Witness Name:D. Fielding
Statement No:WITN0679001
Exhibits: WITN0679002 - WITN0679003
Dated: August 2019

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF DAVID FIELDING

I, DAVID FIELDING will say as follows:-

Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is David Fielding. I was born on the GRO-C 1956. I am currently living in temporary accommodation and my address is known to the Inquiry.

2. I am separated from my wife. I have three children. I met my wife in 1979 and we were married on 3rd October 1998. Christopher was born on GRO-C GRO- 1989, Hannah was born on GRO-C 1992 and Samantha was born on GRO-C 1993.

3. I am currently unemployed. I am a watch and clock repairer by trade. I stopped working around 1993 due to ill health.

4. **This witness statement has been prepared without the benefit of access to my full medical records. If and in so far as I have been provided with limited records the relevant entries are set out in the medical chronology at the end of this statement.**

Section 2. How infected

5. I have severe Haemophilia type A with a clotting factor of less than 1%. I was diagnosed at birth because I had two older brothers who were both haemophiliacs and so I was tested when I was born. My eldest brother GRO-B was a severe haemophiliac who was born on GRO-C 1944 and died in October 1990 at the age of 46 from HIV related illnesses as a result of receiving infected blood products. My other brother Jeffrey who was born in GRO-C 1955 died in December 1976 only six months after my father. Jeffrey died of a massive internal haemorrhage and gangrene as a result of his haemophilia. He was only 22 when he died.

6. Whilst I was born in GRO-C I do not know which hospital I attended at this point. When I was about 5/6 years old I was sent to West Kirby Children's home which was a boarding school and I was there until I was 16. I only came home at the end of term. I was sent there so I wouldn't miss so much schooling due to my haemophilia. I attended Liverpool Children's Hospital if I had a bleed and the main treatment I would receive is aspiration which was mainly to the knee. I was given plasma every so often and also the odd bag of blood if "my cheeks weren't rosy". I also received treatment by cryoprecipitate.

7. I do remember being treated with "knit bone" which is a plant that would grow in the garden. It was boiled and then put on my knee when it was hot and bandaged over. It used to help a little but I think it was more of an old mother's remedy. It apparently had certain properties that eased pain. I remember that I was treated with this throughout my childhood untill I was around 17.

8. In 1972 I started attending the Manchester Royal Infirmary (MRI).

9. Between 1973 and 1975 I went to Portland Training College. This was a college for the disabled and offered different courses from vocational courses to engineering. I wanted to do Radio and TV repairs but because of my haemophilia it was considered that I would be better off doing something else and that is where I studied watch and clock repair

10. In those days I would have a bleed approximately every month or every couple of months. I found that during the warmer months I would have fewer bleeds. I was treated with cryoprecipitate until I was started on this "wonder drug" 8 Y Factor VIII concentrate. I remember that it was not long after my brother had died when I was taught how to inject and treat myself and start home treatment. I remember that I was told that the hospital wanted to start me on home treatment and we were told that eventually everyone would be put on it. It involved mixing the dry powder with saline solution in a syringe which I would then inject. I was given mostly BPL Factor VIII concentrate but I did have others manufacturers. I believe I had a Scottish product at one time. Sometimes I would have treatment in the hospital so I would never really see what Factor VIII concentrate product they gave me. I would inject Factor VIII concentrate as and when required. It all seemed great at the time.

11. Not long after I started on home treatment my brother GRO-B also started to receive treatment from the MRI. He received different products to mine. We didn't raise any queries at the time. I recall that he was on all sorts of different treatments. You name it, he was on it. He was treated with American commercial products.

12. I was treated at the Manchester Royal Infirmary (MRI) from 1972 under the care of Dr Delamore, Dr Wensley, Dr Lucas and then Dr Hay who transferred from Liverpool to Manchester.

13. I was given no information with regard to any risk at all in taking Factor VIII concentrate. I do not even remember receiving a leaflet about information

on Factor VIII. If I had been warned of any risk I would not have taken it and I would have carried on with what I had used before.

14. I was infected with Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C as a result of receiving infected blood products.

Section 3. Other infections

15. I cannot remember specifically when but I recall that I was called in to one of the clinics by Dr Hay and he asked me if I had received any letters in relation to vCJD. He asked me if I wanted to know if I had ever had treatment from one of the vCJD implicated batches. I sat there and looked at him in disbelief. I told him no and that I had been through too much and did not want to know if I had received Factor VIII concentrate from the implicated batch. As I understand it all of the blood products were made in big steel vats and a documentary on vCJD said that the virus sticks to metal so you would assume as so many products were sourced together, you can only assume you have received product from an implicated batch.

16. I was going on holiday on the Saturday and I didn't want that man to ruin my holiday. I had always found him very unhelpful and I had never trusted him since he had told me that I wasn't entitled to the Stage 2 Skipton fund payment. In that regard he said he had been discussing my case with the Department of Health about the Skipton Fund Stage 2 payment indicating that it was Hepatitis B that had caused my liver disease and so from that conversation I asked one of the liver doctors. At the time I said to him, if someone has been infected with Hepatitis B and C can you tell which one caused liver disease and he stated it is not possible.

Section 4. Consent

17. I believe that I have been treated and tested without knowledge, without consent and without being given adequate or full information.

18. I believe that I was also used for research purposes. A number of haemophiliacs and I think about 250 who had been exposed to the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) were called to the MRI. We all formed the same opinion that we had been given a product that was HIV infected but had been heat treated or had gone through a solvent washing programme. They knew that it had been infected but needed to know whether the product testing to remove the HIV was successful. They took blood from me and said that my blood could help find a cure for those with HIV. I did, at that time, sign a consent form. This all took place 6 or 7 years ago which I thought was strange at the time as I had not had any Factor VIII concentrate since 1998. I heard nothing further after these tests.

Section5. Impact of infection

19. My life after college was just basically work and then play. I worked for Ian Jones Jewellers from 1975 to 1986. I would play darts, snooker and go fishing. I also had a great social life. As my brother had died at such a young age I just wanted to go out and enjoy myself until it was my turn. I did drink alcohol at this time in the evenings to cushion the blow of losing my brother and father; it was a very difficult time. I would only drink in the evenings.

20. I remember my brother would have to be seriously bad with a bleed or seriously ill before he had a day off work and I was very much the same. I would go to work in agony many a time. I remember my brother, GRO-B, being very yellow, being very ill and he was in bed for 3 to 6 months. This would have been between 1977 and 1979. We later found out his illness was due to Hepatitis B.

21. Sometime around 1983 I went to the MRI for a regular clinic appointment with my then girlfriend. I was told by Dr Perara at that time to cut down on my drinking because I had Hepatitis B but was only told that it was a virus and not to worry and that it would go away. I was told to cut down drinking but nothing else. There was no mention of how serious the virus was to the liver and no identification of risks. I was not advised to stop drinking but I did cut down. I just thought it was nothing to worry about and I would just get a bit ill with it for a while and then I would be fine. I was asked quite often to have blood taken but they said it was always about levels; I was never told what I was ever really being tested for. Nowadays of course you would be told not to drink at all. I wasn't told this and if I had been I would have stopped drinking alcohol completely.

22. I cannot remember specifically but I do recall that sometime between 1983 and 1985 GRO-B and I were told that we were being tested for HIV and our blood was being taken to test for it. I distinctly remember GRO-B driving us to the hospital and I was asked to go in to the room first. I was not in the room long as I was told that I was HTLVIII negative. I remember coming out and smiling at my brother and saying that I was ok.

23. GRO-B went in to the room and he was there for a long time. When he came out he gave me a nervous smile and didn't say anything. He didn't talk to me the whole way home. The only conversation that we did have was that he was glad I was alright. I do not know why I never asked him; perhaps I was waiting for him to say something. Right up until he died he never told me that he had HIV and he really never mentioned it. There was only one time when he broke his arm and he had to have prophylactic Factor VIII. The hospital asked if I would be able to administer it to him. The nurse who asked me to do it told me I must be gloved up. My brother also told me to make sure to put gloves on for protection and at the time I was helping him with his injections he said 'I don't want you to get it'. I realised then that he had HIV.

24. My brother was in and out of hospital with all sorts of illnesses; struggling to breathe and suffering with respiratory problems. Unfortunately I didn't

see too much of him as I was working a lot and my son had been born in 1989 so I had a lot going on in my life. GRO-B ended up in hospital again in 1990 and I went with him. He looked worried but I never cottoned on that I would never see him alive again. He died on the Monday after I had seen him on the Friday. I was never told he was seriously ill. I got a phone call at midnight and I was told that he had died. The HIV counsellor at the time called me and asked if I knew how GRO-B had died. I said I had a good idea. She told me and then I had to go round and wake my mum up and tell her what he had died from. If that wasn't bad enough I had to go to my sister Susan and tell her. She was in absolute bits and I had to go and get my other brother Alan. He was not a haemophiliac.

25. We all drove to hospital and it was horrible seeing my brother like that. It was as if he had taken his last breathe but it hadn't come out. His chest was raised. All the time my family were asking questions, wanting to know why they didn't know he had this virus. It made us question why he didn't tell us; did he want to protect us? Didn't he trust us? Did he not tell us for fear that we would turn our backs on him? He was obviously frightened of the stigma attached. He was married but he'd only been married for a year. Since his death, nearly 30 years on, we are still sickened by his death and how it happened. We are still angry with him for not telling us what he was going through. He must have been tortured mentally; he didn't feel able to tell his own family. We have so many unanswered questions. It is like having a family book with a whole chapter missing. We could have done so much more for him and we all feel guilty that we didn't see him more. He was always quiet, smartly dressed and wise with money. He was a bit of a perfectionist and worked hard without taking time off. He was far too young to have died at the age of 46.

26. Around this time I was feeling extremely fatigued. I just put it down to working too hard and raising a young family. In 1992 we had our second child (a daughter). A year later we had our third child.

27. In June 1993 I had my 6 monthly appointment at the MRI. It was with Dr Bolton. She asked me how I was. She then said 'I want to talk to you about Hepatitis C". I said "I don't have Hepatitis C, it's Hepatitis B I have". She said "no you have Hepatitis C (HCV) as well". You ask yourself "what does this mean". She said they didn't know what the virus was and that they were learning about it. She told me to go and get on with my life. This was the first time I was given any indication I had HCV. I remember it so vividly I could still go to the room and show you where I was sitting when she told me. I stopped drinking completely at this point. Realising I had two viruses I knew I had to look after myself.

28. In the early 1990s a lot of people were finding out they had been infected with HCV, Sometime in 1994 I received a telephone call from the Haemophilia Society letting me know that there was going to be a meeting and would I like to go. The North West group was the flagship group. The society and the North West group were quite elitist and quite active.

29. We had a meeting at a member's house in Nantwich. When I got there me and Marie (my wife at the time) saw that there were 20-30 people there. At a Chairman's conference in Coventry in 1993 there was a discussion between two members, one of whom has since died, about Hepatitis C. One of them said that he knew someone who was really angry about this and as far back as 1988 had been doing news items about his Hepatitis status and was fighting a case for his infection.

30. We decided to become a pressure group and this is how the Manor House Group was born that very night. We knew by then people with HIV were being compensated to a degree but we realised we had a virus here that was more lethal than we were being told. We started to meet every month and come up with ideas of how to put pressure on the Government.

31. The Manor House Group became the world's first Hepatitis C campaign group formed in 1994.

32. We started to meet in a place in Barleston near Stoke which was famous for its Wedgwood pottery. We had our meetings at the Upper House which belonged to the Wedgwood family. I understand it was also being used by an HIV support group. They were called the Staffordshire Bodies. Our group grew to over 300 members. A few of the group did leave because they could not cope with the information that we were unravelling. We were finding out what this virus really did. We were getting our information from hospitals and certain members who would fly to different countries to find out what others had done for example following the Lindsey Tribunal in Southern Ireland. We gathered a lot of information which we had not been advised of by our treating hospitals.

33. We recovered a lot of information from the Russel Harty Foundation (the talk show host). We wrote letters to ministers asking for information.

34. Throughout this time I had started to feel pain in my side. I didn't get referred to a liver specialist but I should have been. I have seen in my medical notes at some stage and I now know that between 1993 and 1995 words to the effect that "this man has HCV and needs to see a liver specialist. Whilst preparing this statement I do not have my medical notes hence I do not have a copy of this letter.

35. I did not know if the pain was psychosomatic because I was hearing so much about hepatitis. However, I mentioned it to the doctors and I had a CT scan, fibro scans were not available at this time. They also put a needle in my groin to check the blood flow to my liver. By this point I had stopped working due to health issues. I had a duodenal ulcer and I was put on retnadine. There would be serious consequences in a haemophiliac if the ulcer burst so I had stopped working. In 1995 I was told by the MRI that I had cirrhosis of the liver.

36. I can remember starting to see Professor Warnes who was the liver specialist at the MRI. He had my notes in front of him and the first thing he

said to me was "I see you're taking action against the trust". I told him I wasn't there to talk about that and that I was there about my liver. I believe they said they would have to monitor me closely now and give me regular scans.

37. In 1995 I went back to working part time repairing watches and clocks. I just wanted to take my mind off everything that was happening. In 1997 Professor Warnes suggested to me that I should go on Interferon treatment. I was told it was horrendous but that it could help clear up these viruses and give me a better chance for the future.

38. I thought I would have to get my mind set ready for it so I did as I knew I would not be the same person once I started the treatment. I started Interferon treatment in October or November 1997 which I injected sub cutaneous into my stomach. The first time I had it I was shaking and incredibly cold. I remember being in bed and Marie diving on top of me just to try and warm me up. I battled with it. I took painkillers and suffered from headaches.

39. In January 1998 I started going yellow. I went to hospital and they admitted me to monitor me and take bloods. I remember on one of the ward rounds Dr Hay came round with an army of medics all staring at me and just came out with something that really upset me and shocked me. He said because I had chronic active Hepatitis B I wouldn't get a liver transplant because the immuno-suppressant drugs wouldn't work. I wasn't on the transplant list at the time. I was really upset and cried a lot that night; I was staring death in the face at this point. When you know you have cirrhosis of the liver and not going to be given the help needed was dreadful. I didn't sleep that night. Being a part of the Manor House Group and from the knowledge I had gleaned I knew what the implications of not having a transplant were.

40. My sister Susie came to visit me in hospital and I told her what they told me and I broke down crying again; I knew I was going to die. Another

doctor came to see me the day after, Dr Bolton. I told her what I had been told. I said I knew from information that I had gathered that there was a drug available that controls Hepatitis B. She said she would find out for me. She came back later and said there is a drug and its called lamivudine.

41. Some time after Dr Hay denied he had told me that I wasn't going to get a transplant. I confronted him about it and told him I hadn't been able to sleep after what he said. He denied it. He said they would send me for an endoscopy. I was suffering quite badly with piles at this time so I ended up having an operation for this.

42. I was sent home and carried on with the Interferon treatment. By May I had been on it for 6 months. I went back to the haematology department and asked if it was working. They told me it wasn't working and they didn't think it was going too. I told them I wanted to stop taking it at this point. I do remember that summer as it was so warm but I was still going out in a jumper and coat. People would look at me as if I was bonkers but I felt so cold. The colour of me didn't help; I was golden yellow.

43. The Manor House Group had arranged to lobby Parliament in the July of 1998. Quite a lot of us were involved with a few of us chaining ourselves to the railings. I was in a wheelchair at this point as I was not at all well; my fatigue was really bad. I remember being chained to the railings. We were eventually invited into Parliament as a result. We did a lot of things that brought media attention.

44. By August 1998 my stomach was getting bigger and bigger. I was struggling to urinate and I was getting bloated. I called the hospital and explained to them what was going on. They told me to come in and they would give me tablets to help. The person I spoke to said he had been reading my notes and it looked like my liver disease was kicking in which scared me. He gave me Furosemide and Spironolactone which helped me with some of the effects I was having.

45. Between the liver specialist and haematologists it was decided I should go over to St James hospital in Leeds for an assessment. This was at the beginning of September where they did a battery of tests on me. They checked my heart, lungs and how far my liver disease had progressed. They injected some dye through my body and I went for an MRI. They collated all the information and on my last day called me into a room.

46. I remember that I was there with my wife and GRO-A who was a good friend of mine and who was also a Manor House Group member. Two doctors came to see me and told me the situation I was in. Dr Davis said I needed a liver transplant and they reckoned that I had around 6 months to live. They gave me the opportunity to go on the transplant list and it was up to me what I wanted to do. That was a really difficult time. My kids were 5, 6 and 9 at the time. When I was told I kept thinking how unfair it was. You can imagine the thought of leaving three young children without a dad. I think I would have coped better with the news if I wasn't a parent. It worried me so much. I didn't want to leave them and I said that I wanted to live and to be put on the transplant list; I wanted to see them grow up.

47. I knew at this point that not many haemophiliacs had received transplants; I think at the time that only 39 people had. I went home to wait. I was just being sick and having bowel movements 9 times a day. At night time I was getting awful cramps in my calves I couldn't sleep; I would just lay on the floor. I would cry some nights because the pain was awful. I knew it had something to do with the water tablets I was taking because I had all these fluids building up in me. Whatever I was eating would come out one way or the other. I told the hospital this and that I felt really unwell. They admitted me. I was in MRI for a total of 3 and a half weeks. We had booked a holiday and I asked the liver specialist if could go away with my kids for a week. He told me I couldn't go because I was too sick. We had planned to go to Scarborough. I told my family to go without me and to enjoy themselves but it broke my heart. I knew that while they were away there was a possibility I could die.

48. We had a really good social worker at the time. When my family came back from holiday I asked my social worker "whether one would get more benefits from being a widow or being a single parent". They told me that they believed one would receive more being a widow and so I decided I would ask Marie to marry me.

49. We got married on the 3rd of October 1998. The jewellers, Michael Roberts, where I had worked part time, provided the rings. MRI provided the catering and the room; even the registrars waived their fee. GRO-A brought the flowers as he was my best man. The wedding was all covered by the GRO-C evening news as I wanted people to know what had happened to me. I attach as exhibit WITN0679002 a copy of a photograph of me on my wedding day looking yellow, gaunt and with sores on my face.

50. On 6th October I was transferred to St James hospital. They kept me in hospital because I was second on the list for an AB liver. When the doctors would go home I would jokingly say 'when you're driving home, cause a car crash' which is a very horrible thing to say but I was desperate to live. I had to rely on someone else to die for me to live and I know to think in this way is very selfish. To be put in that position is not nice. At the end of the day the only way I could carry on living was if someone else died. I was transferred to Leeds and they monitored me and took bloods everyday.

51. On Friday 9th October one of the male nurses put a big board at the bottom of my bed. I asked what it was for and he told me that now the liver disease had really kicked in (they didn't tell me how bad I actually was but I knew) they had to monitor me every hour because they knew how close I was to death. The board had lots of charts which I didn't look at. At this point I was really scared. I rang home, I was really upset and I told my wife it wasn't looking good and that they were monitoring me really carefully and that I was really worried.

52. My family took it that I was going to die that day. When they came in and saw me they were devastated. When you get to a point in life when the end is very near, there's a worry that you can't explain. It is a scared, frightening worry. I would look at the photograph of my three kids on the side of my locker. I had a lot of visitors and family come to see me. The doctor came to me at 7 o'clock that evening with a nurse and took lots of blood for tests. The sister of the ward said 'I'm going to let the cat out of the bag' and told me that they had found me a donor. I have found this very difficult to say for the purpose of this statement because of the emotion it brings back. It's not too often that I've spoken about it without breaking down.

53. Just to hear those words "found me a donor" is just indescribable. It is one of the most fantastic things I have ever heard in all my life. We were all smiling. Everything started to happen very quickly. From being at the bottom of a barrel and being worried sick to being given a chance of life was unbelievable. My kids didn't deserve to lose their dad. My wife and my sister stayed over with me. The only things that kept me going in that period was all that I had to do was get on the trolley to go down to theatre because I had a chance of life. I had to remain upbeat at all times.

54. I had to pack in smoking or they would not have done the transplant so I kicked the habit immediately when they did the first assessment in September. Prior to this I had smoked around 18 cigarettes a day.

55. On 10th October 1998 at 6.00 am I had my last ever shot of Factor VIII concentrate. When they took my liver out and replaced it with the donor my blood started to naturally clot. Not only did the transplant save my life it also cured my haemophilia.

56. Coming out of the operation and for the next few days I was on cloud nine. I don't remember too much. I wasn't in intensive care for too many days. I can remember GRO-A being there and I saw him crying. That man was

incredible for the support he gave me and my family. He would pick my family up from GRO-C and take them wherever they needed to go as my wife couldn't drive. He would bring them to see me at the MRI or Leeds. He was fantastic I could not have wished for a better friend.

57. I did suffer rejection after the first week and I went on steroids. I believe that they flatten your immune system. It took 3 years for me to be physically well again. Mentally the scars will always be there. I was so close to death. My sister didn't tell me for 5 years but said 'when you came out of theatre we didn't recognise you'. I attach as Exhibit WITN0679003 a copy of a photograph with my daughter just prior to my transplant and photographs of me just after the transplant.

58. Within a year I started to attend meeting with the Manor House Group (MHG) again. I had been given this gift of life and I wanted to use it to campaign. In 2007 I gave my story on the opening day to the Archer inquiry. I attended every session of the Archer inquiry apart from one afternoon session when I was on holiday. When you look at the Archer report and how thick it is, Lord Archer made around 7 recommendations. Penrose was a much bigger Inquiry and a much thicker report but only had 1 recommendation. I was in the auditorium when it was read out and that is why it all kicked off. Everyone was so frustrated.

59. The MHG still exists but because of what happened to me in my personal life last year we have put things on the backburner. Individually people still do things. A lot of people don't want others to know who they are; they want to remain private because they are quite well known in the communities they live in. I am still secretary/treasurer although we haven't done anything with regards to finances in a while. Over the years we have managed to obtain some grants. People have done their own individual fundraising in their own towns or city. There have been individual donations as well which have allowed us to do things such as chartering coaches to London for lobbies. The last thing we were involved in was probably around 2010. Different members of the group have been down

to Downing Street several times and we presented Number 10 signed by 30,000 people just for recompense for what has been done to those infected with contaminated blood.

60. We have also pushed for Inquiries in the past. When Southern Ireland had their inquiry and these issues were happening in Canada as well we were pushing for a similar inquiry to be conducted in the UK as the cases are the same; we all had the same viruses via the same route. The Canadian government at the time set aside 458 million to compensate 20,000 people. France, Switzerland and Japan have convicted health ministers on the face of these cases. Health ministers never reply to us, civil servants were encouraged to never speak about this. It was only ever me who actually got a written reply from Alan Millburn. All the rest of the correspondence was signed by civil servants. The correspondence to the MHG is all with individuals rather than a general library. We met certain health ministers such as Frank Dobson and John Farham who told us there was no point doing what we were doing as there was nothing in the pot.

61. In 2010 we lobbied our MP in GRO-C and GRO-A's MP, the late Paul Goggins did a lot for our campaign. They persuaded Andy Burnham to meet with a few members of the Manor House Group. This resulted from a demonstration we did outside of his office which ruined his constituent meeting. He agreed to meet with us but we weren't allowed to tell a soul. Civil servants had advised him not to meet us. We told him that HCV victims had been kicked into the long grass. We told him about the Archer inquiry and that more money was made available to those infected with HIV but not those with HCV and they weren't planning to address this until 2014.

62. Andy put something in motion that meant no matter who came in to power in the next May election they had to take a look at the Skipton fund. As a result we ended up getting an extra £25,000 and those with Stage 2 symptoms were put on the same annual payment as HIV victims. Sadly

many members of our group didn't qualify for Stage 2 so they were left out. These members felt let down and blamed me. Some of the members were really upset they had been left out again. Personally I took on the guilt of that and have never been able to enjoy the money from the Skipton Fund as a result.

63. I live with the stigma of HCV. I would not tell anyone that I was a haemophiliac; I just said that I had arthritis problems for fear of people linking HIV and HCV with me; the adverts of the tombstones falling down in the late 1980s and 90s were awful. Comedians would joke about AIDS and at the same time about haemophiliacs. I also didn't tell anyone about my brother dying of HIV. We used some form of bleeding reason for his death. I do remember the coroner recording death by misadventure.

64. I also didn't tell anyone about my HCV for fear of anyone finding out at my children's school. I did not want them to have issues and certainly I was very conscious of kids coming round for parties and if they knew the parents not allowing their children to come round to play nor eating anything with out children.

65. That is why I also didn't do any press at the time either. However, when I was having my liver assessment I then thought I had nothing to lose; before I had been told I would get a transplant I went to the GRO-C news. I had some amazing support from neighbours. Since then I have done TV/Radio and news articles about it. Lots of people are supportive of me and tell my kids "I saw your Dad on TV"

66. I separated from my wife as a result of everything that happened. She didn't sign up to nurse me through all these years. I know she married me when I was dying. She has jokingly said she got cheated because I lived. Although joking when she said it, since then we don't get on like we used to. I eventually could not live with someone who didn't love me anymore. When you've been through all of this and have gone through so many bad times over the years you need someone to love you and it just wasn't there and I couldn't handle it. Before I left I actually sought help through

counselling which was paid for by the government through the Hepatitis C trust. The counselling also brought up a lot of things from the past such as the loss of my brother and how bad life has been. I did ask my wife at the time if she wanted counselling either with me or alone but she didn't want to go.

67. I just think over the years with all she had to put up with and the way I've been, most of the time I wasn't the easiest person to live with. She got the ear battering of all my ailments. In June 2015 I walked out. The pressure of this also came about after we fostered two haemophiliac boys; one was a baby with an inhibitor. We lived at the hospital as a result, taking him to and from. I would still do it all again. My life has been saved so I would do the same for anyone else.

68. My LFT levels have been up and down from about 2006 onwards. I got admitted to St James's at one point because my ALT levels were in the 90s when they should be in the 40s. Around 5 years ago a stenographer at LGI carried out the scan and asked me a question which stumped me. She said 'have you never had any intervention?' asking if I had even been opened up. I could only take this as meaning that she could see the narrowing of my bile duct or something similar and whether they were reluctant to open up people like me I do not know. I know that I have seen somewhere reference to stenosis.

69. I had a fibroscan which revealed I have fatty deposits around my liver which can cause fibrosis of the liver, strokes, cirrhosis. I should be having my blood tested every 3 months but the trouble is clinics are overrun as transplants are so successful so sometimes it can take up to 12 months to get an appointment. I am always glad after having a blood test on a Friday when I do not get a call on the following Monday or Tuesday as this means that everything must be ok.

70. As early as 1994/95 a number of us signed up with J Keith Park & Co, solicitors, to investigate negligence claims. It was either against the Manchester health authority and/or the Department of Health from what I

can remember. Quite a lot of people were involved. We were quite UK spread. This was just litigation in regards to Hepatitis C. Quite a few years down the line there were a few of us who had to go to the legal aid board in Chester. We were told the funding was being pulled because our case would not go anywhere. Graham Ross (the solicitor) appealed this decision. I can't quite remember whether he was late in appealing but the case collapsed at this point. I thought the solicitor let us down at the time. Legal Aid was withdrawn and no one pursued the case. We were disheartened. At the time I recall we had built our hopes up only for them to be knocked down. I decided for whatever reason to shred all the letters in this regard.

71. I have still never grieved for my brother because I'm so angry his life was taken away from him. I've hardly been to his grave. I went for a period of 7 years when I never went; I just couldn't bring myself to go.

72. On the 15th June 1997 we planted a tree at the Upper House in memory of all the haemophiliacs who had passed away as a result of contaminated blood. It is impossible to know how many have died; we feel this is information that has been covered up.

Section 6. Treatment/care/support

73. When the Government announced the uplift in payments in 2011 they also provided £300million for counselling which was decades too late. One haemophiliac who unfortunately is no longer alive said we should have been offered after event counselling for PTSD, but we were never offered it.

74. I got counselling when my marriage started to break down but I was never offered any counselling at the time I was advised of my infections. At the MRI they had a counsellor for HIV patients called Meg Openshaw. The

doctors felt that I needed some form of counselling because I was angry about what had happened to me. She came out to see us but all she did was talk about other people and offer me condoms.

75. I have attended a lot of funerals. At one of them Meg said "I wonder who's going to be next". I think eventually she was moved on but I'm not sure why.

76. I have had issues with dental treatment. I have always had my dental treatment at MRI up until recently where I have had to go to a normal dental hospital. When I went to the hygienist to have my teeth cleaned I realised there was something not right. She was gowned up a few times and put around 3 pairs of rubber gloves on. This is when I started to feel dirty. I didn't know how she would be able to control her instruments through so much protection. She had obviously read something. I thought something I don't want to know about and that she must have thought I had vCJD.

77. My notes would have different colour stickers on them to highlight that I had been infected. The treating consultants always made sure that we never got our hands on our notes.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

78. In 2004 I received £20,000 Stage 1 payment from the Skipton Fund and received £25,000 Stage 2 payment from them. I received the additional £25,000 when the Stage 2 payment was increased following MHG lobbying.

79. I got £12,800 per annum from 2011 which I have received since then by monthly payments. Monthly payments have now been increased to a total

of £28,000 per annum; the increases recommended since the Inquiry commenced.

80. I receive disability benefits; I get the enhanced rate of care and mobility so I get a mobility vehicle

81. When I was arrested last year for an offence I did not commit and for which I was acquitted; I lost all my other benefits. As a result of that I sold my flat which I had paid for with the money I got from the Skipton Fund. As I have sold the flat this is regarded as capital and accordingly I am not entitled to benefits.

82. I have also claimed from the Caxton Fund for my funeral. My funeral is paid for. At the time it was £3,500 and I had to pay £200 towards it.

83. A lot of people have claimed a lot from the Caxton Fund but I refused to. I felt so let down because so many members of our group got nothing. Because of this I have felt unable to make any further claim.

84. The Skipton Fund, now the EIBSS, means nothing to me. To me it is not an ex gratia payment,it is "shut up money". Its never been acknowledgement of what has been done to us

85. I do remember in the early days when I was dying of liver disease I couldn't get the care component of Disability Living Allowance; I kept getting turned down. A girl down the road from me got it because she had a sore back but how could a man dying from liver disease not be entitled? I wrote to doctors at the Haematology Centre and the consultants campaigned for me and I finally got it. That year my gas bill was £506 which was the first time I had ever been in debt. I needed the heating on full blast all the time. I used to "melt" the kids because it was so hot in the house but I was so cold.

86. The lady from the Upper House donated £700 for us to have a holiday. We went to Scarborough and we tried to book to go to the campsite we were meant to go to as a family but couldn't as I was so ill. However that was fully booked so we ended up going to the campsite next door to it.

Section 8. Other Issues

87. The Manor House Group has achieved a lot. We were told that we would never be able to get anything. The Skipton Fund came about because of our pressure. Our chairman's MP was the deputy chair of The House of Commons. His other MP was Roy Hattersley who was high profile. We were heavily involved in the review of the Skipton Fund in 2010/11. It was our actions that got Andy Burnham involved. Even when he became the Mayor of Manchester he still let us go and see him. Although he left parliament he saw this as unfinished business. He helped us get this Inquiry although he was more in favour of a Hillsborough type Inquiry.

88. As an outcome I would like total closure. I feel we should be compensated because then it means something, instead of giving you a few grand here and there in the hope everyone will die before you get to the compensation stage. Feeding us bits of money doesn't mean anything. Its okay just saying 'sorry this shouldn't have happened' but they should compensate us. It's all very well saying that this should not have happened.

89. I remember the labour MP for Wythenshawe saying "I wish we had done something when we had the money". I remember the Labour party being awash with money. When you look at the repatriation of Kuwait and the Iraq war; there was money available. The matter could have been done and dusted a long time ago.

90. A lot of our MHG members have now passed away. We had members who were co-infected with HIV and HCV. In fact Mr H from the very first

meeting was co-infected. We had over 10 in our group which wasn't a huge number but they wanted to fight for Hepatitis C as well. They are all dead now; they all died within 10 years of us being formed.

91. One hears stories of people who didn't even need the treatment and being infected. I read the story of one boy who didn't need treatment and was infected with everything.

92. I believe that too many doctors had too much power. I believe they has control over their own budgets and choose where they got their products from.

93. A lot of people did not like Dr Wensley but I did. He cut back on treatment at a certain time and said to only treat the really necessary bad bleeds. I remember that he said this to me at some point in the early 80s. When the HIV news came out he turned to the Chairman of the Northwest group and said something along the lines of 'aren't you glad I cut back on the treatment' which is another sign that says they knew what was happening.

94. This is not just about me. I am doing this for my brother too who will never see justice.

Anonymity

I do not wish to apply for anonymity

I wish 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

DAVID FIELDING

Dated 30TH AUGUST 2019.

MEDICAL SUMMARY

(This summary is not intended to be exhaustive but sets out key points in the records relevant to the Statement)