

Witness Name: Jane Elizabeth Ellison

Statement No.: WITN3904001

Exhibits: WITN3904002 - 007

Dated: [24.1.20]

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF JANE ELIZABETH ELLISON

I am providing this witness statement in response to a request under Rule 9 of the Inquiry Rules 2006 dated 29 November 2019.

I, Jane Elizabeth Ellison, will say as follows:-

Section 1: Introduction

1. My name is Jane Elizabeth Ellison, my address is known to the Inquiry. My date of birth is GRO-C 1964.
2. I have a BA Honours degree but no professional qualifications.
3. I was the Member of Parliament for Battersea from 7 May 2010 until 3 May 2017. I was the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Health (Public Health) from 7 October 2013 until 15 July 2016.

Section 2: Committees / Groups relevant to the Inquiry's Terms of Reference

4. I am not and never have been a member of any committees or groups named in the Terms of Reference.

Section 3: Responses to criticism of W1122

5. In March 2015, David Cameron announced that up to £25 million of funding would be made available to support the transition to a new scheme of compensation for those affected by contaminated blood.
6. As part of my role as the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Health (Public Health) I was involved in the reform of the payment schemes.
7. I was committed to consulting on the proposals for reform. I was always conscious that I wanted to ensure that the views of all of the affected individuals were taken into account and everyone would have the chance to meaningfully participate in the consultation.
8. We considered options including a report from an independent facilitator, a staff scheme event and a plan to write to MPs with information on an online survey to share with their affected constituents (see the agenda for the infected blood fortnightly meetings, 28 July 2015) [WITN3904002].
9. We appointed an independent facilitator to chair a meeting with representatives from some of the main campaign groups. This took place on 5 October 2015. The purpose of the meeting was to hear the views of some of those affected in preparation for the formal consultation process.
10. The Haemophilia Society, Tainted Blood and the Contaminated Blood Campaign were each invited to nominate five delegates in order to provide an opinion on seven different affected categories. (See Independent Facilitator's Report, Reference Group on Infected Blood) [WITN3904003].
11. I also met with members of the All Party Parliamentary Group for Haemophilia and Contaminated blood on 5 November 2015 to update MPs on the consultation process.

12. We also held a one-off meeting with staff from the payment schemes on 9 November 2015. I facilitated the meeting and its purpose was to obtain initial views from the staff involved in running the schemes in preparation for the formal consultation. (See letter dated 2 November 2015 to Nick Fish) [WITN3904004].
13. At the heart of the consultation was a genuine desire to address the differing individual needs of those infected and affected by infected blood. I was personally interested in hearing from those who were 'quiet' – not activists but nevertheless people who were financially stretched. I was also conscious that any financial support scheme would impact people differently, depending on their circumstances.
14. I recall the meeting with W1122 and the then Prime Minister well. I do not recall the date. However, I have been shown an email dated Monday 11 January 2016, which suggests that the meeting was due to take place later that week [WITN3904005]. The meeting was at 10 Downing Street and Alistair Burt MP also attended. The witness is correct to say I was moved by the witness's testimony; I also appreciated him taking the time to speak to me afterwards.
15. The consultation on support for those affected by contaminated blood was launched on 21 January 2016 and concluded on 15 April 2016.
16. I have reviewed a copy of the consultation document entitled "Infected blood: reform of financial and other support proposed consultation" [WITN3904006]. The document recognises the concerns about the existing schemes. It also sets out the proposed elements of the reformed system.
17. In designing the revision of the support scheme which was consulted on for some months, as referenced by W1122, those involved including myself sought to balance a number of complex factors. One in particular was how to weight support: some of the infected and affected might prefer larger shorter-term lump sums, others the security of smaller annual sums but guaranteed across a lifetime.

18. I do not recall the proposal detailed in the consultation being that there should be less support available. Instead, the Department wanted to provide, over a longer period of time, more money, in order to provide the infected and affected with a predictable income. In particular, I was conscious that many had lost their capacity to borrow due to a shortened life expectancy.
19. I never thought that we would be able to anticipate all the different personal circumstances of those infected and affected. We expected that the consultation would reveal any unintended consequences of the proposed reforms and would provide an opportunity for these to be addressed before the scheme was finalised.
20. In my interactions with Parliamentarians representing their constituents I stressed the open nature of the consultation and the need to respond to the exercise with a level of detail that would allow amendments to be considered and effected. In my capacity as a constituency MP I too had received representations from affected individuals.
21. The consultation was genuine, as evidenced by the fact that changes were made to the initial proposals. The final reforms are contained in the document entitled "Infected blood: Government Response to Consultation on Reform of Financial and Other Support", dated July 2016 [WITN3904007]. The document provides an explanation of how we ran the consultation exercise. In addition to the events I have listed above, we received 69 letters from individuals in relation to the consultation which we took into consideration.
22. We wrote to all 3,482 registrants of the existing schemes to make them aware of the consultation. We also wrote to the Members of Parliament who had raised the issue on behalf of their constituents over the year prior to the consultation.
23. When the consultation closed on 15 April 2016, we had received 1,557 consultation responses to the 11 questions that set out our proposals. The questions and the responses are contained within [WITN3904007].

24. We considered the consultation responses carefully and analysed the pre-consultation evidence that had been collated before arriving at the package of reforms. We made a number of changes to our initial proposals. Annex A to Exhibit 6 is a flow chart that identifies 8 differing individual circumstances for beneficiaries under the scheme. It shows that in relation to each, the reformed scheme differs from the consultation proposal.

Section 4: Other Issues

25. There are no other issues I wish to address at this time.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed GRO-C

Dated 24.1.20

Table of exhibits:

Date	Notes/ Description	Exhibit number
28 July 2015	Agenda for the Infected Blood Fortnightly Meeting	WITN3904002
	Independent Facilitator's Report, Reference Group on Infected Blood	WITN3904003
2 November 2015	Letter to Nick Fish from Kypros Menicou	WITN3904004
11 January 2016	Email from Hanna Johnson re PM briefing – Contaminated Blood	WITN3904005
January 2016	Infected Blood: Reform of Financial and Other Support	WITN3904006

July 2016	Infected blood: Government Response to Consultation on Reform of Financial and Other Support	WITN3904007
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