

Witness Name: Caroline Leonard

Statement No.: WITN3449115

Exhibits: N/A

Dated: 13 December 2023

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF CAROLINE LEONARD, ON BEHALF OF BELFAST HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE TRUST

Further to the Rule 13 notification sent to Belfast Health and Social Care Trust ("the Trust") on 22 August 2022, notifying the Trust of significant criticism of Royal Victoria Hospital by Witness W3708 to the Inquiry, I provide this statement in response to a request for a written statement under Rule 9(2) of the Inquiry Rules dated 9 September 2022.

I, Caroline Leonard, will say as follows: -

Section 1: Introduction

- 1.1 My name is Caroline Leonard. My date of birth is known to the Inquiry. My professional address is BHSCT HQ, First Floor, Non Clinical Support Building, Royal Hospitals Site, Grosvenor Road, Belfast, BT12 6BA.
- 1.2 I was the Director of Cancer and Specialist Services at Belfast Health and Social Care Trust (BHSCT) until my retirement on 25 August 2023 and as such, I had responsibility for services provided at the NI Cancer Centre, some medical specialities, renal transplant surgery, laboratories and pharmacy. The Regional Haemophilia Comprehensive Care Centre fell within my Directorate, and as such, I was nominated by my Chief Executive, Dr Cathy Jack to undertake a coordinating role in support of the Infected Blood Inquiry on behalf of BHSCT. On retirement from the NHS, I have been engaged by BHSCT to continue my coordinating role as outlined above for the duration of this Inquiry.

- 1.3 In order to address the questions posed in the Rule 9 request of 9 September 2022, I have requested assistance from the current Senior Records Managers in the Trust to determine what medical records exist in relation to the treatment and care of Witness W3708's father in the Royal Victoria Hospital in 1987. I have also spoken with colleagues from the NI Haemophilia Comprehensive Care Centre here in the Trust.
- 1.4 In drafting this statement, I have also referred to previous statements and exhibits supplied to the Inquiry in 2019.

Section 2: Response to Criticism by W3708

- 2.1 I would refer to my statement to the Inquiry WITN3449007 dated 15 August 2019 and exhibits WITN3449008 – WITN3449031 therein. This outlines an account, as then requested, of the BHSCT records retention and destruction policies from 1948 to that date.
- 2.2 I can confirm that medical records pertaining to the care of Witness W3708's father in the Royal Victoria Hospital in 1987 have been destroyed in keeping with the extant policy at the time and exhibited previously.
- 2.3 In the absence of securing any medical records, I can confirm that BHSCT is unable to undertake any meaningful investigation of events alleged to have occurred over 30 years ago and therefore cannot verify the factual basis of the criticisms made. However, it would be extremely disappointing if any patient or family member had been treated in the manner described in the statement submitted to the Inquiry by Witness W3708.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed GRO-C –

Dated ____ 13 December 2023 ____