

Witness Name: Geoffrey Dusheiko

Statement No.: **WITN3754103**

Exhibits: None

Dated: 30 November 2020

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF PROFESSOR GEOFFREY DUSHEIKO

I provide this statement in response to a request under Rule 9 of the Inquiry Rules 2006 dated 20 May 2020.

I, Geoffrey Dusheiko, will say as follows: -

Section 1: Introduction

1. My name, address, date of birth and professional qualifications are as follows:

Geoffrey Mark Dusheiko, Liver Unit, Kings College Hospital London UK. **GRO-**1948 MB BCh (Wits) FCP(SA) FRCP FRCP (Edin).

2. The positions I have held as a doctor, the organisations in which I have held these positions and my role and responsibilities in these positions are as follows:

- Intern, Medicine Baragwanath Hospital, Johannesburg, 2 January 1973 to June 1973
- Intern, Surgery Baragwanath Hospital, Johannesburg, July 1973 to December 1973

- Locum Tenens positions January 1974 to July 1974: Paediatric Ward Northwick Park Hospital, Middlesex, U.K; Dr H.B. Valman, General Practice, Johannesburg; A.E.C.I, Modderfontein
 - Sen. Intern Paediatrics, Johannesburg Children's Hospital, July to December, 1974
 - Sen. Intern Cardiology , Johannesburg Hospital, January to June, 1975
 - Registrar Medicine (Respiratory, Endocrine, Neurology, Coronary intensive care units, Haematology, General medicine), Johannesburg Hospital, July 1975 to July 1978
 - Research Fellow, Liver Unit, Johannesburg Hospital, July 1978 to July 1979
 - Visiting research associate, Liver Unit (South African Medical Research Council Fellow), Liver Diseases Section, National Institutes of Health Washington DC USA, August 1979 to July 1981
 - Senior Physician (Consultant), Hillbrow and Johannesburg Hospital, August 1981 to December 1983
 - Unit Head (Consultant and Ward Head), Hillbrow and Johannesburg Hospital, January 1984 to December 1987
 - Guest Researcher (Vice Chancellor's Research Award), Dept of Microbiology, University of Minnesota USA, September 1986 to March 1987
 - Senior Lecturer, Academic Dept Medicine, Royal Free Hospital School of Medicine, January 1988
 - Reader in Medicine, Royal Free Hospital School of Medicine, 1989
 - Professor of Medicine, Royal Free Hospital and University College School of Medicine 1996
 - Emeritus Professor of Medicine, University College London Medical School, January 2014
 - Consultant Hepatologist, Royal Free Hospital London, 2014-2016
 - Consultant Hepatologist, Liver Unit, Kings College Hospital London UK, 2016-to date
 - Interim Deputy Director, Blood safety, Hepatitis HIV and STI National Infection Service, Public Health England, March 2019 to December 2019
3. I have served on NICE panels, National Institutes of Health USA hepatitis consensus panels, EASL guidelines committees, World Health Organisation advisory boards, the Skipton Fund, NHS EIBSS and have advised Thalassaemia and Haemophilia Societies in the past.

Section 2: Responses to criticism of W2222

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to W2222. I note the date of the witness statement: 1 May 2019

1. At point 35 Witness W222 wrote “Professor Dusheiko draws a £70,000 fee every year” ...(from the Skipton Fund).

This is an error of fact. The records will show that my reimbursement for expenses and fees for the entire body of work I undertook for the Skipton Fund, over more than three years, came to £1044 in total, i.e. approximately £350 per annum.

2. Conflict of interest

3. W2222 submitted two unsuccessful applications to the Skipton Fund in 2004 and 2006; I provided a legal opinion to her legal team in 2008, when she wished to submit a third to the Skipton Appeals Fund. I provided a careful and guarded opinion to assist her legal representatives. My view was that it was not possible to pinpoint the exact time that W2222 had cleared hepatitis C virus. I could neither rule in nor rule out an unrecognised prolonged phase of the acute illness following her blood transfusion in June 1987. However, I forewarned W2222 “it may be difficult to alter the Skipton’s Fund’s viewpoint that, under the scheme, restricts the right of compensation of individuals who have cleared the virus as a result of treatment or who have cleared it spontaneously after a period of chronic infection” and “that the scope of the Skipton’s Fund criteria may prove a high barrier”
4. On 11 March 2009 her application was rejected. W2222 appealed but her appeal was rejected on 9 June 2009.
5. Further legal filings against the Skipton Fund followed in November and December 2009, including a request for a judicial review.
6. On 1 July 2010 Justice Parker ruled that there was nothing irrational or unjust in the provisions of the Scheme. The application for judicial review was dismissed.
7. I joined the Skipton fund in 2014, some years after these rulings. When I joined the Skipton Fund, I was bound by the terms that defined the presence or absence of chronic infection and by these earlier rulings.
8. W2222 provides a harrowing account of her trajectory since receiving a blood transfusion. However, when diagnosed through the look back program she was anti-HCV positive and HCV RNA- negative by sensitive PCR, and thus did not have serological evidence of chronic hepatitis C and was not infectious. Her account highlights the distress caused by misinformation and poor awareness that surrounds resolved and chronic infection with hepatitis C virus. Her statement describes unwarranted stigmatisation and discrimination. Although she does not have evidence of chronic hepatitis C, her statement points to mistaken societal biases and public lacunae that have impacted upon her psychological wellbeing, and her social interactions, relationships, and employment, unnecessarily weighing her down in life. The incorrect translation of the presence of detectable antibody to hepatitis C without detectable hepatitis C virus RNA gave the antibody test a meaning it

should not have had, and imparted a paradigm that virologically resolved hepatitis C should not have conveyed.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed _____

GRO-C
G Dusheiko
2020.11.30 11:38:45

Dated 30 November 2020