

Witness Name: Miles Adrian Clifford

Statement WITN7387

Exhibit No.

Dated: 10/01/2023

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

WRITTEN WITNESS STATEMENT OF

MILES ADRIAN CLIFFORD

I provide this statement in response to a request under Rule 9 of The Inquiry Rules 2006, dated 17 October 2022.

I, Miles Adrian Clifford, will say as follows:-

Section 1 Introduction

1. My full name is Miles Adrian Clifford and I was born in 1997 and I am now 25. My father Adrian Paul Clifford was born in 1964. Currently I live with my partner at an address that is known to the Inquiry. I have a twin sister called Demi and my mother is Stephanie Clifford. She has provided her own statement to this Inquiry.
2. I intend to speak about how my father became infected with hepatitis C (HCV), hepatitis B (HBV) and HIV. In particular how he came to be infected, the nature of this illness in so much as how it affected me, the treatment he received and its impact upon my life, my family, my career.
3. My father had a history of haemophilia in his family. I believe my father had haemophilia B. My grandfather was in the army therefore my father moved around as a youngster, such as to Germany and Ireland.

4. My father was given factor 8 in order to treat any bleeds he may have, whenever it was required, usually after he injured himself. I do not recall if he was given cryoprecipitate.
5. As a profession my father did spray painting work on a production line, in a factory, just outside of Exeter.
6. My mother was a cleaner however I do not recall where my parents first met my mother will clearly be able to provide these details.

Section 2 How Infected

7. My father had a car accident when he was about 18 or 19. This would have been either in 1982 or 1983. His car rolled off the road. He was unconscious and was taken to Exeter hospital where he had a blood transfusion. He was of the belief that he would have died if it was not for the blood transfusion.
8. I do not recall how long my father was in hospital. My father was treated by his consultant Dr Richard Lee. Dr Lee called my father shortly after his hospitalisation and told him he had HBV, HCV and HIV. Dr Lee also believed when my father was given the blood transfusion, the last bag transfused was the infected one.
9. It is my belief that Dr Lee knew there was a risk of infection from the blood given to my father.

Section 3 Other Infections

10. So far as I am aware my father had no other infections apart from HBV, HCV and HIV as a result of the transfusion he was given at this stage.

Section 4 Consent

11. My father did not consent to having a blood transfusion at Exeter hospital because he was at that stage unconscious and unable to provide consent.

12. My mother did not consent to my father having a blood transfusion and was unaware of the risk of my father having a blood transfusion.

Section 5 Impact

13. My father was devastated to be diagnosed with HBV, HCV and HIV. He did not want his family to know about it.

14. The attitude to HIV was, in that period, very negative. This was largely due to the media coverage and public perception. Eventually when my father's siblings and parents did become aware, they did to some extent shun him.

15. My mother was advised to have her blood tested for HBV, HCV and HIV.

16. My primary school had to be told about my father having HBV, HCV and HIV in the event of another child coming into contact with my sister or I, albeit neither of us had any of these infections. This was in the early 2000s.

17. Due to my father having HBV, HCV and HIV, my parents had to undergo a course of IVF treatment in order to have my sister and I. This was due to my father's condition. As my parents always wanted children they were told this was the only safe route. I believe the process took 3 years of treatment before my mother fell pregnant. I also believe Dr Lee was instrumental in pushing for further courses of IVF after the initial failures.

18. My father had to take about 15-20 pills a day for treatment of his HBV, HCV and HIV. These various tablets of course had their side effects such as loss of appetite and fatigue.

19. Over time due to the effects of HCV my father's liver started to fail and he developed cirrhosis of the liver.

20. My father became susceptible to various illnesses due to the effects of HBV, HCV and HIV. Due to one of these infections, he developed type 2 diabetes.
21. In addition and as a result of taking medication for HBV, HCV and HIV, my father's kidney started to fail and he started to lose his bladder control. This was particularly embarrassing and distressing for him.
22. My father's relationship with my mother suffered, as when he was diagnosed with HBV, HCV and HIV they were advised not to be intimate, to the extent they were told not to even kiss or have any close contact with each other due to the risk of infection.
23. As a youngster, I remember having to choose the medication for my father by the colour and shape of the individual tablets without realising what it was he was taking.
24. As his medical condition made my father extremely tired it meant my mother had to pick me and my sister from school and take on most of the responsibility of bringing us up. In fact many of my friends thought my sister and I came from a one parent family
25. My father had bad experiences with his work after they became aware of his illnesses. He had his own break room area to eat in as they were scared he would infect his colleagues. He had to provide his employer with a doctor's note to show them he was not contagious in any way. He also had his own mug to use. It was unpleasant for my father and colleagues at his work were uncomfortable around my father. There were around 200 employees where my father worked, I do not recall the name of his employer. There was bullying at my father's work aimed directly at him, due to his illnesses. Rumours were spread by his work colleagues that he was a homosexual. This was clearly very distressing for both my parents
26. When my father developed shingles in 1992 he could not cope with work any longer and stopped working.

27. I grew up in council housing and there were rumours that my father was a drug user or a homosexual. I saw the words "AID's keep out" spray painted on our garage door at home. On another occasion the word "fag" was sprayed on the door. This was in the year 2000s. I suspect it was done by a neighbour but I have no proof of this. My parents' car was keyed on more than one occasion and had to have the bodywork repaired. This again I suspect to have been the work of our neighbour but have no proof of this either.
28. Even close family members would not come to our house. This included my uncle, my father's own brother, and his children even though they were aware my father was a haemophiliac. To this present day I do not have contact with my cousins.
29. Other family members did have contact with us such as my aunt. However, even my father's parents were suspicious of my father's illnesses.
30. My father suffered from extreme depression as a result of having HBV, HCV and HIV. This got worse as he suffered more and more. When he lost his bladder control he was reluctant to go out and could only go out if there were toilets nearby. He was uncomfortable and embarrassed wearing incontinence clothing.
31. My father lost a lot of weight and was at one point less than six stones. He was 6 foot 2 and a broadly built man previously.
32. The shingles my father developed in 1992 also affected his face and his neck. Eventually he was virtually bed ridden.
33. My recollection is my father was always ill from the day I was born in 1997.
34. My mother found it extremely difficult to look after me, my sister and my father. She also had to hold down a job in order to support the family, it affected her mental health.

35. My mother did have a limited amount of support from family and friends.
36. I was aware my father had a terminal condition and felt ostracised. At my school, in order to protect him, I told others my father had heart issues. I was told by my parents not to tell others about my dad's illnesses. This was due to the suffering they had endured when they told other people. They did not want this repeated on my sister and I.
37. By the time I was in secondary school attitudes had changed. In 2017, whilst at University, I believed my housemate would understand about my father's illnesses, I told my housemate who then told my girlfriend and other friends. I did not want this information shared with others apart from my housemate. Clearly that was a mistake.
38. My sister found my father's illnesses very difficult to talk about and even today does not talk about him passing away.
39. I lived in a happy family unit. My dad stayed positive however he was terrified of going into palliative care and hated the idea of going into a hospice. He was scared of needing to be taken care of.
40. I was well aware my father was going to pass away sooner rather than later, however I could not tell others about it, which made it very lonely for me.
41. Due to the treatment my father received and the circumstances he was in, it meant we could not move. It was difficult in terms of childcare, there were financial difficulties too and my mother received a carer's allowance.
42. My parents received debt management advice due to debt building up. As she was a cleaner her income was limited.
43. I missed out on many social opportunities as I avoided having friends over rather than have to explain to them about my father. I felt it was not worth it. I would often tell my friends that my father was at work and worked different shifts.

44. When I was asked why my father did not attend parents ' evening at school, I would say it was because of his shift work. From an early age I had to create a smokescreen, for fear that if I told the truth people would treat me differently.
45. Whilst growing up, adults who were aware of my father's illnesses would not walk close to me and on occasions deliberately walk in the other direction.
46. My mother avoided joining any clubs and had little in the way of outside interests as she did not have the time to do them due to looking after me, my sister and my father.
47. Our family life was heavily impacted. I would often go to the cinema with my mother and sister. My father would have to stay at home. Doing things as a family unit was very difficult for him.
48. I did go on holidays with my family however this was only once a year and it was generally to somewhere cheap due to our financial constraints.
49. My last family holiday with my father was in 2015 when we went to France. My father was in good spirits however became hospitalised in France and we had to return a few days early.
50. After our holiday in 2015 I was at home upstairs with my mother and sister when I heard a gunshot downstairs. I went downstairs and saw that my father had killed himself. The police were called and my father passed away. He had used a licenced shotgun we kept for clay pigeon shooting and target practice.
51. I believe his discomfort and pain directly related to the HBV, HCV and HIV infections he had been given, ultimately led to him committing suicide. My mother shares my opinion.
52. My mother was 46 when my father passed away. I was doing my A levels at the time. I felt I was unable to continue and took a year out of education.

53. My sister continued her A levels and did not stop them, GRO-C
GRO-C She did not talk about our father passing away for a couple of years.
54. I found it very difficult following the death of my father. I had a lot to contend with emotionally. I took medication for post traumatic stress disorder in order to help me sleep and received counselling from a bereavement charity.
55. My father's death affected me as I changed my aspirations and A levels. I decided to study archaeology at University and continue to find dealing with human remains difficult.
56. My sister also changed her aspirations as initially she wanted to join the travel Industry including an airline, then changed to a business route, a field in which she currently works.
57. I withdrew from people around me and did not keep in touch with friends from school.
58. My sister also kept our father's death a secret from others.
59. I am honest and open about my father's death and have told my current partner.
60. My mother does not tell most people how her husband passed away. She has some close friends who do know. People have in the past stopped her in the street and said they did not know how she coped having a husband who was a homosexual and on these occasions my mother has had to correct them.
61. Following my father's death, when the coroner's report was produced there was no mention of HBV, HCV or HIV. This caused problems with funds as it did not link the cause of death with these illnesses resulting in his suicide.

Section 6 Treatment / Care / Support

62. Following the road accident my father made a full recovery from his head injury. Once told that he had the various infections there was advice given to him by Exeter hospital on preventing infection to others. The advice was to avoid contact with blood around anyone else and not to share a toothbrush etc.
63. My mother was tested monthly for a year at Exeter hospital in order to check if she had caught HBV, HCV or HIV from my father.
64. My parents wanted children therefore needed to receive IVF treatment. I believe Dr Lee carried a degree of guilt for infecting my father and pushed for extra rounds of IVF treatment as my parents did not want to risk infection by trying to conceive naturally.
65. My father saw various people regularly at Exeter hospital and was given medication such as steroids. He was given about 15-20 pills to take on a daily basis.
66. Whilst he received treatment for his HCV I now cannot recall what this treatment was.
67. My father got on well with the nurses and other medical professionals treating him at Exeter hospital.
68. The medical profession tried to take care of my father and sent birthday cards to him. They also sent presents to me and my sister. It was a very convivial atmosphere.
69. Whilst my father was alive there was a young carers group which took me and my sister on outings such as on bowling trips.
70. I was not offered counselling and my mum was not offered counselling either. My father was offered counselling but he chose not to take it.
71. My father found out about treatment elsewhere such as in America however this could not be accessed due to financial constraints on the NHS. I understand the need for constraints however when the illness was caused by

the NHS, I find it appalling that there should be a price put on it.

72. I cannot recall my father having issues with any other forms of treatment including dentistry.

73. My father struggled with accessing disability benefit and he was turned down for it initially which was then granted on appeal.

74. My father wanted to have a cosmetic filler for his cheeks which were sunken due to the effects of medication. However this was turned down due to the cost implications.

75. My father was illiterate through no fault of his own and would sign anything put in front of him in order to conceal the fact he was illiterate. He was often given leaflets and documents to read which he did not understand. If we were in attendance we would read these for him but this was not always possible.

76. My father needed a liver transplant as he developed cirrhosis however this was denied due to his haemophilia. The basis on which he was denied this procedure is unclear to me. This happened a few years before my father passed away.

77. My father eventually became almost bed ridden due to his illnesses and did not want to be put in palliative care or go to a hospice for end of life treatment.

78. In hindsight I would have taken professional counselling had I been offered it. I suffered from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder following my father's death. I did receive a limited amount of counselling from a volunteer who was not a trained counsellor. The waiting list on the NHS was I believe six months. I am not on any medication now.

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Section 7 Financial Assistance

80. We received limited financial support from the McFarlane Trust as they paid for school uniforms for me and my sister. They also paid for school trips which my sister and I went on.

81. After my father was turned down for disability benefit, a charity group appealed and this was accepted.

82. I believe the England Infected Blood Support Scheme currently make monthly payments to my mother.

Section 8 Other Issues

83. I found it was a strange decision that despite being aware of the risks that the NHS could have received infected blood from abroad, why did they keep it and use it. This meant they were prepared to gamble on my father's life when he was given infected blood.

84. When my father's cheeks were impacted as a result of his shingles and he wanted a filler, this was denied. It makes me upset that there was a price put on my father's life. It was cruel. I feel the people who held the purse strings were dehumanising.

Statement Of Truth

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

Signed: _____

Dated: 10/01/2023