

Witness Name: Eleanor Jane Dorricott

Statement No: WITN1197001

Exhibits: WITN1197002 - 5

Dated: February 2019

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF ELEANOR JANE DORRICOTT

I, Eleanor Jane Dorricott will say as follows:-

Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is Eleanor Jane Dorricott. I was born on the GRO-C 1996 and I am 22 years old.
2. I live with my mother at GRO-C I am currently working in a law firm as a marketing assistant.
3. My late father was born on 23rd July 1967 and sadly passed away on 3rd April 2015, as a result of being infected with the Hepatitis C Virus (HCV).
4. I provide this statement in response to a request under Rule 9 of the Inquiry Rules 2006. I am aware that my grandmother Jennifer Ann Dorricott, my mother Ann Dorricott and my sister Sarah Dorricott will also be giving statements.
5. This witness statement has been prepared with benefit of access to some of my late father's medical records. If and in so far as I have been provided with limited records the relevant entries are exhibited to this statement.

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Section 2. How Affected

6. My father, Michael Paul Dorricott was born on GRO-C 1967. He suffered from mild Haemophilia A, but I do not know how he was diagnosed. I know very little about his condition and how he was infected. I have been informed that whenever he had any bumps or bleeds as a child he was treated with Cryoprecipitate. However, as his Haemophilia was only mild, he did not receive much treatment.
7. On 15th December 1982, when he was 15 years old, my father had a routine dental operation at Huddersfield Hospital, where four teeth were extracted. Prior to the operation, his dentist suggested using Cryoprecipitate. However, he was given Factor VIII instead. Please see exhibit WITN1197002 and WITN1197003. Neither my father nor his parents gave permission for him to be treated with Factor VIII and they were under the impression that he was being treated with Cryoprecipitate. They had not received any information about the risks associated with using Factor VIII. My father was not aware that liver function tests were taken before and after his operation. He did not receive any further treatment with Factor VIII.
8. In 1996, when I was born, my father decided to go to a Haemophilia centre for a check up because he had not been seen in many years. At the check up they advised that they were going to test him for infections and he was later diagnosed with the Hepatitis C Virus (HCV). He was then referred to Addenbrookes Hospital for treatment to manage his cirrhosis of the liver.
9. I do not know what information was provided to him when he was being informed of his infection.

Section 3. Other Infections

10. I am unaware of any other infections that my father may have contracted as a result of receiving contaminated blood products.

Section 4. Consent

11. I believe that my father was treated with Factor VIII without his knowledge or consent.

12. My father was aware that he was being tested for infections when he attended the check up appointment in 1996. As such, I do not consider that he was tested without his knowledge or consent.

Section 5. Impact

13. When I was younger, I knew we were not a normal family but I never really understood what was happening. I had always known that my father was ill, and that there was something not quite right, but he always tried to give me and Sarah the best life possible, which he and my mother did.

14. I do not know what year my father began his course of treatment with Interferon and Ribavirin, which was successful. I have only recently found out that my dad had such terrible side effects from this treatment. I knew he was very lethargic, but I did not know the treatment was causing such bad mood swings and aggression. At the time, I thought the treatment was helping him and making him better. I did not understand the effect it was having on him.

15. Despite the treatment being successful, my father required a transplant due to the extent of his liver cirrhosis. He was put on a waiting list and then received his first transplant in 2000, which was successful. After this, he was on lots of medication to stop his body rejecting the liver and to control the HCV. I only have vague memories of seeing my father in hospital during this time.

16. Five years after his first liver transplant, his consultant conducted another scan and found cancer in his liver. At this time, I was around 11 or 12 years old and we were living down south. I overheard my mum on the phone telling her sister that my father had cancer. I went to speak to my mum about it and she told me that he was not very well.
17. He had to wait a few months and then he had a second liver transplant. I found this time very difficult and it brought back vague, suppressed memories of him when he had his first transplant. The second transplant was successful and his HCV was undetectable.
18. We were advised that dad was cancer-free, but during his five-year routine check up my parents were told that the cancer cells had spread again and settled in the portal vein of the second transplant liver. I found out that my father had terminal cancer whilst sat at the top of our stairs; I was listening to him talking to his doctor on the phone. I have blocked out a lot of the memory of this, but I remember coming down the stairs and crying my eyes out. My father was also very upset.
19. My parents had planned to relocate to Cumbria for their retirement. My mum had already moved up to start her job and I stayed in Surrey with my father, so I could finish college. I remember my mum coming back down from Cumbria and my sister coming to stay with us, the next few days were really strange. This was a very difficult time for me as I was attending college and only 17 years old; I had just found out that my father was going to die.
20. My father was given twelve months to live. Just before he passed away there was about a month when things started to go downhill very fast. He had an infection where he completely shut off and he just slept on the sofa. When he was awake he was quite aggressive. My mum and auntie drove him to hospital, but there was nothing left and he had completely shut off. So there was no real way to say goodbye to him.

21. My father's skin had turned yellow from liver failure, his kidneys were also failing and his stomach and lungs became infected. He could no longer breathe unaided and he passed away on 3rd April 2015 at the Freeman Hospital, Newcastle. Before my father passed away, I did not think it was real.

22. I did not know the extent of my father's illness and I did not know that he would not be with us for most of my life. He died when I was only 18 years old. Sarah and I should not have to lose our father at such a young age. We should not have to explain to our children why they have not got a grandfather. We should not have to walk down the aisle without him. My mother should not have to be a widow at 48 years old. This could have been avoided. This should not have happened; we have to live our lives with no father to support us.

23. Watching my father slowly deteriorate and watching him die whilst holding his hand, has severely affected my mental health. Since he passed away, I have suffered from severe anxiety, stress, depression and suicidal thoughts. I had never suffered from panic attacks before my father died, but after he passed I had one a week on average. When I started university in 2015 this increased to about two or three a week and I felt suicidal. I had never felt like this before and it was getting to the point where I could not leave the house. In January 2017, during my second year, I dropped out of university due to the severity of my anxiety. I am seeking therapy to help my mental health, and I now have CBT and bereavement therapy. However, these events will forever be with me. I believe had my father not have died, this would not be the case.

24. My father asked us to make sure his death certificate stated he had been infected by the HCV caused by tainted blood. The doctor at the Freeman Hospital refused to do this, we had a Coroner's Inquest on 30th October 2015. The coroner requested letters from the doctors that treated my father, which are exhibited as WITN1197004 and WITN1197005. These clearly state that the cause of death was the HCV from contaminated blood products. As such, the Coroner ensured that the death certificate stated this.

Section 6. Treatment/Care/Support

25. I was not offered counselling or emotional support when my father was unwell or following his death. Since my mental health has been affected, I have since sought counselling and therapy.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

26. Although I am aware that my parents received some financial assistance, I do not know any further details regarding this.

Anonymity, disclosure and redaction

27. I confirm that I do not wish to apply for anonymity. I understand this statement will be published and disclosed as part of the Inquiry.

28. I am happy to give oral evidence if necessary.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed.....

GRO-C

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Dated.....06/02/19.....