

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

**SECOND WRITTEN STATEMENT OF
DEBRA ANNE POLLARD**

1. I, Debra Anne Pollard of the Royal Free London NHS Foundation Trust, Pond Street, London, NW3 2QG, will say as follows:
2. I am employed by the Royal Free London NHS Foundation Trust (the Trust) as a Lead Nurse Specialist within the Haemophilia & Thrombosis Centre. I have worked for the Trust as a Clinical Nurse Specialist since February 1992 and have been in my current role since May 2014.
3. The information provided within this witness statement is based upon facts within my knowledge, save for where I indicated the source of information or belief. Where matters are not directly within my knowledge, I believe them to be true.
4. As the Lead Nurse Specialist, my responsibilities include leading and managing a team of specialist nurses and allied health professionals. I am also responsible, together with the Centre Director, for the strategic development and management of the department.
5. Since my arrival at the Haemophilia & Thrombosis Centre in 1992, I have been responsible on a number of occasions for answering questions from the Infected Blood Inquiry (the Inquiry). As a result, I am aware of some of the issues surrounding the Inquiry and know how to investigate matters arising within our archives and systems.

Scope of this witness statement

6. I have been asked to write this statement on behalf of the Trust to respond to specific matters raised within the witness statements of Mrs Collette Wintle, dated 19 November 2018 and 12 April 2019. In this statement I respond to three specific questions raised by the Inquiry with regard to points made within in Mrs Wintle's statement.
7. I attach to this statement a bundle of supporting documents which are relevant to the comments in Mrs Wintle's statement dated 19 November 2018. Page numbers referred to in this statement in the form **[WITN3094002/1 – 38]** are references to pages in that bundle.
8. At paragraphs 21 and 29 of her statement, Mrs Wintle states that she was exposed to Nv CJD at the Royal Free Hospital in 1993 and that, at the time when BSE and CJD were being reported in the news, she approached the doctors at the Haemophilia Unit to ask if she was at risk and was told to stop worrying about it and that she was not a victim. My comments upon this are as follows:
 - (a) Upon review of Mrs Wintle's medical notes I see that on 8 September 1993 **[WITN3094002/1]** Mrs Wintle attended to discuss planned surgery. She was seen by Dr John Pasi (Consultant in Haemostasis & Thrombosis). During this discussion it is clear that a decision to treat with Factor VIII was taken due to the extent of the planned surgery. Dr Pasi summarised this in a letter to the surgeon **[WITN3094002/2]**. There is no evidence in the notes of what issues were discussed in relation to the potential risks associated with Factor VIII at that time. Mrs Wintle had been exposed to clotting factor many times previously – the last occasion being 22 July 1991 **[WITN3094002/5]** prior to a colposcopy and cone biopsy procedure when she received BPL 8Y FVIII batch number FHC 0396.

- (b) Mrs Wintle had elective surgery on 4 October 1993. There is a treatment plan [WITN3094002/3] and hand-written medical notes [WITN3094002/4] indicating the proposal to use Factor VIII concentrate and documenting that the first dose was given prior to surgery at 10.45am on 4 October 1993. This was Alphanate Batch Number AR3204A [WITN3094002/5]. This Factor VIII batch was used continuously until 15 October 1993, when it is recorded [WITN3094002/6] that following an allergic reaction on 13 and 14 October 1993 treatment was switched to BPL 8Y batch number FHB 4208 [WITN3094002/7]. The adverse reaction was reported to the UKHCDO [WITN3094002/8] as was standard practice at the time.
- (c) Mrs Wintle was discharged from hospital on 15 October 1993 [WITN3094002/9], but readmitted on 18 October 1993 [WITN3094002/10] when Factor VIII infusions were recommenced with BPL 8Y batch number FHB 4208 [WITN3094002/7, and WITN3094002/11-13]. Further surgery took place on 21 October 1993 which resulted in a wound requiring complex dressings with the risk of bleeding and it is recorded in the medical notes that infusions of Factor VIII would continue to be given to cover dressing changes. During this time Mrs Wintle was taught to self-administer Factor VIII [WITN3094002/14] which allowed her to go home at weekends [WITN3094002/15 -16].
- (d) Mrs Wintle was discharged from hospital on 24 December 1993 and on that day received BPL 8Y FVIII batch number FHB 4189 [WITN3094002/17]. 50 vials of the same batch were also dispensed to her on the same day [WITN3094002/18] for use at home – this batch was later reported to have included plasma from a donor who later went on to develop nvCJD.
- (e) The first communication in the medical records about nvCJD was a letter dated 3 December 1997 [WITN3094002/19] to Mrs Wintle, informing her that she had not been exposed to the recently recalled batches of BPL 8Y Factor VIII; this is a letter which was sent to all patients who had not

been exposed to these batches. The only other communication I have found in Mrs Wintle's records which relates to the issue of contaminated blood is the correspondence in 2001 between Mrs Wintle & Professor Christine Lee [WITN3094002/20 and WITN3094002/21] about the campaign for recombinant Factor VIII to be made available for all.

- (f) From my review of the notes, therefore, there is nothing recorded indicating that Mrs Wintle approached doctors at the Unit, at around the time that BSE and CJD were in the news, regarding whether she was exposed to Nv CJD nor that she was told to stop worrying about it and that she was not a victim.

9. At paragraph 30 of her statement, Mrs Wintle states that her doctors never discussed the risks of her being exposed to Nv CJD nor apologised for 'lying' to her. I set out my comments upon this below:

- (a) Mrs Wintle transferred her care from the Royal Free Hospital to Queen Elizabeth Hospital Birmingham when her family relocated there in 2003 [WITN3094002/22-24].
- (b) When the vCJD notification took place led by the Health Protection Agency in 2004, Dr Jonathan Wilde, Centre Director at Birmingham Haemophilia Centre wrote to Professor Christine Lee [WITN3094002/25-27], requesting information as to whether Mrs Wintle had been exposed to "implicated batches" of FVIII. When this information was obtained, Dr Carolyn Millar wrote to Dr Wilde with the completed vCJD Exposure assessment form [WITN3094002/28-30], requesting that he inform the patient as her current Haemophilia doctor. There is no further comment in the medical records of discussions or communication with this patient about nvCJD exposure
- (c) In summary, the identity of these implicated batches was only shared with clinicians at the Hospital at the time of the notification in September 2004. At that time an immediate "look-back" exercise took place to

identify which patients had been exposed and arrangements were made for Mrs Wintle to be notified by her treating clinicians in Birmingham.

10. At paragraph 31 of her statement, Mrs Wintle states that she found, upon review of her medical records, that she was tested for Hepatitis G without her knowledge or consent. My comments on this are as follows:

- (a) There is a single page result dated 17 January 1995 in the medical records [WITN3094002/31] referring to Hepatitis G PCR. These results are not reported on the hospital pathology system and as far as remaining staff in the department can remember this was part of a study in the hepatology department at the time. There is no evidence of any consent for the test or any information about the test being given to this patient. We believe this test was performed on a previously stored sample of plasma.

11. On review of Mrs Wintle's statement there are some further points set out there which I believe it may be helpful to address:

- a. At paragraph 16 of her statement, Mrs Wintle states that Dr Goldman knew from 1985 that she had Non-A Non-B hepatitis and yet she was not given a diagnosis until 1991. Further, at paragraph 24 of her statement, Mrs Wintle states that there was never any discussion with her regarding the risks of treatment with commercial factor concentrates. Upon review of Mrs Wintle's medical records, I note the following:

- i. There is a letter from Dr Peter Kernoff (Consultant Haematologist) to the GP dated 22 February 1984 [WITN3094002/32], describing the risks of Hepatitis from Factor VIII and that the preferred treatment for this patient would be Desmopressin (DDAVP) to avoid this risk.

- ii. There is a hand written referral from Dr Goldman to Professor Thomas, Hepatologist, dated 21 May 1985 [WITN3094002/33]. In this referral Dr Goldman states that Mrs Wintle "and her fiancée are only too well aware of the risks of bleeding and of treatment". Having seen Mrs Wintle, Professor Thomas responded by way of a letter to the GP dated 20 June 1985 [WITN3094002/34].
 - iii. There is also a letter from Dr Lyttleton dated 25 August 1987 [WITN3094002/35] which is a referral to a gynaecologist which states that "after contracting non-A non-B hepatitis following a factor VIII infusion, she has elected not take the oral contraceptive pill". From this, it appears that Mrs Wintle was aware at this time that she had non-A non-B Hepatitis.
- b. At paragraph 28 of her statement, Mrs Wintle states that was she not informed of her HCV infection at the time she had that genetic counselling in 1991. Upon review of Mrs Wintle's medical records I note the following:
- i. A genetic counselling appointment took place on 26 March 1991 and Dr Goldman's summary of that appointment dated 12 April 1991 is attached [WITN3094002/36]. It appears, from that summary that Dr Goldman intended to inform Mrs Wintle of her HCV diagnosis at the time of her next hospital visit on 16 April 1991.
 - ii. I am unable to find any notes of a subsequent visit on 16 April 1991. However, Dr Goldman also referred Mrs Wintle to Professor Dusheiko (Consultant Hepatologist) by way of a letter dated 26 April 1991 [WITN3094002/37]. On 19 September 1991 Dr Dusheiko responded to Dr Goldman [WITN3094002/38] and it appears from this letter that Dr Dusheiko had discussed Mrs Wintle's Hepatitis C diagnosis with her at that time.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed:

GRO-C

Date:

08-05-2019

