

Witness Name: A V Farrugia
Statement No: WITN1218001
Exhibits:WITN1218002-08
Dated: January 2019

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF ANTHONY VICTOR FARRUGIA

I, Anthony Victor Farrugia will say as follows:-

Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is Anthony Farrugia, DOB **GRO-C** 1971 and I live at **GRO-C**
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2. My father, Barry Farrugia, died on 22 September 1986 after being infected with HIV and Hepatitis C through contaminated blood products.
3. I have also had two uncles die after being infected with contaminated blood products **GRO-C**
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4. This witness statement has been prepared without the benefit of access to my late father's 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 Affected

5. I do not have much first-hand knowledge of how my father was infected as I was only a child at the time. The information set out in the paragraphs below has been taken from his medical records unless otherwise stated.
6. My father suffered from mild Haemophilia A.
7. He was treated at the Royal London Hospital in Whitechapel (under Dr Colvin) and the University Hospital of Wales in Cardiff (under Professor Bloom) which is where he went when we were on holiday.
8. In 1977 we were on the beach when my dad had a recurrence of a forearm bleed and was taken to hospital. This was the first occasion on which he was given Factor VIII. This is confirmed by his treatment records for the period 1973 to 1981 which are exhibited at **WITN1218002**.
9. There is also a note in his Royal London Hospital records dated 12 August 1977 which states *"Telephone call from Professor Bloom. This patient has now developed a Factor VIII inhibitor and is in hospital in Cardiff being treated with high doses of Factor VIII concentrate."*
10. I believe that my father was infected with Hepatitis B in 1977. I recall that I saw him very jaundiced on several occasions including in August 1977 after the first administration of Factor VIII. His medical records confirm that the first positive Austria Antigen test was on 2 September 1977 and that he subsequently developed chronic active Hepatitis in June 1984. He was given steroids as treatment for this.
11. His notes records *"In 1977 he had viral hepatitis with dark urine, pale stools and enlarged tender liver. He has subsequently remained HepBsAg +ve although his titre has fallen steadily (now positive only on R.I.A). He is HepBeAg & Ab negative."*

12. There is now shown to me marked **WITN1218003** a copy of a letter from Dr Colvin to the Regional Blood Transfusion Centre which states that my father developed hepatitis after only receiving cryoprecipitate. He had in fact had Factor VIII from 11 August 1977.
13. According to his medical records my father started home treatment in 1981.
14. I believe that my dad was infected with Hepatitis C (then known as Non-A Non-B) and HIV in the early 1980's. There is a note dated 13 August 1984 which states *"Agree that this is chronic hepatitis. Prof Lennard-Jones wonders whether non A non B is the main cause of trouble in view of weak HBsAg and e negativity."*
15. Dad started to be treated with Armour Factor VIII in 1981 when he went onto home treatment.
16. Dr Colvin had put my dad on Porcine Factor VIII in 1982 but when he went on holiday, the replacement doctor injected my father without the Piriton that he needed. After this, he was moved back onto NHS Lister Factor VIII.
17. There is no warning of risks of HIV in his medical notes.
18. In June 1984 he was found to have abnormal LFTs and an ultrasound showed an enlarged spleen. There were no symptoms of obstructive jaundice. Over that period his notes record that he lost weight and became increasingly depressed.
19. According to his records he was tested for HTLV III antibodies in or around September 1984. There is a letter from Dr Tedder dated 9 October 1984 which refers to testing and states that he had also received samples from the AIDS Haemophiliac Surveillance Group. A copy of this letter is now shown to me marked **WITN1218004**.

20. When my father told me that he was HIV positive, I knew straight away the severity of the condition and what was going to happen as Rock Hudson had just been diagnosed and it was all over the news. I was absolutely distraught.

21. I was on my own in a children's home at the time and I had no support available to me.

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23. A copy of a letter from Dr Colvin setting out my father's medical history is now shown to me marked **WITN1218005**.

Section 3. Other Infections

24. There is now shown to me marked **WITN1218006** a letter dated 31 January 1985 which indicates that my father was also exposed to Hepatitis A, CMV and EBV.

Section 4. Consent

25. I am not aware of what testing my father knew about or consented to.

26. There is no indication from his records that he was aware he was being tested for any blood borne viruses.

Section 5. Impact of the Infection

27. There is now shown to me marked **WITN1218007**. A copy of the Medico Legal Report prepared for the HIV litigation. Paragraph 32 sets out the physical symptoms that my father suffered from as a result of his HIV infection. These included depression, abdominal pain, confusion, insomnia and candida of the mouth.

28. The psychological impact is summarised in the psychiatrist's letter dated 14 April 1986 which is exhibited at **WITN1218008**. At that time my father was diagnosed with organic brain syndrome. He had a pre existing history of depression which ran in his family.
29. In August 1986 (just prior to his death) he was on the following medications Spironolactone, Lactulose, Septrin, Paracetamol, Miconazole, Amphotericin suspension, Dexa rhinospray, Corsadyl mouthwash and Aludrox.
30. My dad split up from my birth mother in 1973 when I was 18 months old and in 1976 he married a nurse whom he had met in a Welsh hospital. I grew up believing that she was my birth mother rather than my step mother.
31. She was physically and mentally very abusive to me and my brothers and it was an extremely difficult childhood for us. In 1984 things got really bad and I kept running away from home to get away from the beatings. There had been some involvement with the NSPCC but I didn't really feel like I could tell people what was really happening at home because I believed she was my birth mother.
32. In November 1984 I ran away again. It was freezing cold and I didn't return home until 3am, by which stage my dad knew I was missing and had gone crazy. A few days later my dad asked me if I wanted to go and live with my mum. I believe this was the first time I had heard that my dad's wife wasn't really our mum although I note that there is a letter in my father's medical records that states I was made aware of this in late 1981.
33. In January 1985 I moved to Luton to live with my real mum, who I had never met properly. She had been to our house a few times when we were younger but she was always introduced to us as an 'Auntie'.
34. The relationship with my mum was okay for the first few months but it was clear that she preferred animals to children. By June 1985 our relationship had broken down and I started staying at a friend's house.

35. During the summer holidays a car pulled up beside me and they said that they were social services. They took me to Houghton Lodge where I stayed for about 5 weeks, before they found me a placement in a children's home opposite my secondary school. I moved in September 1985.
36. Dad came to visit me on my birthday in 1985 with my brothers. He came back a week after my birthday when he sat me down and told me that he was HIV positive.
37. He had started to get ill in July 1984 and, in hindsight, that was when everything really fell apart at home. If I'd have known about my dad's infection and his health then I wouldn't have gone and stayed with my mum. I would rather have stayed and taken the beatings. My twin brother David had to stay there and live with it during this time, and it must have been terrible for him.
38. I remember one day sitting in the garden to the hospital. I was eating an ice cream and my dad went to take a bite, but was stopped by a nurse. That was tough to get to grips with as a child, not even being able to share an ice cream with your dad.
39. The illness was attacking my dad's brain as he had been diagnosed with Organic Brain Syndrome, and he was becoming very aggressive towards everyone. I have found reading the psychology reports from 10.04.1986 (when he was sectioned) very disturbing.
40. One weekend, when Dad was ill, his wife went away for the weekend. He served up my brothers a half raw dinner but my brother's just had to eat it because they didn't know how he would react if they didn't. This wasn't who my dad was, but it was the effect that the illness was having on his mental health.
41. My dad suffered from the stigma of the virus from his own family. His brother's wife would not allow him to see his niece. His wife's family would have a separate mug, plate and cutlery to be used if he was ever invited for dinner.

42. I visited my family for Christmas in 1985, at which stage my father's health was deteriorating. I didn't see them again until April 1986, shortly after which my father was sectioned at London Whitechapel. This was the last time I saw my father. I was due to see him in September 1986, but he died just before I had the opportunity to see him again.

43. My dad died in September 1986, and I was taken to the back of the children's home and told the news. My uncle David helped to arrange the funeral, and I know he encountered some difficulties with the funeral home as a result of my dad's infection. There were even rumours going around at the time that people with AIDS were being cremated and their ashes left in the casket, unbeknown to the family members. I now often wonder what was actually in his coffin.

44. My dad had left everything to his wife as he believed she would look after us, but she took everything and left us with nothing. David was kicked out of the house within two days of my father's death. I lost all of my childhood possessions; everything was gone. She took the one child that was hers and left, going back to Wales. My older brother was over 18 so was left to live his life, whilst David was put into care.

45. It was a terrible time as David and I are twins and instead of being re-united in the care system (which I was already in) David was placed in a children's home 100 miles away from me.

46. A few months after my dad died, we found out that my uncle Vickie had also been infected with HIV. GRO-D
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47. A few years later, my uncle David also found out that he was infected. The Contaminated Blood Scandal has destroyed my entire family. At the time we just believed what we were told; that it was all a tragic accident.

48. I moved out of the children's home when I was 16 and moved back in with my mum until I was 18 and secured a mortgage on my own property. I got a job

as a welding apprentice and I lost contact with my family; I didn't see any of my brothers again until August 2010. (I was in contact with David from the age of 18)

49. Over the years I heard all of the AIDS jokes and it was easier to go along with it and laugh despite the fact it was so hurtful. I think I was laughing just to cope because if I didn't questions would be asked. I never spoke to anyone about my dad's infections and it wasn't until 2014 that I went public and spoke out.
50. I got an email in 2008 from my dad's sister telling me to have a look at the Tainted Blood website. It was seeing the information on this website that prompted me to request my father's medical records, which made for extremely difficult reading.
51. Reading through my father's medical records and becoming aware of the truth of what really happened to him made me very ill. At one stage I was coughing up blood and my weight dropped five stone. I was diagnosed with IBS, psoriasis and depression (for which I refuse to take pills). It was like having to re-live everything. I shouldn't have had to go through it all; it should have been dealt with by the Government when I was a child.
52. I endured a colonoscopy and endoscopy without any pain medication and I was told I could have bowel cancer. This worried me so much as it made me think of the suffering my father went through with a terminal illness. Ultimately, though I was told that all of my health problems had been caused through stress.
53. It is worse for me now than it was when I was a child because I understand more now. At the moment I am not sure if this has ruined my life or defined it; only time will tell.
54. I wish I could have told my dad what was happening to me. He must have just thought that I was playing up when I ran away.

55. My step mother received the fruits of everything. A lot of widows have remarried and moved on but the children have received nothing and can't simply move on. We were deserted and forgotten about by both his wife and the Government.

56. I am now married and have three children. I am a full time house husband and I work in chicken management for about 30 hours a week. I do struggle with my children and I believe this is probably a result of my difficult family life when I was a child. On top of that, campaigning has taken up a big part of my life and I feel like this has made me slightly distant from my children. I find it difficult to interact with my children as a father should. It is a big struggle for me.

57. I still cry everyday. This shouldn't have happened. My dad has 18 grandchildren who he was never able to meet. I have never been able to even start the grieving process as what really happened has never been publically admitted.

58. It was said to Angie, my dad's sister, that it was best to just go away and forget it ever happened. This was when my father had just died of AIDS and her other brother, Vickie, had just been diagnosed.

59. I spoke to Dr Colvin recently and I told him it was important for me to find out exactly what happened; who gave my father HIV, at what hospital and when. He told me that it wasn't worth getting angry or frustrated about.

Section 6. Treatment/care/support

60. According to my father's records he received counselling in February 1985, 10 April 1986, 21 May 1986 and 26 June 1988. He saw a psychiatrist with whom he discussed AIDS.

61. I was never offered any counselling or support at the time, despite the fact that social services were heavily involved in my life. We saw child psychiatrists but this was through the haemophilia department and was mainly in relation to the way David and I behaved at home. It was so tough not being able to talk about what was happening. I couldn't talk to anyone about my dad other than my social worker.

62. Some time later I was able to access 19 sessions of counselling through the Skipton Fund. This did nothing for me. The person who was counselling me had no idea what I was talking about. It is impossible to forget everything that has happened when it has still never been fully admitted.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

63. David and I went through the 1991 Litigation but were told, after a lot of work, that we had to inform his widow about it. She came in and took the lion's share of the settlement, leaving David and I with next to nothing. By this time she had already met someone else and had another baby. I had to sign a waiver as part of the litigation as I was told that if I didn't sign it then nobody would receive anything.

64. We also received another payment of £2,000 following the litigation, but this was too little too late. We had already been kicked out of our house and left with nowhere to go.

65. The MacFarlane Trust payments were given to the widows and the children were only given £1000.

66. I applied for the Skipton Fund payments which were shared between Dad's widow and his five children.

67. When they paid the £10,000 widows payment my step mum sent me a cheque for £1600.

Section 8. Other Issues

68. The HIV Litigation medical report refers to a letter in the records dated 7 June 1983 which indicated my father was given a suspect batch of Factor VIII in 1980. This letter has never been provided to me when I have received copies of my father's records and I therefore believe the records that have been provided are incomplete.

69. I think the Inquiry needs to look at psychological support available to those infected and affected, and they need to ensure it is running effectively alongside the Inquiry.

70. My dad was a mild haemophiliac – there was no treatment that he received that was for a life threatening injury. I want to know why he was given copious amounts of blood products when they weren't needed.

71. The Inquiry needs to address the support available for the children of those who were infected. It feels like we have been forgotten.

72. No person should have had to go through what my dad went through, and the fact that so many people suffered is wrong. I am ultimately looking for redress for what was done to my father. We've had 33 years of having to live with this and deal with it, everything being dragged up and relationships being undone. It's still ongoing to this day and I just want it finished with.

Anonymity

73. I do not wish to remain anonymous.

74. I definitely 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 22nd Feb 2019

Medical Chronology

10.07.1978 – Letter from Dr Colvin asking Mr Farrugia's wife to go for a blood test.

19.04.1981 – 'Mr Farrugia experienced an extremely uncomfortable hot feeling with some tightness in the chest immediately following this dose of Hyate and he was not given this again'.

02.07.1981 – 'After the Factor VIII was given... Mr Farrugia complained of a hot feeling, a cough, a tight chest and itchy skin'

20.06.1983 – 'severe haemophiliac' – 'feeling generally unwell, sweaty and lethargic'

18.09.1984 – Barry 'seems almost but not quite able to eliminate the Hepatitis B antigen'

03.10.1984 – Internal letter from Dr Colvin – the Hepatitis remains active and 'the outlook is rather gloomy'