

Witness Name: Christopher
Richmond
Statement No.: WITN2670001
Exhibits:
Dated: 26th November 2018

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF CHRISTOPHER RICHMOND

I provide this statement in response to a request under Rule 9 of the Inquiry Rules 2006 dated the 5th November 2018.

I, Christopher Richmond, will say as follows: -

Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is Christopher Richmond. My date of birth is the GRO-C 1996. My address is known to the Inquiry. I am currently living at home with my mum Melanie Richmond and Step-Dad Martin Richard Walters. I am unemployed and receive Employment Support Allowance. I am being supported by my Step Dad for this interview as I am diagnosed with Asperger's Syndrome and I have a severe amount of anxiety which makes discussions such as this, very difficult. I would also like to add that I was a young child for a lot of what happened to Mum and I cannot comment on certain areas. I intend to speak about my mum's infection of hepatitis C. In particular, the nature of her illness,

how the illness affected her, the treatment received and the impact it had on her and our lives together.

Section 2. How Affected

2. I believe that Mum was diagnosed with Von Willebrands disease. I do not know details around this, including when she was diagnosed. Details for this will come from other family members.
3. Mum has told me that she used to receive DDVAP treatment, whenever she had a bleed. However in ¹⁹⁸⁹1990 at the age of ¹⁸19 she was admitted to hospital for something and received Factor VIII at Aberdeen Royal Infirmary. When she received this treatment, Dr Dawson told Mum "*Lets hope there is nothing nasty in it*" referring to the drug. This is all I know about this.
4. Mum tells me that she was given the infected blood product by Dr Dawson and this gave her hepatitis C. She received this product at Aberdeen Royal Infirmary in ¹⁹⁸⁹1990.
5. Mum received Factor VIII once at Aberdeen Royal Infirmary in ¹⁹⁸⁹1990. I do not know any further details of this and this information will come from other family members.
6. I do not know about any discussions Mum had with doctors about the risk of being infected and no one has ever told me about a time the risks associated with the blood product was explained to her.
7. Mum was diagnosed with hepatitis C in the early ¹⁹⁹¹1990's. I do not know how she found out she was infected. Information from this will have to come from other family members. I do know that Mum was told by the doctors at Aberdeen Royal Infirmary that she would not live to see me go to high school. I do not know when this conversation took place.

8. I don't know what information was provided to Mum about the infection itself. I was too young at the time to understand what was going on.
9. I do not know if adequate information was provided to Mum and her family to help her manage and understand the infection. Mum and I have not discussed this.
10. I believe that information about the infection should have been given to Mum about the risks associated with receiving Factor VIII before she was given this. Mum should have had full conversations about what hepatitis C was.
11. I do not have views about how the results of the tests and or information was communicated to Mum at the time she was told she had hepatitis C. This information will have to come from other family members.
12. I am unsure about information was provided to Mum about the risks of others being infected as a result of the infection. I cannot fully comment on this. I do know that she was informed by some doctors that there was a possibility that my brothers and I could have been born with hepatitis C. Mum told me this.

GRO-C

Section 3. Other Infections

13. Mum has Crohn's disease now and she has severe fatigue. She tells me that she was diagnosed with this in 2014. I do not know the hospital that diagnosed her with this. This is possibly a consequence of the hepatitis C or from the Interferon treatment that she has received. I do not know when she received the Interferon treatment. She was told that she may have been exposed to Variant CJD because the product she received may have contained this. I do not know when this conversation took place. The doctors cannot confirm for sure if she has this or not. I do not know when Mum was told she might have Variant CJD. She was told of this risk by her Gastro doctor. He had received this letter and read it out to her. I do not know details of the doctor who read this to her. This information will be contained in her

FRIMLEY
PARK
HOSPITAL

2007

2011
ST. GEORGE'S
LONDON

medical records. As a result of this, Mum had an endoscopy investigation in later years refused to her, which resulted in her having to have some of her bowel removed. I have no further information on this as I was 6 years old at the time and I don't remember anyone telling me Mum had been refused treatment. Further information will have to come from other family members.

Section 4. Consent

14. Yes Mum was treated without her knowledge. She was given Factor VIII in ¹⁹⁸⁹ ~~1990~~ by Dr Dawson at Aberdeen Royal Infirmary without telling Mum until afterwards.
15. Yes Mum was treated without her consent. When Dr Dawson gave her Factor VIII, she did not ask for Mum's permission.
16. Yes Mum was treated without being given adequate information or advice. She was given Factor VIII without being given full information about what it was.
17. I do not know if Mum has been treated or tested for the purposes of research.

Section 5. Impact

18. There were a lot of mental and physical effects of Mum being infected with hepatitis C. She has severe depression and has had this for as long as I can remember. When I was growing up her energy levels were always very low, she would isolate herself and she had no social life when I was growing up. She was never able to work because she couldn't keep up with the typical tasks that a job would have. I do not know which jobs she attempted. She was having a huge amount of emotional turmoil continually throughout my childhood, she had severe pain in her stomach, all the time. Now she has Crohn's disease so this may be related to this as well. She had a stoma bag inserted to help her after a botched investigation when the doctors refused to do a proper endoscopy investigation which led to part of her bowel being

removed. She felt very depressed when the doctors would not help her. I do not know full details of this as I was very young and further information will have to come from other family members.

19. Mum has developed chronic fatigue. She has had this as far as I can remember. Her sleep patterns now varies, she struggles to stay asleep at night time and in the afternoon she sleeps for a very long time. I cannot give an estimate as she locks herself in her bedroom.
20. I do not have dates. Mum received a letter saying that there was a risk of being exposed to Variant CJD. I don't know the date she received this letter. I do not know who sent her this letter. She has later on been diagnosed with Crohn's disease [GRO-C]. Her diagnosis was delayed as the doctors refused to do the endoscopy. [GRO-C] She received treatment for her hepatitis C, but I do not know details of this. She is currently depressed and when I was growing up with her I mainly remember her being depressed.
21. Mum had treatments for hepatitis C. The treatments were called Interferon and Ribavarin. I do not know when she started this treatment. In 2007 she was told that she had cleared the hepatitis C. I do not know which doctor or hospital told her this. I do not know when this occurred.
22. The obstacle with treatments that I know about is when she was refused the endoscopy because she might have Variant CJD. Jeremy Hunt MP at the time, had to get involved to help Mum get help and help her get access to medical care.
23. I do not know if there are treatments which I consider ought to have been (but were not) made available to Mum.
24. Mum was really ill, when she was on treatment. My brothers, [GRO-C] [GRO-C] and Jordan Richmond and I had to live with my grandparents while she was going through her treatment. Jordon was 12, [GRO-C] was 3 and I was

about 9 when we moved in with our Grandparents. We all lived there for 14 months and then **GRO-C** and Jordon went home and I stayed with Gran for another 6 years. I remember when the three of us moved in with Gran, this was the worst point of her depression. She was always crying she was always sleeping. She had fatigue beyond chronic fatigue, she could barely move. She was vomiting all the time. I was about 9 years old when this happened. It was extremely upsetting and frightening.

25. I do not know how Mum's infected status impacted her treatment for other medical conditions.
26. There was a big impact on Mum's private, social and family life. Socially, she was provided with paper cups when she went to events as people believed this would stop her infecting other people. She felt like an outcast. My Uncle, Damian Piesse flatmate, binned all the cutlery and plates after Mumm went to visit them, to stop the infection spreading. I remember when we were younger she met with us and tried to take us to the Zoo. I remember she felt too sick to go in to the Zoo, so she sat in the car, while we went inside with someone else. I can't remember how old I was, I just remember she was being sick and couldn't join us. I ultimately spent about 6 years approximately, not living with her because she was unable to look after us. After a period of time, my older brother and younger brother could return home to her. I had to stay behind at my grandparents. Mum could look after my younger brother at this point but my older brother could also help her, but she could not look after all of us. Being left behind I felt horrific and very isolated. I was about 12 years old when this happened.
27. I was desperate to move home for a long time. I didn't get on with my grandparents and the whole thing left me extremely distraught. I was horrifically bullied and ended up with severe depression. Mum was too ill at the time to get involved with the things that were going on in my life, she was too ill. I was not diagnosed with Asperger's so the troubles I was having were not yet identified by everyone. This meant I was acting out, arguing and things. I wasn't able to get the appropriate support at that time because Mum

was too ill to help me find this. We are not very close now, because of this. Mum didn't protect me because she couldn't. I was getting into fights because of social difficulties I was having at school. The children did not know Mum had hepatitis C, they were picking on me because of the social difficulties I was having associated with Asperger's. I was having thoughts of suicide at school trying to deal with this. I wasn't getting on with my grandparents at the time so I was trying to deal with this. I would go see Mum at the weekend but that would be 2 days out of 7 that I would I would stay with her. Even then when I did, I would hide in my room and I would not talk. In Year 11, prior to my GCSE's, I attempted suicide at school. My favourite subject at school was history. I failed a test at school for history and I was told that given my grades I was going to fail the whole course and there was nothing I could do about it at that point. This was another teacher who said this to me. So I accepted that and walked outside and walked outside and lay down in the middle of the road, so I could be hit by a car. While I was waiting for a car to come, classmates around the school saw this and started cheering for me to be hit. An acquaintance tried to pull me off the road and someone ran in and got the teachers. The teachers came outside and spoke to me for a bit until they could persuade me to come inside. After this things become a bit blurry. The school called Mum and I went home. After this day I was not allowed to return to the school. I was referred to CAHMS and diagnosed with depression and Asperger's. I was not allowed to return to school because they said they could not provide me with a safe environment. This meant I did not finish my GCSE's and I left school with no qualifications. I was given no aftercare by school, no support from the local authority, the school wanted me off the premises as soon as possible and wanted nothing else to do with me. O have been given a variety of medications to help me with my depression, including an anti-psychotic medication at one point. I cannot recall the name now. I have come off the medication now. I have been seeing a counsellor for about a year now, which I find is helping me.

28. My brother, GRO-C was 3 years old when we moved to Grans house. Gran is called Margaret Mary Clark. We moved there when Mum was going through treatment for hepatitis C. GRO-C

GRO-C

GRO-C. My older brother is called Jordon. He was 12 years old when we moved in with Gran. GRO-C

GRO-C. He went home before I was able, to help look after GRO-C. He was looking after GRO-C and so his education ultimately suffered. GRO-C

GRO-C

Jordan is 3 years older than me. GRO-C is 7 years younger. GRO-C

GRO-C

29. Mum has never been able to work, she's not worked because of her illness. She has attempted jobs when I was younger but I do not know details of this. She has been on benefits for a number of years.
30. I have been severely damaged at school and I was unable to receive the support from Mum that I needed because she was ill. I ended up leaving school with no qualifications. Because of my lack of qualifications, I am unable to go to university and I am currently on Employment Support Allowance. I can't find a job now and I struggle with depression still.

Section 6. Treatment/Care/Support

31. I don't believe there was any support from the family. Mum had to carry on.
- GRO-C
- GRO-C
- I do not know if Mum has been offered psychological support, I think she may have but I am unclear. I was not offered psychological support for Mum's infection, I was referred to CAMHS but this was due to school. I was diagnosed with depression and I received support for this, but this is not directly connected with Mum's infection.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

32. I do not know when Mum found out that financial assistance was available.
33. I do not know how much Mum received and which fund she received it from.
34. I do not know the process of applying for financial assistance.
35. I do not know about difficulties or obstacles that Mum faced in applying for financial support.
36. I do not know any preconditions imposed on the making of an application for or the grant of financial assistance.
37. I have no comments to make about the amount of financial assistance received or the various trusts and funds.

Section 8. Other Issues

38. I have no further details to include for the Inquiry's investigation.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed

GRO-C

Dated 20/02/19