITN3661001 and WITN1461001.

## **Section 3. Other Infections**

6. I refer to the evidence in WITN3661001 and WITN1461001.

## **Section 4. Consent**

7. I refer to the evidence in WITN3661001 and WITN1461001.

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

8. My dad and I had the closest and most amazing bond. Even my brother said to me the other week "*you were the closest to dad*". Dad and I were both really sporty. He was a brilliant table tennis player and he got me into playing in the league. I also remember dad and me winning a big table tennis competition on holiday. Dad and I used to have the best times together. I excelled at all sports and loved badminton and athletics. I used to compete in the league and dad would always cheer me on. When his health deteriorated to the extent that he could no longer come and watch me, he would eagerly await my return from sporting competitions, so that I could fill him in on the day's events. He was always so interested in, and supportive of, my sporting career. He was literally the best dad that I could have ever had.
9. Dad wanted me to have the very best; he even took out a loan to pay for my wedding day as he wanted me to have an unforgettable day. That was the type of man he was putting the needs of others before his own. He was also a Sunday school teacher and loved by the local community. He also got really excited at Christmas time if he found a gift that he thought I would like. He was caring, kind, shy and quiet. He was my wonderful dad.

10. Growing up, dad could not read or write at school as due to his haemophilia his school attendance was poor. His parents were reasonably well off, so they paid for private art lessons for him as he excelled in art and anything creative. He gained numerous art certificates which enabled him to get a job as a window dresser, which he was brilliant at. His parents also encouraged him to learn to read and write when he was in his teenage years. This was hard for dad, but he always challenged himself, was super determined and never gave up and this ultimately helped him to secure the job of window dresser for a national company.
11. He had such a great work ethic. He worked right up to his death, he must have weighed less than 7 stone and could hardly get into the car but he carried on. I am so proud of him, but it brings tears to my eyes just writing this statement and going back over the memories.
12. What seemed so unfair is that my wonderful dad fought so hard to get over his cancer, enduring the horrid and debilitating effects of radiotherapy only then to be unfairly taken by the infected blood. I remember going off to a neighbour's wedding one day and when I got back home dad was lying on the sofa crying. It was so awful to see; no one wants to see their dad cry. He was asking me all about the wedding and I was telling him not to worry about that. Dad said, *"I can't cope with the radiotherapy"*. I told him that he had to do it, he had to get through it. He managed to endure it and beat the cancer and that is what really hurts as after such a magnanimous fight, he was always going to succumb to a life sentence that he did not know anything about.
13. I remember the hospital staff telling me on the Wednesday of the week in which dad died that he was not going to live. I was thinking *"what are they talking about, he was sat up in bed talking"*. I remember him asking me to go and put a bet on at the bookies for him. When they told me this, I remember my 25-year-old self being dragged into a hospital room and told to calm down when I was screaming in the corridor. I was hysterical. I just could not comprehend the fact that my dad was going to die.

14. I went back to the hospital the next day, and it was too upsetting seeing them take him off the machines which were keeping him alive. I remember screaming something like "*the machine is keeping him alive, if you take him off it, he will die*". I was too distraught to keep attending the hospital knowing that my beloved dad was going to die. He died a few days after my last visit.
15. I remember the day after my dad passed away, people were trying to talk to me, and they were all opening his birthday cards. I got really upset as he should have been there, but he was cruelly taken too early. I think I stomped out that day. The emotions were too raw. My dad was such a wonderful man to the extent that people literally lined the street for his funeral.
16. After dad's death, I recall Professor Preston talking about a batch of blood which had been given to three people; all of whom had died. One was my dad; one had been in a car accident and there was another chap too. All three had died from that one batch of blood.
17. I think it is really cruel that relatives were basically drip-fed information; making us guess things and only telling us bits they wanted us to know. It would have been so much easier to deal with had people been open and honest.
18. The medical professionals also inferred dad's cirrhosis of the liver could have been due to drinking alcohol. This was really unfair as dad literally never drank. The most he had was the odd shandy, but I felt this was a way of dissipating any blame. I remember being really firm with GRO-D basically telling him in no uncertain terms that my dad was most definitely not a drinker. I could see how awkward it was for GRO-D who, I felt, definitely knew more than he was letting on. He had not been honest with us and we felt even after the post-mortem they were still not being honest with us.
19. After dad's passing, I used to go to the bathroom at mum's house every Christmas Day and have a good cry. It was only the year my son was born that I didn't do this as I was so busy with him. I remember feeling really guilty about it.

Dad supported Arsenal and I supported Chelsea! In Dad's memory, I named my son GRO-C who played for Arsenal.

20. I think my biggest bugbear about what happened is that I genuinely feel that people at the top of the hierarchy knew that they were importing cheap and dangerous blood. In my experience as a civil servant, those further up the chain making important decisions are usually aware of what is going on and the implications which could occur, yet it is only later on within the process the information gets fed down to others. Government officials and the NHS chiefs must have known what was going on. They knew they were importing cheap blood from the US which could, and did bring in viruses. It served a purpose for them at the time in terms of a massive costs saving but it had the most horrific effect of killing thousands of innocent people, including my wonderful dad. Lives over money? I imagine things may have been different if someone high up in the government or NHS had relatives who had been infected or affected by this.

21. Dad always encouraged me with my schoolwork and was really proud of my studies. When he died, I was doing a Btec national, which was the equivalent of 3 A-levels, in law, economics, banking and accounts. I had to pass all of the subjects in order to pass overall. At the same time, I was also working for the Education Department within the council. Dad was really proud of me. When he died, I had to take my Btec national exams literally a few days after his death. I was asked if I wanted to postpone them, but I declined. I sat the exams and passed them all except accounts in which I received a marginal fail. I have always hated figures and I remember the teacher saying that we would tell them about dad's death so that I could re-sit the exam in a fortnight's time. I remember thinking that I did not want to use dad's death as an excuse, and I even thought about giving the whole thing up but that would have been throwing away two years of hard work. I thought better of it and re-sat and passed the exam. I did it for dad. I also think about dad and how proud he would be knowing his Granddaughter was undertaking a degree; the first one in our family to get degree. He would have been immensely proud.

22. Dad would have loved it when I moved to the civil service. I really enjoy my job in the Department for Work and Pensions where I help people with health conditions get back into work once they are feeling better. This can be difficult as a lot of my clients have cancer and get upset which ultimately brings back memories of my dad's fight against cancer, which was ultimately in vain due to the infected blood. I would definitely not describe myself as a typical civil servant. I am a real people's advocate and the sort that stands up for what is right. I hate injustice.
23. I admire Andy Burnham for the way he stood up so publicly about infected blood and spoke out so forthrightly about what he believed in. Conversely, I went to my own MP GRO-D who was totally disinterested and did not want to know anything about infected blood. I ended up saying something like "*well just be pleased that your family have not been affected by this tragedy*". His response was something like "*there is not a lot we can do about it now*". I felt he was so blasé; he just didn't seem to care, and he didn't even try to sound interested which was difficult for my mum.
24. Nothing can ever bring my dad back or make up for those lost years. I miss him and he would have been the most wonderful grandfather to his two grandchildren. I am always showing my kids pictures of dad and we often talk about him. My brother and I have always wanted the Inquiry to provide answers and it has never been about the money for us. My mum has slightly different ideas when it comes to financial compensation. Sadly, this seems to be more of a focus for her than on actually finding out answers for dad. I have always helped mum out, both practically and financially, to the extent that my husband and I used to go without to ensure that mum had the means to pay a plumber or anything else if she needed this. Sadly, mum and I don't have the best relationship as I find that she far too focused on compensation. No amount of money will ever bring dad back and I miss him daily.

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

25. As far as I am aware, my dad did not receive any unfavourable treatment from medical or health professionals as a result of his HCV infection.

26. However, following my dad's death mum was taken ill and admitted to hospital, it was some weeks before we were told she had cancer. One occasion she was put into isolation where the health professionals would take extra care when interacting with her. This was due to her mentioning about my dad and what he may have died from. However, they let me, and my brother, interact freely with mum so they obviously didn't care about us and only appeared to protect themselves from the risk they thought mum posed having been married to my dad.

27. I also refer to the evidence in WITN3661001 and WITN1461001.

28. I have never been offered any counselling or psychological support in consequence of dad's HCV infection.

## **Section 7. Financial Assistance**

29. My father received no financial support from any of the Trusts or Schemes during his lifetime.

30. I have never received any financial support from any of the Trusts or Schemes.

31. My mother received the Skipton Stage 1 Payment, in 2014, in the sum of £20,000 after my father's death. She then received the Skipton Stage 2 Payment, in the sum of £50,000, a few months later.

### Difficulties/logistics in relation to the £100,000 Interim Payment

32. I received an email asking about mum's bank account details which was in relation to her receiving the £100K. I explained the difficulties surrounding the logistics of how the 100K payment will work, paying such a large amount of money into one bank account with no advice and the lack of insurance over £85K. This, to me, posed a problem to an eighty-six-year-old that will not allow Power of Attorney (POA) but allows friends etc to go to the bank and draw out large amounts of money. Such a potential for fraud, others having mum's card to go to the bank and to see such a large amount of money deposited into her account fills me with dread. However, if mum needs money and as her mobility is poor, she will ask others to get the money out rather than have a named person on her bank account. She is already paying excessively for shopping as she insists on using local taxi firms.

33. If people had not had to wait so long for this pay out and the acceptance of responsibility for this disaster had been aired many years ago these people left behind would have been in a better position to spend and benefit from this payment rather than, like my mum, be a prisoner in her own home for most of the week unable to enjoy what time she has left.

### Section 8. Other Issues

34. For me the biggest thing I want this Inquiry to achieve is for someone to stand out there and take responsibility for what has happened. This needs to be said out loud because the truth has been purposefully hidden for too long.



**Anonymity**

35. I do not wish to apply for anonymity.

**Statement of Truth**

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

Signed..... GRO-C .....

Dated..... 10/11/22 .....