

Witness Name: Gideon Bullock

Statement No: WITN1731001

Exhibit: WITN1731002 - 06

Dated: 19 October 2021

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF GIDEON BULLOCK

I, Gideon Bullock will say as follows:

Section 1: Introduction

1. My name is Gideon Bullock, son to Kenneth David Bullock, a much-loved husband, father and grandfather.
2. Kenneth was also a Haemophiliac, and like many others, he was given contaminated blood products in the early 80s, which ultimately led to his death on the 3rd of October 1998.
3. I have been delaying the necessary task of writing this statement in much the same way I have dealt with the prolonged and terrible death my father suffered over two decades ago. I have put them in a box and buried them. I've tried to ignore them for fear of re-surfacing memories which I would rather keep buried.

Section 2: How Affected

4. I realised now that his suffering, how he died, and its injustice have come to define my memory of him. The events that led to his death and the subsequent campaign have dominated my childhood's positive, happy memories.

5. To compensate, I tried to distance myself from it. Ultimately, this was a fruitless effort. I was reminded of my fathers' absence at every stage of life with a wave of anger at how unjust it was that he couldn't be there, whether it was moving to a new home, starting a new job, needing a bit of advice on a DIY chore, or getting married and being blessed with children. Worse still, knowing those grandchildren would never get to meet their grandfather. And one day, they might learn why and how he had died, how our health service had failed him, and how politicians and medical professionals had closed ranks to protect themselves and their interests.
6. I was 26 years old when he died. I had been fortunate enough to study at university and had started in my career. My father's stoicism and dedication to work were well known, and he would show strength and persistence against the steepest of odds. His condition had meant visits to the hospital were not out of the ordinary. That his condition was suddenly so serious came as a shock. We could immediately see that this visit to the hospital might take us down a different path. In just a couple of weeks, he ended up in ICU at King's College Hospital. We didn't get a chance to speak to him, to be with him.
7. We wanted to believe this wasn't going to be the end. Given the circumstances and the disease given to my father by the very institution that could grant him a transplant, why wouldn't they do it? It seemed unfathomable. My mothers' requests to see doctors were constantly refused on one pretext or another. We were given no prognosis or information and soon came to realise he was going to be left to die.
8. The last few days of his suffering were unbearable to witness. His complexion was a sickly yellow-grey colour, and his body was emaciated; he'd developed bedsores, and his eyes had turned to a jelly-like consistency through severe conjunctivitis. He couldn't move or talk or even blink, but he was still there. My very last communication with him was just over 24 hours before he died. My mother and I were at his side, and I held his hand. I told him that I loved him, and in response, he gave my hand an almost unperceivable squeeze. It was the lightest of movements, a final moment between us both. If you had been

watching, you wouldn't have seen it, but it was there and in that slight unnoticeable movement was an "I love you too" and a goodbye. When I reflect on this moment, that he was conscious enough to respond and therefore aware of the pain and discomfort, it leaves me cold. Worse still, the fear he must have felt, the fear that death was coming, that there would never be the opportunity to be with the loved ones again that surrounded his bed.

Section 3: Other Infections

N/A

Section 4: Consent

9. As far as I am aware there were no discussions or detailed information in terms of my dad's illness, or the treatment and his medical notes refer only to "exposure to blood products".

Section 5: Impact

10. In the 23 years since his death, I have become the sole support for my mother and done my best to help her through her grief and anger towards the system that killed my father. We've campaigned for justice. It hasn't been easy. I have supported her through knee operations, house moves and the realities of getting old. Every day, in every interaction with her, I am aware that she should have my father beside her to do these things. He should be here so they can grow old together and dote over their grandchildren.

11. Kenneth David Bullock had his future taken away from him. He never got to retire and leave his precious work behind. Nor was he able to grow old with his wife and meet all his grandchildren. Personally speaking, he didn't get to see me grow into my life and become the person I am today. I know he would have had plenty of advice as my career blossomed, and I very likely would not have agreed with it all but appreciated it nonetheless. I'm pretty sure he would have gotten on well with Dara, my wife, they share a similar sense of humour, and I

know he would have loved spending time with his youngest grandchildren, and I'm pretty sure they would mark his hugs as a 10 out of 10 as I did.

Section 6: Treatment/Care/Support

12.His Death Certificate reads: Multiorgan failure. Variceal haemorrhage. Hepatitis C. liver disease. Haemophilia A. **Exhibit WITN1731002**

13.In the wake of his death, we had no idea of the story which was about to unfold, and only a few weeks after his death, we discovered the misdirection.

14.In January 1999, 4 months or so after my fathers' death, my mother asked his GP to provide letters and notes related to his treatment. Our primary goal was to question the people responsible for his care at St. Thomas' and Kings.

15.We knew that the illness my father had suffered from for more than 16 years was Hepatitis C. He contracted the disease via the contaminated blood products he was given during a routine dental procedure at St Thomas' in 1982. We knew this was the cause of the immediate liver damage diagnoses soon thereafter. **Exhibit WITN1731003**

16.However, we didn't know that this diagnosis was the first and last mention of contaminated blood. Every single report and update on the state of his health by the St. Thomas' clinical team at The Haemophilia Centre over that 16 years stated acute alcoholism as the cause of his liver disease.

17.The team responsible for his care at St Thomas' Haemophilia Centre, led by Dr Savidge and my father's consultant, R.P.H.Thompson, had systematically misled and hidden the truth behind my father's liver cirrhosis and its cause; treatment with infected blood products.

18.When we followed up with St. Thomas', they told us, "At no time has Guy's & St. Thomas' suggested that Mr Bullock was an Alcoholic." They were unaware

at the time that we had reams of medical records from his treatment that read, for example:

- a. By November 1983, any mention of contaminated blood products had been dropped from his medical record. My father was described as suffering from "acute alcoholic hepatitis." **EXHIBIT WITN1731004**
- b. In 1995, Dr Savidge: "This man suffers from Chronic Hep C superimposed upon hepatic dysfunction due to alcohol." **EXHIBIT WITN1731005**
- c. 1996: "chronic high alcohol consumption." **EXHIBIT WITN1731006**

Section 7: Financial Assistance

N/A

Section 8: Other Issues

19. Of course, anyone who might read this didn't know my father and might assume perhaps we didn't know him. However, I will say that my father was a Chartered Civil Engineer and a brilliant mathematician. He leaves an extended obituary and record of his achievements in the library at the Institute of Civil Engineers in London.

20. Two years before his death, he prioritised work over his health and family, despite his condition. He travelled between Houston, Texas and Lima and was responsible for a global alliance between governments and industry on a contract worth \$3.5 billion. When the stakes are this high, someone showing signs of acute alcohol consumption doesn't keep a seat at the boardroom table. He had long since given up even the occasional drink knowing that it would hasten his illness.

21. So why the deceit, why the switch from the actual cause of his liver disease. Why was "infected blood products" dropped from his notes over those 16 years?

22. How did being characterised as an alcoholic effect his chances of ever getting a liver transplant? Is this why he was left to die?

23. We'll probably never know.

Statement of Truth

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

GRO-C

Gideon Bullock

Date: Tuesday 19th October 2021

