

Witness Name: David Pescod

Statement No: WITN1464001

Exhibits: WITN1464002-9

✓ Dated: December 2018

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF DAVID PESCOD

I, David Pescod, will say as follows:-

Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is David Pescod, Date of Birth GRO-1951 and I live at GRO-C
GRO-C
2. I was infected with Hepatitis C as a result of treatment with contaminated blood products.
3. 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

4. I suffer from mild Haemophilia A which requires intermittent treatment. Fortunately, in later life I have not had to receive much treatment.

5. There is now shown to me marked **WITN1464002** a copy of my treatment record from the UK Haemophilia Database Office which shows that I frozen fresh plasma in 1970 and cryoprecipitate between 1971 and 1980.
6. This also records, under the Patient Hep C Data that on 22 April 1980, after I had an operation on my nasal septum, I was given a transfusion of Armour Factor VIII, batch 040405.
7. The operation was carried out at the Royal Free Hospital, London. My consultant was Christine Lee. This was the first time that I was treated with Factor VIII concentrate. A copy of the discharge summary is now shown to me marked **WITN1464003**.
8. After the operation I was fine for a few days but noticed that my energy levels were lower than usual and I was tired with nausea. I remember this distinctly as I was making a double bed from pine wood at home and was frustrated by my inability to lift the timber and complete tasks.
9. I attended the Royal Free Hospital for follow up on 29 April 1980 and was seen by Dr Peter Kernoff. He asked me 'have you been sick yet?'. The sense of probability in this question concerned me as it appeared they had a deeper understanding of what was happening.
10. I returned home, weak and depressed. I had no energy and the following day when I attempted to do some carpentry I was violently sick and was projectile vomiting.
11. In May 1980 I was informed that I had been infected with acute Non-A Non-B Hepatitis after I was re-admitted to hospital. A copy of the letter to me GP setting out my diagnosis is now shown to me marked **WITN1464004**. This confirms that I was moderately jaundiced and that in view of the temporal relationship between my treatment with Factor VIII and acute hepatitis it was likely I had non-A non B hepatitis (NANBH) "which is known to be transmitted by this form of blood product."

12. Before my treatment with Factor VIII I was not warned of any risk of infection. It is clear from the letter in my medical notes from N M Bass (Registrar to Prof Sherlock) that the risk was known at the time my treatment was administered.
13. In 1985 I had a long conversation with Dr Kernoff regarding the risk of AIDs and the remote possibility of sexual transmission to my wife as recorded in the letter exhibited at **WITN1464005**.
14. In 1990 I received a letter from Dr Lee which stated they had now identified one of the agents responsible for NANBH and named the hepatitis C virus (HCV). The letter went on to confirm that they had a new test available which measured the antibody to HCV and showed past infection. The letter confirmed that my anti-HCV was positive on 17 May 1990. I was not aware I was being tested for the same. A copy of the letter is now exhibited at **WITN1464006**.
15. In 1998 Professor Christine Lee at the Royal Free stated that she believed I had been infected with Hepatitis C in 1974; six years before my nasal operation and the onset of symptoms because this was the first time I was treated with large pool unsterilized clotting factor concentrate. Her letter is exhibited at **WITN1464007**. I find this hard to believe and if it is true, angry that I was not informed of my infection for so long.

Section 3. Other Infections

16. In 1997 I was told by letter that I may have been exposed to vCJD.
17. I also believe that I was exposed to Hepatitis B as I tested positive for the antibodies.

Section 4. Consent

18. I believe I was tested without my consent because I was not aware that I was being tested for NANBH, HIV or Hepatitis C. I assume they just kept testing the blood samples that were taken from me as the reasons for taking the blood samples were never discussed with me.

Section 5. Impact of the Infection

19. My wife was 38 weeks pregnant at the time of my diagnosis and I was desperate to be at the birth of my son. The doctors remained ambiguous about whether I was allowed to attend the birth and told me it was subject to negotiation with Bart's Hospital, where my son was to be born.
20. When I was later told that I would not be allowed to attend I was absolutely devastated. I swore at the doctors with words I rarely use in public and I was overcome with emotion. I had been so intent on being there for the birth to make up for the difficulties we had faced with my NANBH, that we had not made any back-up plans for other attendants to be with my wife; my wife therefore had to give birth alone.
21. When our son, Jack, was born on GRO-C 1980, he suffered from a GRO-C GRO-C and was placed in intensive care. My wife really struggled without having her son by her bed side and missing out on the normal bonding that occurs.
22. Over the next few years my health concerns diverted from haemophilia to hepatitis and its consequential matters. My infection had an increasingly negative effect on my sense of worth and my confidence, which not only made me struggle with my sense of identity but also put considerable strain on my marriage.
23. In October 1988 I was found to have chronic abnormality of liver function with NANBH. I was also diagnosed with hepatosplenomegaly as a result of chronic

NANBH. Although my liver function tests were abnormal at that stage I refused to consider Interferon treatment because it was still in the trial phase.

24. In 1996 I was made aware that there were currently no treatments available for Hepatitis C. I started to purchase traditional Chinese medicine, at a cost of approximately £100 per month. With the help of my GP I was having liver function and blood tests on a monthly basis. I kept an accurate record and observed a slight improvement in functions, which did not seem to impress the hospitals.
25. In 1998 I was buying a house in Felixstowe and applied for a mortgage to Nationwide. Whilst in a meeting in their office, I informed an assistant that I had Hepatitis C. A week later, although the mortgage had been approved, I received a letter withdrawing the offer and refunding all payments.
26. In May/June 2001 I commenced treatment with Pegylated Interferon and Ribavirin. I was first informed about the possibility of this therapy when it was in the early stages of development in March 1996 as set out in Dr Dusheiko's letter dated 12 March 1996 exhibited as **WITN1464008**.
27. This treatment had seemingly been delayed to wait for my funding to be approved.
28. I was warned that the treatment process was tough but my second wife, Kate, convinced me it was the right thing to do for her and my children. We agreed that it was probably the best time to do it, whilst I was still fairly fit and healthy, and the recent passing of my mother had given me a clear view on the pearly gates. I asked if it would be possible to meet someone who had undergone the treatment to fully prepare myself, however this request was flatly rejected by the hospital.
29. I had read everything that I could about the treatment but still had trepidation and anxiety before commencing treatment. I was given an A5 piece of paper

which listed a variety of side effects in small print, including nausea, headaches, depression, hair loss, irritant skin, rashes, sickness etc.

30. I asked several times if I would be able to continue working whilst receiving the treatment, and they had assured me this wouldn't be a problem.

31. It became clear that I was part of a drug trial run by Shering Plough, and I would not be permitted any other drugs during the treatment. This even included paracetamol, which was alarming. I wasn't sure if the doctors were working for me and the NHS or for the pharmaceutical company.

32. As I travelled home after my first Interferon injection I felt a cloud forming over me. Over the next few days I felt increasingly weak and fragile. These side effects would worsen every week until I could hardly climb the stairs and I would not want to be touched by my wife at all. Laughter was not something heard in our house for many months.

33. My skin was very sensitive and I had to moisturise every day. Not wanting to be touched made comfort difficult and sex out of the question. Emotionally I was a wreck. I had tried to continue working but in one important meeting I broke down and had to go home. I was profoundly depressed and isolated. Fortunately my employer was very understanding and allowed me to take the time off when it became clear I would be unable to work effectively.

34. When my energy was at its highest, normally the day before the next injection, I walked along Felixstowe front and have a large hot chocolate in a café but I had to ring for a taxi to get home. My appetite was all over the place and my meals consisted of snacking and junk food. I was like an adolescent snacking and watching daytime television, bursting into tears at any sentimental drama I watched. I lost weight and my hair. I did not see my sons during this period as we thought it would cause them pointless distress, and raise too many questions and anger.

35. I don't think it would have been possible to get through this without the support of my wife; I became a different person but thankfully she hadn't.
36. In December 2001 I was told that I had cleared the virus, subject to tests every 3 months. The letter confirming this is exhibited at **WITN1464009** I was still exhausted but a cloud had been removed; I was just a haemophiliac again.
37. Over the next few months I made a half hour radio documentary for BBC Norfolk about a haemophiliac who wasn't as lucky as I. He had to attend a Hepatitis C support group in Norwich prison as it was the only one available to him. The documentary revealed that the UK does not have a good record on treatment or diagnosis of Hepatitis C, with interviews with Health Trust executives and Hepatitis experts. The programme was broadcast on a Saturday evening and I was pleased to have done something for those less fortunate, but to what effect?
38. When I returned to work, it was as if I was a different person. I visited my GP who suggested I should go part-time and illustrated the improved life expectancy as a part-timer.
39. Working part-time had considerable financial consequences for me but as it was taking such a long time to recover from the Interferon treatment both emotionally and psychologically, I knew it was a decision I had to make for my health.

Section 6. Treatment/care/support

40. I did receive some counselling in 1993-94 which helped me to learn about my behaviour and tendencies to over compensate for my condition. This helped me to deal with the growing complications I was facing.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

41. Around 1998 I received £20,000 from the Skipton Fund. I was made to sign a waiver to say that no further action would be taken.
42. I received £3,500 in 2016 from the Skipton Fund, but I don't know why I received this payment. I received such little information that I thought it must have been a mistake and I would be made to pay it back.
43. On 20.04.2017 I started receiving a monthly payment of £250 from the Skipton Fund.
44. That was increased to £252 in June 2017, and it went up again when it was moved to EIBSS in April 2018, when it was moved up to £333 per month.
45. These payments were never really transparent as to why the payments were made and what they were for.
46. I wasn't happy that the Skipton Fund was a limited company and someone was profiting from distributing the money out. I was happy when it moved to the EIBSS although I never received any information regarding this reformation.

Section 8. Other Issues

47. This is about regulation. It is outrageous that something as fundamental as blood has been sourced from outside of the UK blood donor pool. It should have been better regulated.

Anonymity

48. I do not want to apply for anonymity.
49. I would be happy 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

24/1/19