

Witness Name: T Britton  
Statement No: WITN1813001  
Exhibits: 0  
Dated: February 2019

## INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

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### FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF THELMA BRITTON

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I, Thelma Britton, will say as follows:-

#### Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is Thelma Britton of GRO-C  
Cambridgeshire GRO-C I was born on GRO-C 1931 and I am retired. I am married to Colin Britton.
2. I prepare this statement as an affected person in connection with my late son, Alastair John Britton, who passed away on 04.07.1993 at the age of 34 as a result of being infected with HIV and Hepatitis C.
3. **This statement has been prepared without the benefit of access to my son's medical records.**

#### Section 2. How Affected

4. My son had severe Haemophilia A which was diagnosed in 1960 when he was aged about 10-12 months. He had a clotting factor of 0%.

5. He initially received whole blood transfusions and was one of the first young children with Haemophilia to be treated with Factor VIII following a thumb bleed which could not be brought under control following treatment with whole blood.
6. He was treated at the Churchill Hospital, Oxford and his consultants were Professor Macfarland, Dr Biggs, Dr Rizza and Dr Matthews.
7. I am unsure as to exactly when or what my son was told in relation to his infections of HIV and Hepatitis C. However, he was told that he was infected during a visit to the Churchill Hospital whilst receiving treatment for a severe bleed.
8. The evening of the day on which he was told, our son took my husband and I out for dinner and when he thought that we were suitably inebriated he told us the sad news. He said that he had found out, that day, that he had been infected and he only had a few years to live.
9. Despite what happened, I believe that the consultants were dedicated to caring for my son and I believe that they were put in a very difficult position because without receiving treatment with blood products, my son would have probably died.

### **Section 3. Other Infections**

10. I am unsure as to whether my son received or was put at risk of any other infections.

### **Section 4. Consent**

11. I am unsure as to whether my son was tested or treated without his knowledge and therefore without his consent.

## **Section 5. Impact**

12. I suffer from giant cell arteritis and endure swelling of my arteries and veins in both my head and neck and I am regularly treated with steroids.

13. My husband [GRO-C]  
[GRO-C]  
[GRO-C]

14. Our son was born on [GRO-C] 1959 and was diagnosed with Haemophilia before he was aged 1 following a number of bleeds.

15. I worked hard to support my son and give him the best possible life when he was growing up. My husband and I enrolled him at [GRO-C]  
[GRO-C] This worked well because the school was situated within a mile from our family home.

16. My son had to deal with numerous health issues as a result of both his Haemophilia and his infections but he took everything in his stride and I am very proud of him.

17. Everyone who met him admired him and he had a determined air about him. He made his own way in the world through hard work and persistence and he followed his own path.

18. We did discuss my son's infections within the family and with close friends but outside of this circle, HIV was never mentioned for fear of the stigma which surrounded it. We were all scared of being shunned by the wider society. I held a very real fear that we would be subject to some abhorrent behaviour and I just wanted to shield and protect my son.

19. Our close friends and family had nothing but love for our family and were always ready to help whenever possible and our family GP was our absolute rock.

20. I tried to make life as "*normal*" as possible for both my children and our son's sister totally adored her brother. She was devoted to him.

21. As the infections took their toll, our son went from being a 6 foot strapping young man to six or seven stone frail gentleman with paper thin transparent skin.

22. Our son got married about 18 months before he passed away.

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23. Towards the later stages of our son's life he became too poorly to work and he spent the last year of his life dying in his bed.

#### **Section 6. Treatment/Care/Support**

24. As far as I am aware, my son did not suffer any obstacles in relation to accessing medical or dental care.

#### **Section 7. Financial Assistance**

25. To the best of my knowledge, my son did not receive any financial assistance from any of the Trusts. I also understand that my son's wife did not receive any financial assistance.

26. My husband and I were turned down for financial assistance from the Skipton Fund because we were "*only*" parents. It is sad that the Trust did not take into account that parents had nurtured children throughout all the stages of their lives.

## **Section 8. Other Issues**

27. I have some recollection of my son being involved in a private legal action but I believe that this never came to fruition.

## **Anonymity, disclosure and redaction**

28. I do not wish to be anonymous and I do not 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

15th February 2019