Witness Name: Richard John Murphy
Statement No.: WITN3928001
Dated: 20-01-2020

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF RICHARD JOHN MURPHY

I provide this statement in response to a request under Rule 9 of the Inquiry Rules 2006 dated 4 December 2019.

I, Richard John Murphy, will say as follows: -

Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is Richard Murphy. My date of birth is GRO-C 1963 and my address is known to the Inquiry. I am married to Deborah, and have one stepson, Luke, Deborah's son, who is 24 years old. Deborah and I married in 2012 and we have known each other for over twenty years through work.

2. I have been married three times. I married Caroline in 1990 and we divorced in 1997. I was on my own for 5 years, until I met Anna. We were married in 2004 and we parted amicably in 2009. Anna is now remarried and has two children, I still keep in contact with her and her family as my work means I make deliveries to them .

3. I have lived in GRO-C, Manchester, my whole life. I qualified as a plumber through an apprenticeship with Edgerton Construction then worked as a kitchen fitter for 14 or 15 years. After my first marriage broke down, I spent 15 years working at a chipboard manufacturer and supply company as a production planning manager. I currently work as a delivery driver for Tesco.

4. I intend to speak about my infection with Hepatitis C which I contracted following a transfusion I received during emergency treatment following a motorcycle accident in April 1983, I was aged 19 at that time.

Section 2. How Infected

5. I remember the day of my motorbike accident, it was 21st April 1983. I cannot remember everything about it, but I remember I was going to see friends on my motorbike down Huddersfield Road in Oldham. I it was at 19.25 I was going towards a set of green traffic lights and I was struck by a car crossing the junction against a stop light. I had punctured both my lungs, broken several ribs and had sustained other injuries.

6. I was taken by ambulance to the Oldham Royal Infirmary ("ORI") in Oldham. This hospital is now shut and the services have been transferred to Royal Oldham Hospital.

7. The following morning, the doctors at the ORI decided to transfer me to Wythenshawe Hospital, Manchester, because my injuries were so severe and I was unconscious. I was driven unconscious in an ambulance with a police escort down the M60 to Wythenshawe Hospital.

8. The first thing I remember is coming round, whilst flat on my back on a life support machine. I was told I had been unconscious for several days. The doctors decided to keep me sedated to give my body a chance to

recover. It was a surreal feeling waking up, there were tubes coming out of me everywhere.

9. I cannot tell you what treatment I had specifically, as I was unconscious, but I was told after I woke up that I had some chest drains and a blood transfusion to treat the internal bleeding. The transfusion could have taken place at the ORI or at Wythenshawe. I would have thought it would have been at the ORI because of the internal bleeding but it might not have been.

10. No one ever mentioned to me how much blood was transfused to treat the internal bleeding. I do not remember when I learnt that I had the transfusion. I do not know if they gave information about options and the risk of infection to, or sought permission from my mother before transfusing, but my mother and brother were with me in hospital.

11. I was in hospital for two and a half weeks, but it took me another year before I was physically fully recovered and able to go back to work. My sister is sixteen years older than me, and her husband Edward's parents let me stay at their cottage by the sea in Devon for a month to rest. I remember I would sit outside on the balcony and watch the world go by.

12. I was diagnosed with Hepatitis C in late 2013, possibly September. It was 30 years between the transfusion following the motorbike accident and diagnosis.

13. The Hepatitis C came to light following my marriage to Deb. I sold my house and we took a joint mortgage together in May 2013 for our current house. Because we were on a joint mortgage, I wanted to take out a life insurance policy in case anything ever happened to me so I applied for one and the insurance company contacted the doctor at my new address. Dr Shafique wrote to me inviting me to come in for a full check-up as he had never treated me before, so that he could see if everything was as it should be and then fill in the life insurance form.

14. The diagnosis process took several months, but Dr Shafique is a really good doctor and very thorough. He'll listen to you, he's like a dog with a bone, and won't let anything go. I went in for the check-up and the nurse took some blood samples. Once he received my blood test results, Dr Shafique contacted me and asked me to make an appointment and return. He asked me if I liked a drink. I said that I had a drink at the weekend here and there. He asked me to go away for a month and not to drink at all, and then come back in and redo my blood tests.

15. I went in for a retest, and then received another request to make an appointment. Dr Shafique asked me if I had touched a drop of alcohol at all in that month. I confirmed I hadn't. He explained to me that my liver function test levels had risen over the fortnight, rather than falling. The blood tests went on for six weeks, one a week. The outcome at the end of the testing was that Dr Shafique sent off a blood sample to the Manchester Royal Infirmary, who confirmed that I had the live Hepatitis C virus. I cannot remember if I was told which genotype I have. When I was told about my diagnosis, I was none the wiser, I didn't then know what Hepatitis C was.

16. In terms of the information I was provided with when I was diagnosed, Dr Shafique offered me a choice of which hospital I could receive my treatment from. I was offered the MRI or Salford Hospital. I chose the MRI, because it was the easier one to get to and began my treatment in February 2014.

17. I was told by the doctors treating me at the MRI that there is a risk of infecting others with the Hepatitis C virus through direct blood contact. Straight away, I had to spell out to Deborah the importance of not using my razor to shave her legs. However, there was no other discussion of the risk of infecting others.

18. I remember specifically that the registrar at the MRI asked me questions about how I had come to be infected with the virus. He asked if I had ever had a blood transfusion, and when I said that I had one in 1983, he

told me that I could get some compensation. He gave me the website for the Skipton fund. I made an application online by myself and started receiving payments from the fund in April 2014. I also received forms from the Caxton fund, but I was earning too much, as was Deborah to receive any money from it.

Section 3. Other Infections

19. I do not believe I received any infection other than Hepatitis C as a result of being given infected blood.

Section 4. Consent

20. I was not conscious at the time of my Initial treatment in 1983, so I was treated with a blood transfusion without my knowledge or consent. However, my brother and my mother were at the hospital when I was being treated. I do not really know if my mother should have been asked for permission if she was not. If the transfusion was needed to keep me alive, her permission was not relevant. From my perspective, at 19, I might not have been here but for the transfusion.

21. While I was undergoing the treatment at the MRI between February and August 2014, the doctors monitored my platelet levels on a monthly basis to work out whether the treatment appeared to be working. It was during one of those visits that they asked me if I'd 'donate' some of my blood for research by supplying an extra set of bloods on that day. I was told it would be anonymous, so I said take as much as you want, if it helps curing people in a better, faster way. I knew at the time I was on the treatment that scientists were developing new drugs, and now they can just treat you with a tablet. When I first started the treatment I hated needles, but the amount of blood tests I have had cured me of that stigma. I feel I was given adequate information about donating my blood, I understood they were taking it to use for research progress. It was not

a difficult thing I had to do, I gave a couple of vials of blood and that was it.

Section 5. Impact

22. Following on from the accident in 1983, I felt physically ok. I got back to a normal level of fitness and I used to train on a Tuesday and Thursday with my rugby team even if I didn't play. Playing rugby, there is a risk that if someone crashes into your chest, your lungs could collapse again, so I took early retirement from playing in rugby games at 19. Generally, my health was ok.

23. Fatigue were the only symptoms of the virus I noticed before I received my diagnosis in 2014. I put the fatigue down to age, because I was tiring a lot more, I would come home from work and just be asleep straightaway. At the weekend, I would sleep for two or three hours in the afternoon easily, and then I would still go to bed at night and sleep all night. Sometimes I would be sat on the sofa watching TV and just dropping off all the time. I was always in bed by 10pm. I did not feel any pain, it was just tiredness. I had not thought to mention the fatigue at the point that Debs and I got married in 2012. As far as I am aware, I had no medical complications or conditions as a result of the infection.

24. I began the treatment in February 2014 at the MRI. I received a dual therapy treatment for the Hepatitis C virus. It was pegylated interferon, which I injected on a weekly basis, plus ribavirin tablets daily. I received the treatment more or less straightaway following my diagnosis, I chose to delay starting the treatment by a few weeks as I had a family holiday planned in January 2014. Once I returned, I began the course of treatment, which lasted 6 months.

25. Prior to starting the course of treatment, I had an ultrasound on my liver, I cannot remember if they gave me a prognosis on the condition of my liver.

26. There was not a discussion about treatment options. The doctors at the MRI just said, "This is the treatment we're going to put you on to start with." They told me that I might suffer from dry skin and flu like symptoms at the start of the treatment, and that I would have to go back to the MRI every four weeks for blood tests.

27. Interferon did interfere. I gave myself the injection on Friday night, alternating the side of my body from week to week, so that on Monday I could go to work. I took the tablets twice a day, two in the morning, two at night. I was working at the chipboard manufacture and supply company in a managerial position at this point and I told them about the treatment. My work let me be very flexible and didn't put me under any pressure. However, I had to work my treatment around work, because I was not in a position to take a day off.

28. When I was on interferon, it was very difficult to accept but the treatment physically floored me, so I was incapable of virtually anything. During the first week, I experienced flu-like symptoms, I would get in the bath to try and get warm.

29. Once the interferon settled in my system, my energy levels dropped a huge amount. I walked my dog Cole every day, a very short walk. I could have physically curled up on the couch every day, I was so weak. I could not do anything physical without it knocking me sideways. Whilst on the treatment, I experienced a lot more fatigue than I had previously and was unable to function at the weekend. If we went driving anywhere I would be so tired Deborah would drive and I would just sit there.

30. The treatment was successful after the first six months and I did not have to take any more medication. The doctors at the MRI told me I had

cleared the virus, but to be honest I have never been back to the MRI, I have had no follow up. I was told that even if the treatment is successful now, the virus can come back. Dr Shafique said that the virus will always show up in the blood tests but the real issue is whether it is active or not. I would appreciate some sort of hospital check-up, even if it was just an annual appointment at the MRI specialist unit.

31. I did not understand at the time the impact it was happening on me mentally, but the loss of strength took its toll on me. I got through it at the time, but the mental impact of that sudden loss of strength festers over time. It was that feeling of not being able to do the menial tasks in life which you've always taken for granted.

32. An example which will always stay with me is of a day in the summer after I had been on the treatment for several months. Deborah was mowing the lawn, and I offered to do it for her, but I managed about three pushes of the mower and then broke down. I would inject the pegylated interferon on a Friday night so that if I felt shitty I could rest on Saturday and Sunday. I used to work all week and then be under the weather at the weekend which was hard for Deborah, but she was brilliant, she was there for me 110%.

33. One of the most noticeable side effects the treatment had, was upon my libido. The loss of libido was quite apparent for a period of two years during and after the treatment, it would however be fair to say it has never fully returned. GRO-C GRO-C

34. Another major side effect of the treatment was the depression I experienced for the first time and continue to experience at times. I never had any really dark thoughts, because my accident at 19 changed my perspective, there was no way I was going to take my life, life's too precious.

35. However, the mental effects of the treatment have been severe. When I was on the treatment, I was feeling really low and down but I did not tell anyone. I went to the doctor and asked for some medication, but I did not want to take it alongside my other medication. I was trying to bottle it all up and not let Deborah know all about it. It crept into my everyday life, bit by bit, until I got to the stage where I had to seek help because I could not control it anymore.

36. I thought when I finished the treatment I would be back to my normal self, but I was left feeling pretty beat and indecisive. When I look back at things, I have never been as mentally strong since, I can see my mental toughness, or whatever you want to call it ebbing away.

37. From when I finished the treatment, to where I was earlier this year when I quit my job, I felt the mental impact of the treatment was growing and growing. I was unable to cope with certain things which before I was fine with. There is an element of stress to every job, but suddenly stress at work started to become an issue. I used to wake up in the morning and my chest would be tight, even though I was just doing the same routine as I had done for the past twenty two years. I was worrying so much, about my work. I would be going into work at 5am and leaving at 7pm, where previously I would have just left the task unfinished over the weekend.

38. In the last few years, I have had a couple of meltdowns at work, ending with me in floods of tears in front of the managing director and all sorts. It got to the stage where if I hadn't left the planning management job, something would have gone pop and it was in the last 12 months that I ended up at A & E. Basically what I wanted to do was pack in work altogether, but obviously at the moment I'm not in a financial position where I could do that, so I had to get other work.

39. I went in one morning, and saw all the papers on my desk and it was too much. I went into Deborah's office, next door and told her I could not

keep working there. It was really tough because I had worked there for 22 years of my life and it is a good company. I had to rein it in in some ways, or without a shadow of a doubt I would have gone off the rails. That night I went to A & E and saw the psychiatric nurse. He told me to go back to my doctor and they changed my medication.

40. Since then I have simplified my life. It has only really been in the last six months that I have started to return to normality, and that is since changing my job from working in a managerial position to being a driver for Tesco. I started taking anti-depressants about two years ago, and have needed to change my medication a couple of times. Through Dr Shafique, I went to see Healthy Minds at the surgery, and I got in contact with the charity, Mind as well. Dr Shafique has weaned me down off the antidepressants, so now I have not taken any for the last three months. I believe it is completely to do with the treatment for Hepatitis C, having to deal with the infection, the treatment and the way it made me feel.

41. At the end of my treatment, they did a scan and an examination that was the last thing before they sent me on my way. I am not sure what type of scan it was. The doctor attributed the scar tissue on my liver to the initial accident in 1983. They had a listen to it, and said everything seems fine. I feel it wouldn't do any harm to have another test every 12 months.

42. Since I finished medication for depression, I do not sleep very well, I wake up at the slightest sound so I never sleep throughout the night.

43. I see a lot of adverts on TV about mental health, and feel it is hard to stand up and put my hand up and say I need help. I told one of Deborah's friends about my depression, and he said, "What have you got to be down about, you drive a nice car, you've got a good job." It's so narrow minded. That is the stigma you have to live with.

44. Now I avoid going to parties and social functions, I do not like crowds much, and that is a change. I used to like to go out at weekends, but now I cannot cope in a packed pub or venues or anything like that. The extent

of our social life now is that we will go out and have a meal somewhere. I like to keep myself to myself, and I want to keep what has happened to me between Deborah and me.

45. Since I was diagnosed with Hepatitis C, I have not told people. My mother-in-law and father-in-law knew, my brother and sister, but apart from that it is something that I keep to myself. I tend not to tell people, because the first thing they say is "Can I catch it?"

46. I feel that if any social event is going on, people will say "Don't invite Murphy, he's got an infection." People around here know what HIV is and because of the publicity of the Inquiry, they think HIV and Hepatitis C are the same. They think, "We could catch that, and we could get AIDS".

47. Whilst the Inquiry has some beneficial effects and the increased publicity makes people aware of Hepatitis C, they do not know I am cured so assume it is infectious. The publicity side of it is really good as it is increasing awareness of what actually happened. However it is leaving it out there for everyone to form their own opinions. I think people might seek to avoid me if they knew about it, especially in this part of the world, it is still a lot of flat cap and braces. There are a lot of very narrow-minded people, it is a bit of a backwater and people see things as black and white.

48. The impact of the treatment on Deborah has been tough. I was living day by day, it is difficult because Deborah had seen me change, and it has been difficult for her to deal with sometimes.

49. Also, my fuse was much shorter than it had been before the treatment, I would snap a lot faster at Deborah.

50. My diagnosis, from our point of view, has made us stronger together, because we are making as much of the time we have now, because there is uncertainty about my life expectancy. All I am concerned about

is that she will be looked after if I am not here. It was difficult for her when I was on the treatment, she had to put our lives on hold for the six months. Once my immune system was taken away by the medication, we did become little hermits, we could not have a holiday, or go away anywhere. There were a lot of restrictions for her.

51. At the time I was trying to live with the everyday situation for myself, and looking back I was not thinking so much about what it must be like for her. Deborah GRO-C, and my psychological issues and treatment worried her a lot at the time. She was second guessing everything in order to cater for me, trying to sort everything out behind the scenes.

52. Luke was still at home then, and he saw me in that state. He has known me since he was 11 or 12, so I have been in his life for a long time.

Section 6. Treatment/Care/Support

53. No psychological support was offered to me before I sought it. Whilst I was on the course of treatment, it was pretty much like "This is what you've got, we'll send you to see this consultant, this is it, the course of treatment's finished." This meant that there was a gap between finishing treatment and seeking help. I finished the treatment in September 2014 and I think it was at the end of 2014 or the start of 2015 when I went to see the doctor about antidepressants. It could have been offered to me at the time of treatment at the MRI, they could have asked me how I was feeling and if we were coping. Instead it was "Off you go, see you next month", once they had taken my blood and given me my new tablets at the end of each month.

54. I have never been offered counselling or psychological support in consequence of being infected with Hepatitis C.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

55. After I was diagnosed, the registrar at the MRI asked if I had had a blood transfusion in the past and referred me to the Skipton Fund's website. I filled in the form online with all my details in February 2014 and I received £20,000 in my bank account six weeks later on 15th April 2014. I was told that I could apply for the stage 2 payment if my condition worsened. There were no preconditions imposed on my making the application for financial assistance. However, I then did not get another payment until November 2016.

56. The speed with which the money arrived in my account made me think that there must be something in the medical records that shows that I received an infected blood product or a blood transfusion.

57. I continued to receive forms through from the Caxton Fund, but both Deborah and I were earning too much to receive any money. The only form I have to fill out is an annual, pre-payment prescription form, so that I do not have to pay for any medication I am prescribed.

58. The financial burden has been eased this year by the money from the EIBSS. I received a payment in November 2016 for £3500, then in 2017/18 it was £3500 again but spaced over quarterly payments, then in 2018/19 it rose from £3500 to £4500 over the year. Also, I receive a £500 winter fuel payment. I also received a letter on 3rd May 2019, letting me know that I will now receive £4600 every quarter, and I have started getting that now.

59. I feel the Trusts are being more reasonable now than they were originally, thanks to the recommendations from the Inquiry, but there is still the disparity between England, Scotland and Wales. When I was reading up about the Inquiry and the payments, they've bumped it from £20,000 to £50,000. I keep a grip on what's going on, I look at the website, I watch the hearings and follow the latest news on the Inquiry.

Section 8. Other Issues

60. Since the diagnosis, I have managed to get a life insurance policy, but it was about three years after before I could get it. Every time I apply for holiday insurance, I have to put down that I have the Hepatitis C virus and have had it treated, because if something were to happen related to it, then the policy would be void. The insurance companies use it in their favour so they charge you more. Travel insurance might be £25 for the majority of people, if you have had Hep C, it would £50.

61. The thing that niggles in the back of my mind is that some symptoms were recognised which suggested that something was not right ten years before my diagnosis, and is was not followed up. Whether that was because the knowledge and awareness of infected blood at that time was not what it is now, I do not know. I remember that when I was going through the application for the Skipton fund, someone said to me that the hospital had tried to contact me in the 1990s and a letter was sent to my home. The letter was clearly sent to a previous address. I don't understand why if the hospital was trying to contact me they did not look into whether I had moved to a different GP's surgery. They can trace where you are by your GP. Surely, given the seriousness of the situation, they should have pushed on to speak to me and not leave it at a letter.

62. I think an opportunity for diagnosis was missed by a previous doctor. His name was Dr GRO-D and he worked at GRO-D Surgery in Oldham. I went to see him in mid 2000s as I was suffering chest pains. This was diagnosed as an enlarged heart. He took a blood sample from me and he said that there was some liver irregularity in my results but there was nothing to worry about. It has since occurred to me was that there was something that was not picked up then, that was a chance missed and the virus could have been caught earlier.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed GRO-C

Dated 20-1-2020