

Witness Name: Vivian Eric Mitchell

Statement No: WITN3174001

Exhibits: None

Dated: 28/05/2019

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF VIVIAN ERIC MITCHELL

I provide this statement in response to a request under Rule 9 of the Inquiry Rules 2006 dated 3 May 2019.

I, Vivian Eric Mitchell, will say as follows:

Section 1: Introduction

1. My name is Vivian Eric Mitchell. My date of birth is GRO-C 1945. My address is known to the Inquiry.
2. My profession qualifications are MB, ChB, FRCP FRCPATH.
3. I was appointed Consultant Haematologist to Leicester Area Health Authority (T) in November 1979.
4. I was responsible with two colleagues for providing a full clinical and laboratory haematology service to three acute hospitals (Leicester Royal Infirmary, Leicester General Hospital and Groby Road Hospital (later Glenfield Hospital) and a population of one million.
5. I was responsible for developing a service in haemostasis and thrombosis including haemophilia.
6. I was a member of Member of the United Kingdom Doctors' Haemophilia Organisation and then, much later, became a committee member, until my retirement in 2003.

Section 2: Letter to Dr Perry

7. The request is in relation to a letter I wrote to Dr Perry of Birmingham Children's Hospital in 1985. This was a reply to a letter from Dr Perry to my colleague Dr Hutchinson which had been passed on to me. I have been told that Dr Perry's letter is unavailable. This is unfortunate since it could be expected to contain much more information and without it my letter is out of context.
8. The concern relates to two sentences in my letter which reveal that Mr Beard was unaware of his HTLV111 antibody result and that his Birmingham doctors did not wish him to be informed during his short stay in Leicester.
9. It is unbelievable that the doctors at Birmingham Children's Haemophilia Centre intended that Mr Beard should be kept permanently in ignorance of his HTLV111 antibody result, a position which would be untenable.
10. They were asking that he should not be told by a doctor he had never met before and would never see again and who did not have access to his hospital notes and treatment records. As a large and respected paediatric regional haemophilia centre I am sure they had a policy for informing and counselling their young patients and parents. I do not know why Mr Beard was not informed whilst he was registered at Birmingham Children's Haemophilia Centre.
11. My reference to complying with Birmingham Children's Hospital's wishes refers to making sure Mr Beard was not informed inappropriately by an inadvertent "out of the blue" remark perhaps when attending out of hours for treatment – surely the worst of all ways to be told.
12. Mr Beard attended Leicester Haemophilia Centre in October 1985 for treatment of a bleed. Two months later he returned to Birmingham, having attended the Leicester Centre on one further occasion for the same reason.
13. I met him on the first of these visits when I happened to be in the Haemophilia Centre holding an unrelated clinic. Before this he had been sent an appointment for a haemophilia clinic but he and his mother did not make it.
14. Had Mr Beard's care been transferred from Birmingham to Leicester and he unaware of his HTLV111 result, I would have arranged to see him and his mother with the Haemophilia Sister with time allowed for full counselling and with his Birmingham notes, correspondence and treatment records to hand.
15. However counselling by a doctor and haemophilia nursing sister with whom he had had a long term relationship would have been preferable.

16. I am sorry if discovery of my letter caused Mr Beard further distress but believe that I acted in good faith.

Section 3: Other Issues

17. There are no other issues that I wish to discuss.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed **GRO-C**

Dated 28th May 2019.