Witness Name: Jacqueline Ahearn
Statement No.: WITN3983001
Exhibits: WITN3983002-004
Dated: 16.06.20.

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF JACQUELINE AHEARN

I provide this statement in response to a request under Rule 9 of the Inquiry Rules 2006 dated 10 January 2020.

I, Jacqueline Ahearn, will say as follows: -

Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is Jacqueline "Jackie" Ahearn. My date of birth is GRO-C 1967 and my address is known to the inquiry.

2. I was born in Liverpool and then moved to the Isle of Man when I was 4 years old. This is where I lived until I met Brian Ahearn in 1990 and at that point, I was a full-time hairdresser.

3. We moved to Manchester in 1991 and I carried on hairdressing for about 6 months but after that I became Brian's full-time carer. He is a haemophiliac. Effectively, since meeting Brian, I have been his carer on a full-time basis.

4. Brian and I have 2 children together, called Paige and Liam. Paige **(See WITN3984001)** was born in 1993 and Liam **(See WITN3985001)** was born in 1998. Paige has a son, called GRO-C GRO-C We were married in August 2001.

5. Brian has a daughter from a previous relationship, called Vicky. They only reconnected recently GRO-D not knowing the situation. I was the mediator and smoothed the way between Brian and Vicky, as I am more level headed. GRO-D GRO-D GRO-D Vicky has two children, called GRO-C and GRO-C.

6. About 18 months before Brian and I got married, I started to feel sick, dizzy and not right. I went to the doctors for this and initially they thought it was due to a diet I was on but after a scan it was found that I had a brain tumour. I had the brain tumour removed in 2002 and so lots of stuff before that is very hazy. I want to make it clear that this is why my recollection might not be the best.

7. I am not legally represented and although the anonymity process has been explained to me, I am happy for my information to be in the public domain. I would also assist with oral evidence if it helps.

8. I intend to speak about my husband, Brian Ahearn, who made a statement to the Inquiry prior to his passing **(See WITN0165001)** and his infection with Hepatitis B and C. In particular, the nature of his illness, how the illness affected him, the treatment he received and the impact it had on him, myself and our family.

Section 2. How Infected

9. When Brian and I first met in Greece, I still lived in the Isle of Man. We had been seeing each other for four months and he came to visit me in the Isle of Man for a month.

10. I got a vibe that something wasn't right when he was visiting and at some point, he told me he was a severe haemophiliac. I had an inkling what it was and the first thing I asked him was if he had AIDS – this was very prevalent at the time. He said no as at that point, he didn't know there was anything wrong with him.

11. GRO-C GRO-C Even though Brian had haemophilia, he was brought up to fight it - and for everything else. He was never wrapped in cotton wool.

12. Brian found out he had been infected with hepatitis C later on in our relationship. Paige was born on GRO-C 1993 and at this time he did not know he had hepatitis C. I know this for sure because at no point when I was pregnant did I ever mention my husband has hepatitis C.

13. We definitely didn't know about the hepatitis C when I was pregnant because I remember we went to a retreat for haemophiliacs. I recall I was pregnant and was massive and we had a talk whilst there about how passing on haemophilia to children works. We were told that if I have a girl she will be a haemophilia carrier and a boy will be fine. We definitely didn't know about the hepatitis C then. I would have been full of worry and would have asked questions relating to it.

14. I have a letter that states that on 22 September 1993, Brian went for a routine appointment at Manchester Royal Infirmary. He saw Professor

Hay who told him he had hepatitis C. Brian was told off the cuff and in a very matter of fact manner that he had hepatitis by Professor Hay. I know that Hay later said that he didn't start at the hospital until 1993 and so he assumed we already knew about this diagnosis. Brian most certainly did not and the news came as a massive shock - to both of us. If Hay was right, then how long had the hospital known about it without telling us?

15. Even then there was no information given on how to manage the infection, what to expect moving forward or precautions to take, Brian was never a drug user, had no tattoos and as far as I am aware has he never had an operation that required a blood transfusion. We had a strong relationship and as such the Factor concentrates he used for his bleeds must have been responsible. I don't recall him ever mentioning that he was warned by doctors of any risk attached to him using these products, certainly in the time we were together.

16. This letter was not included in my husband's statement to the inquiry, as we did not have it at that time. I remember getting all his medical records, just after his statement was given, which showed what treatment he had received and when we had been told about the hepatitis. However, I can't currently find this letter.

17. At the inquest into Brian's death, that occurred last week, they were talking about the first treatment, called cryoprecipitate, that Brian was given and they think he was infected with hepatitis B from that, when he was 13 years old.

18. The judge at the inquest didn't know much about haemophilia but asked if there could be a chance he was infected with hepatitis C at the same time. Professor Hay, who was called to give evidence said he could have been infected through the cryoprecipitate but it is highly unlikely.

19. Hay said it is probably the new treatment, called Factor VIII concentrate, that caused the hepatitis C. He went on to say he is more than certain that Brian was infected with hepatitis C with a batch from England. Hay said the product would have been made from an English blood donation in the period before it was screening of donations started. This confirmed what we suspected.

20. There is some doubt as to when and which product infected Brian but there is no question that he contracted both hepatitis B and C as a result of contaminated blood. His death certificate records the cause as liver cirrhosis due to hepatitis C infection and the use of contaminated blood products **(See WITN3983002)**.

Section 3. Other Infections

21. As far as I am aware, Brian was only infected with hepatitis B and C and he did not contract any other infections as a result of his treatment for haemophilia. However, he was tested for HIV and was found to be negative.

22. He was also sent a letter to say he could be at risk of vCJD but it stated that there was no test for this. This was just a standard warning letter, saying someone with haemophilia had died from it. There was obviously a possibility that it was in the Factor products. vCJD was not mentioned again and just like the hepatitis C, this was something they (the doctors) said don't worry about. It's easier said than done though, there is always a lurking doubt, particularly when one of those "don't worry about' conditions becomes a reality. Unfortunately, I don't have a copy of the letter anymore.

Section 4. Consent

23. As far as I am aware, Brian always consented to the treatment that he was given. However, I do think that he felt he was being tested on

when he was younger without his knowledge. GRO-C GRO-C GRO-C I do remember him saying he had a lot of blood tests and he didn't know what these were for and he felt things were being tried on him.

24. There is also the diagnosis with HCV. As I said, Brian was not aware that he had hepatitis C when told by Hay therefore he must have been tested at some stage for this infection without his consent.

Section 5. Impact

25. The hepatitis started affecting Brian about 15 years ago and it was a slow drip. It wasn't until he died that I realised how bad it was because at the time it was normal.

26. A major affect was that he started obsessing about everything, especially cleanliness Everything had to be extra clean, including the house and himself. He would obsess about time keeping, emptying bins and all the drawers had to be spotless inside He could obsess about something for hours and it would totally dominate his thinking.

27. If this wasn't done or that wasn't done, then a real problem would occur and this paranoia got worse as time passed. Brian was 1 of 7 but his brother, sister, stepdad and mum had all died and so I put a lot of it down to that you know – the strain of the loss. I just thought that was the way he was.

28. He didn't like me going out or being away from him and this caused friction between us. For a period of time, about 12 years ago, I slept in the lounge on a mattress. I think I slept in the lounge for about 2 years. I thought the kids didn't know about this, as I would put it all away in the morning but they did. We had a relationship breakdown and this was really more on the mental rather than the physical side.

29. By this time, Brian had given up work but prior to that he was a painter and decorator. He trained as a carpenter after school and then did painting and decorating. He held the extended family together and they all came to him. It was always him that sorted out everyone's troubles.

30. There was stigma attached to him not working and people would ask why. People would come, walk around the car and question me. They would ask why he gets these benefits and would comment on the fact that we had another new car. They didn't see the pain he suffered with swollen joints and the bleeds.

31. He had this due to mobility issues and I would try to justify it to them and would say he had a work injury but Brian would say it is none of their business. I would feel like saying take all of that away, as it isn't about a new car.

32. Giving up work really affected him and it got progressively worse. It affected his self-respect and I know he was downhearted. Being in pain saps your spirit and he had no one to take it out on other than the kids and me. We did split up about 9 years ago for a short while, so I would have been about 44 years old. That was more a shock tactic on my behalf as we weren't getting anywhere; we weren't talking and he was screaming at the kids and all our lives were in turmoil It was horrific and this was all due to the hepatitis C.

33. Liam bore the brunt of his anger and anything could set him off and he would go on and on and on about it, turning it into a huge issue. The argument would escalate and could lead to weeks on end of stony silence between them with me stuck in the middle. Yet, it could be because of something as simple as Liam leaving some shoes downstairs.

34. I felt like even if I wanted to leave Brian, I wouldn't have been able to. It is not that I did want to leave him but I just didn't have this choice. I

didn't have money that was my own and so I couldn't leave. If me and Brian split up, then I would have struggled financially. Everything that we got financially was for Brian; even the care allowance Brian claimed, and so it wasn't technically mine.

35. I remember when it was bad and I was sleeping on the floor, I went to citizens advice to see about a house. I did think seriously about leaving but 70% of the reason we got back together was that I loved him but there was the 30% reason of who would look after him.

36. Maybe when we were going through this bad patch in our relationship, maybe if I had my own job and income, I could have got my own house. But I would have had to leave this house to put my name down on the list to get a house and I knew deep down that just was not an option.

37. I don't have family and even though it wasn't something I thought about a lot, due to not having a job and being busy looking after someone, I had nowhere to turn. All the money was in his name. He didn't keep me short of money but I didn't have my independence. Perhaps the difficulties in parting are what kept us together but I do know that almost all these problems we endured came as a direct result of his infection with the HCV.

38. It was the depression that I really couldn't deal with. He was depressed to the point where he didn't speak and used to just scream at lot for no reason. This is when I thought something needs to be done; we split up and I said he could only come back with medical help.

39. I said he needed anti-depressants but he was old school. He didn't speak about things like that and so me saying this was like a red rag to a bull. In the end though, he did get anti-depressants from the local GP. Brian was very private until the last few years, until he said I want to stand up and be counted.

40. If Brian, how he was 5 years ago, was sitting here now and I said anything about mental health, he would say he was fine and nothing was wrong. He started on antidepressants and was on them for 4 or 5 years and things did settle down. However, he went from being depressed to showing - and having - no emotion at all; he wasn't bothered about anything. Sometimes I would say just scream or shout or do something as I craved some sort of reaction on occasions during our conversation.

41. GRO-C

42. He asked to see a counsellor through the local GP surgery at one point and went to a group meeting but he walked right out. Brian was too intimate a person to expose his feelings in a group environment. He was offered a phone call once a fortnight but this is not what he needed. Although, the girl on the phone was really nice and he opened up to her. The last phone call he had, he said he was going in for an operation on his ankle and we never heard from her again. I suppose everyone's depression is different and I have never lived with or known anyone else with the condition but near end of his life he slept for 20 hours a day and would only be up and awake for 4 hours.

43. He would get up with me in the morning and then I would say things like why don't we nip there and you sit in the car and he would agree to do this. However, 10 minutes later he would change his mind and go back to bed.

44. I didn't leave the house for long periods of time either in the last 4 years as I was convinced if I did, I would come back to find him dead. I

harboured serious concerns that he would kill himself, as this is how filled with despair he was and how low the depression had caused him to sink.

45. Brian also suffered from other symptoms as a result of the hepatitis C. He had a big weight gain and since he was diagnosed with cancer it all makes sense. He had a big stomach and one reason for this was that he did eat whatever he wanted which was probably down to the depression. I used to just say the bloated stomach was down to eating but now it makes sense that this was in part due to the liver damage and cancer.

46. He was a very social person when I met him and he had lots of friends. However, in the last 4 years of his life, he didn't go out and didn't socialise. Due to putting on weight, he felt people were looking at him, judging him and he said he smelled although I didn't notice this.

47. Additionally, he had horrendous itching all over his body. He was always itching and we went to the doctor about this a lot. He would scratch until and his legs were sore and often bled as a result. On top of this, he had trouble sleeping because his joints were so painful.

48. I used to say that you only have to turn the lights on and he will tan. Brian was always a funny yellow colour, so much so that he almost looked like Homer Simpson. No one ever really said anything about the yellowness until he was diagnosed with cancer. Looking back, he was actually very grey also and maybe this was because he always had sallow skin.

49. Brian had memory problems and vacancy for a good long time. I would say to Brian, I told you this yesterday and I thought it was because he didn't listen to me but I think he actually just couldn't remember. It used to frustrate me but all makes sense now that I know it is a side effect of

the HCV. His memory and cognitive functions definitely deteriorated further when he was sleeping a lot over the last 3 years.

50. I actually thought he had brain cancer in the end because he was that muddled and couldn't retain any information. Even before he was diagnosed with cancer, he only ever wanted it to be me and him. He didn't want to get involved in anything and he didn't want me going out or not being near to his side. Possibly there was a fear of being alone. He was never like that before so he had a complete change in behaviour.

51. GRO-C

52. GRO-C

GRO-C He was so confused and some of the stuff he was saying was not quite right.

53. In Brian's statement, he has this obsession that he saw a doctor who arranged a scan and he kept saying he never had the results. I don't think he ever saw this doctor, as there is no record at the hospital but Brian was adamant. He was adamant he wasn't mixed up and it wasn't just something he fixated on.

54. When he was telling the inquiry about this I didn't stop him but he was obsessed and mixed up in places. The reason that he gave evidence was for GRO-C, so that this never

happens again. He had always been so private about the haemophilia and then all of a sudden, he just didn't care anymore if people knew.

55. He was so upset he couldn't go to Leeds to give evidence for the inquiry. He was devastated in fact but he was too ill. He couldn't even get from here to the car by this point but he did watch some of the evidence on YouTube.

56. I can count on one hand how many people know about the hepatitis C. Even at school, I said to Paige and Liam not to tell anyone that dad had injections. Also, the kids didn't have many friends to stay when they were younger. Liam would start talking about what happened in circle time in primary and I would worry he had told people. This stopped after Brian gave his statement to the inquiry, as he didn't want to pretend anymore.

57. GRO-C

GRO-C As I've mentioned, when I met Brian and found out about the haemophilia, the first thing I asked was if he had AIDS and so I can understand why people think like that.

58. There are so many things that people don't know and there are many misconceptions amongst the public. For example, people think if a haemophiliac cut's themselves shaving that they will bleed to death. Also, when I was pregnant and had Paige, people would say I bet you are relieved you are not having a boy. My boys wouldn't get haemophilia but the girls pass it to their children. If I had all boys there would be no more haemophilia and so again this is something that people didn't understand.

59. Back when Brian was diagnosed, I remember thinking; 'thank god it is only hepatitis C'. In hindsight, I think now for people with hepatitis C, who have developed liver cancer, it may actually be just as bad as HIV.

GRO-C

60. GRO-C

GRO-C I don't think people get it, if they haven't lived through it.

61. GRO-C

62. If Brian hadn't had the hepatitis then we would have had another child, as I had an abortion. I had Paige and then had a miscarriage, when Paige was 3 and then we had Liam. Then at 42 years old I found myself pregnant again. The initial joy at the discovery was tempered by the realisation of the destructive course of Brian's behaviour due to the infection and the consequent marital upheaval. After much soul searching, I had a termination.

63. I knew it was the right thing to do, as I couldn't look after a baby and Brian. However, if things were different I would have continued the pregnancy. We agonised over the decision and I would have loved to have another child as would Brian. I remember going to the doctor and I explained that I couldn't keep the baby because of everything else that was going on. Brian and I decided on this together.

64. When we went to the abortion clinic, they separated us and I understand why but we were upset they did this. We made this decision together and so we wanted to stay together.

65. We did always talk about how old the baby would be and when its birthday was. I don't know if I resented Brian for having to do this – I don't feel like I did but I did resent the situation I had been put in. This occurred about the same time as Vicky had GRO-C, so they would be the same age and I often think that I could have a child now who could remind me of Brian and occupy my time thus distracting me from what I am going through emotionally.

66. Brian did try to take legal action with regards to his hepatitis C infection but solicitors always said they wouldn't take this on. Fifteen months ago, my dad had to go to Liverpool GRO-C and I remember we were on the phone to a solicitor on the way there. We couldn't get anywhere with this though.

67. Brian couldn't get life insurance, which was a big thing for him and we paid a lot more for travel insurance. In the airport, they took the haemophilia drugs out to have a look at them and people could see this. He said he was frightened that they were looking into this so in depth and that it may curtail future travel. I tried to make a joke out of it for the kids but it wasn't nice. Brian said he was worried they were going to take his fillings out!

68. When Paige was pregnant there was not that amazing excitement that there usually would be in a family. The mood was dampened by the worry over the baby being a boy. Paige has a low blood count and she is nearer a haemophiliac than she should be, so she has always been under the care of the hospital.

69. I am not sure exactly why but Paige saw Professor Hay because of the potential of her having a haemophiliac baby. She was 10 weeks when she found out she was having a boy and Hay said something along the lines of; 'have you ever thought about terminating this pregnancy as your family has been through enough'. This really upset Paige and

Brian was livid. This is not something that any doctor should say to a patient in his care, in fact; How dare he? However, Paige continued with the pregnancy anyway and had GRO-C

70. GRO-C

71. I think everyone has bad and good days and I don't feel as bad now as when we split up. This was the lowest point in my life. From him having the treatment for cirrhosis in 2016 and the hepatitis clearing, I would say the last 3 years were the best, until he got diagnosed with cancer, as we had learnt to live with the depression.

72. When you are living it, you think it is normal and I never thought I couldn't do it. I just got on with it and both Brian and me were like that. We would just say: Oh well, get up and get on with it, with potential problems our thoughts were; we will cross that bridge when we come to it.

73. We had a lot of holidays and spent a lot of time together in the last 3 years. Before that we always had the kids and Brian's GRO-C so I spent my time between Brian and his dad. We were told that the hepatitis virus had gone and we thought we had done it and made it through to the other side only for the bombshell of the cancer to be dropped.

74. After the last holiday we went on in October 2018, I thought; I don't want to go away again as he was sleeping all the time and he couldn't walk. I did not like people's reaction at the pool, as they would ask what

had happened to his leg and he would say an accident with his bike. We were living a lie.

75. I never thought Brian was going to die because everything else he had got over and so I thought we would get over this. He had so many operations during his life and had hepatitis B and C and beaten – or so I thought - them both, so I never contemplated that he would die.

76. I remembered he looked in the mirror sometime after his diagnosis of cancer and he said what do I look like. I said that he looked good for losing some weight and I never thought the cancer would beat him.

77. I don't think there was enough support when we were told about the cancer. I was given a green thing to whip my tears and I felt they could have given me a proper tissue. There just isn't enough support. There was no one professional to talk it through with. No one you are advised to contact for help; Nothing

78. When we first went to Christie's (the cancer treatment centre) he said he wanted to go on holiday and we will deal with this after we are back. I didn't agree to do this, as I didn't want him to get ill but this is my one regret.

79. Someone asked me if I felt guilty but I don't as I feel I did everything I could for him. We cared for him at home and this is what he wanted. Whether Brian had an inkling of what was going on, I don't know but I found messages on his phone revealing just how upset he was. I just always thought he would get out alive and I never took it on board that he wasn't going to.

80. This is a terrible thing to say but in hindsight, for Brian's sake mentally, it was the best outcome, as I don't think he could have gone through more. I am glad it didn't last long. Once diagnosed it was awful, as you

have a million thoughts and he was worried about me, the kids and grandkids. I always tried to reassure him and would say that I am fine.

81. Brian died in Bury hospice on 23 July 2019 and his funeral was on the following Friday, so 10 days later. When he died he looked so happy and he had a smile on his face. The kids were not there when he died but they came a bit later.

82. One of the nurses, who had been caring for Brian, on the Sunday said I don't think I will see you again as she wasn't there until the Tuesday and she thought he wouldn't make it until then. However, she came on to the ward an hour before he died and she said she didn't know anyone who fought on as long.

83. Liam wanted to go see Brian as he wasn't there when he died. I rang the undertakers to ask when we could view the body and they advised us not to. I had a phone call from them to say that if you can't come this afternoon, then you can't come at all. I said to Liam that I have only seen one person after they have been dead for a while, which was my mum and she didn't look right.

84. Someone dying in front of you is different to seeing someone dead. I said to Liam, you might not be happy with what you see and, in the end, he didn't go. I had no problems with the funeral or funeral directors. The funeral directors had done five similar types funeral recently and so they were used to it.

85. GRO-C

86. I don't see any of Brian's family but Kevin and Brian were very close. I saw Brian's brother at the funeral but he didn't speak to me and I don't really know why this is.

87. Brian was very private and if anyone asked what was wrong he would say his problems were due to football injuries or a motorbike accident. No neighbours know about Brian's illness and they just think he died of cancer. This is the truth but they would probably be very shocked if they knew it stemmed from hepatitis C, not that this would bother me.

88. I have been severely affected by Brian's death in numerous ways. Now, I am anxious about what is going on in the outside world. I now have an unfounded fear that someone is going to break in to the house and kill me whereas I never worried about this before. I listen to the news and am filled with dread about what the future holds and that id I go out I will get the coronavirus. I was never like this before. My anxiety is so bad it is consuming me.

89. I have never been treated for depression but I have a bottle of wine with the girls and this is what has got me through it. Paige consciously makes me do things, she will say can you pick GRO-C up from nursery and if she asks I will do it. This weekend I could have stayed in bed all weekend, as I just couldn't be bothered but my family won't let me do that, thankfully.

90. Last Tuesday, Paige called to see what I was doing that day and I said I am having my nails done and then taking the dog out. Paige's partner then took me out to lunch and so they are always keeping me busy – and keeping an eye on me. I am sure that they are worried about how I am coping with being alone.

91. I said to my sister the other day that when I get to 70, I will take a bottle of pills and end it all. She asked me if that is really what I want to do

but I was joking and that isn't what I would actually do but you wonder where those type of thoughts come from

92. I will never get over this and the sadness creeps up on me when I least expect it. I will be sitting here on the sofa and just burst into tears or I can be in Asda and find myself just crying in the aisle. Even my walk up to bed at night alone will often make me cry. I mostly manage to keep it together when I am out or with the kids but it is when I am on my own I cry.

93. Paige and I have started slimming world and I got my half stone award the other day and I came home but I have got no one to tell about this. Also, I have no one to tell what the kids have said to me and I can't watch things on the telly we used to enjoy together. It is just silly things like this that affect me. Recently, I was messing with the dogs and I remembered that Brian used to do this and it made me sad. These little things bring it home to you how much you are alone when the love of your life departs.

94. GRO-C was a surprise and I thought Brian and I would be together to bring him up. He is too young and won't remember his granddad. Also, a neighbour is putting their house up for sale and I am sad as a new neighbour will come and they won't know Brian. It is these things that get to me. I feel that just being here now, forever on my own is a terrible prospect but I don't want to put this on my kids, be a burden to them when they have their own lives to lead and enjoy.

95. Liam left home about 18 months ago, as he mostly stays with his girlfriend but he does stay here sometimes. Brian felt that Liam should take his place and this was probably the source of a lot of their differences but I don't want him to feel that he needs to do this. I want my kids to live their own lives, even though they probably want to look after me but I don't want them to feel like they need to.

96. I feel very angry and have very selfish feelings about how Brian was infected and how he died. Possibly, it could have happened anyway; we don't have a magic ball and I could have passed away with my brain tumour but I feel like they, the medical profession due to their failure made it happen for us. It makes me ask; how dare they?

97. He might never have got hepatitis C and could have been killed by a bus and it would have been traumatic but we wouldn't have lived all those years of drawn out suffering and distress, having numerous hospital appointments with all the attendant worry with hopes raised and dashed. Looking back, it was an absolutely horrendous way of life that I would not wish on anyone.

98. I worked for about 6 months after I met Brian but I had to give up work to be able to care for him. I suppose now this bothers me but it didn't bother me then. However, about 15 years ago, I got a dinner time job at a school, to just get away from it all, out of the house for some respite. I only worked there for 45 minutes each weekday and I did this job for 5 or 6 years.

99. I stopped this job about 8 years ago, as by that time things had taken a dramatic turn for the worst with Brian's health. At the time, I told myself I left the job because the age divide was too great between myself and the kids. I said the kids were too cheeky and my kids never acted like that.

100. Now I understand that I was so stressed at home that I couldn't cope but at the time I didn't realise it was due to the stress. This job made me get out and I made some friends with the girls there and it allowed me some me time.

101. Before Brian died, I thought about going back to work but I have not done anything about it. I have never been good on computers because I have been a carer for so long and I think I need computer

skills to work. Paige is a hairdresser and it is all completely different now, so I know I couldn't go back to that. If I had a job to go back to, maybe I wouldn't find this as daunting but I think I have lost my confidence.

102. I don't feel held back as it was our decision for me to look after him but I feel like I am still in the 1990's. I have lots of girlfriends and we have weekends away and Brian was always happy for me to do that. I also meet my friends on a Tuesday and I wouldn't have got through this time without them. However, when they talk about their jobs, I just wouldn't even know where to start. For example, when I worked they didn't have long interviews but that is the case now and I just feel like I can't do it.

103. I don't know where I fit anymore, because all my friends work and I don't have a husband to look after. What do I do now? I can do whatever I want but I need to get out of that front door. I feel I am stuck in a rut at the moment and I need to discover a purpose in life moving on.

104. I feel I have been cheated out of the years ahead with my husband. It is the decision being taken away from you that is so hard. We have not had a lot of input into the decisions that have been made for us, as we put them in the hands of the doctors. We are even now waiting for the doctors to help us all to get out of this mess meaning better blood products and treatment for haemophiliacs in the future.

105. When Brian was alive, we used to say the slap is coming, as we would climb back up and it would knock us back down again. Even now I feel like I take ten steps forward, only to get something as simple as an email update from the Inquiry and it drags me right back down.

106. I have never paid a bill or sorted the gas or electric when it was required Brian did it all. It is still his voice on the answerphone and I

don't know how to change it. Although, I now know how to argue with the guy at Virgin because since Brian passed I have learnt to do this. I lived on my own before I met Brian but that was a long time ago and so I am simply not used to it.

107. Just after Brian died, I rang the DSS about a bereavement payment and they said I could get universal credit and I needed to make an appointment to get this. They said I needed to get a fit note from the doctor and I just went to pieces. It was all too much for me to take in., certainly at the time so I called back and said I don't need the benefits.

108. Not only have I found coping with living on my own hard but I also struggle with social interactions, other than close friends. If there is someone I vaguely know in the street I avoid them because there is the initial awkwardness and I feel like I need to make it better for them. When they ask how I am, I want to fall on the floor and cry but instead I say I am fine and that I have bad and good days.

109. My friend is doing a pub event for Brian, to raise money for the hospice but I don't want to go. My dilemma is if I am there and laughing then I look bad but if I am there and crying then people think; will she ever get over this? There is no right and wrong but I just don't want the pressure of having to act in a certain way.

110. My daughter always talks about not seeing him again but I don't believe I won't see him. She upset me a few weeks ago as she said she hasn't just lost her dad but she has lost half of me as well. I was mortified as I don't wish to compound my children's grief with anxiety about my life.

111. I am very much an open book and I meet with friends every Tuesday night and when Brian was alive, I would be the first to walk in and say; thank god I am here, as I am going to choke him one of these days. But we always had each other's back. No one could disparage Brian in

my company and get away with it. My sister said that out of everyone she knows we had a good marriage and we spent a lot of time together.

112. I would say to my friends that they see their husbands for 5 hours after work but we saw each other all day long. Even before the cancer diagnosis, he just wanted to be with me and the family. This has made adjusting to him not being around even harder.

113. Last week after the inquest, there are lots of the good things I remember now because all the bad stuff took over. We did have a nice life, with nice holidays and good family time together and it is this I miss. All the running around like an idiot, all the hospital appointments, dealing with medication, I don't miss any of that. I have all this time now to sit on my own and reminisce about how we were each other's lives. If you spoke to our friends they would say the same.

114. I wouldn't change what has happened; I have more good than bad to take away from it. I still feel like he will walk through the door. He was in hospital a lot and so I am used to sleeping on my own and coming home myself.

115. I miss the physical presence more than anything. Once he was diagnosed with cancer we had the talk about what was going to happen to a certain point but we would get too upset and stop. We did have some days where we put the TV on and talked and cried but we never planned the point when I would be on my own.

116. My reasons for being sad now are very selfish and I feel guilty about that. I feel angry he isn't here and I am on my own. Then there is who will I go on holiday with and who is going to fix things around the home. Also, the shopping, I can't get around the fact I have to shop for only one person now. You don't realise the void that losing your partner leaves in your life until you're there experiencing it.

117. I suppose now I couldn't say exactly how I am feeling. My friends or Paige will call me and I will feel numb. I don't feel happy or sad but I do feel angry, this is the main thing.

118. I feel I am in a position that I get payments and so I don't need to worry about that but when you live with someone with a disability you get help. You get carers allowance and Brian got disability allowance and then they die and you get nothing. When he first died the doctor said I could get a sick note, I think because of how I was reacting.

119. Now I am very anxious and I don't like going out. Whenever I go out, my head is down as I don't want to speak to anyone. Furthermore, I don't like living here. I would like to sell and move because Brian's done every room and every bit of painting and flooring. It is too much of a reminder at times and it will always hold me back from moving on. But then I don't like going out and want to come back home to it all if I am out. That is how mixed up I am!

120. I used to be social and now I am not because it chips away at you. People have said I am young and can meet someone else but I don't feel like I would want to. In another 100 years, I might change my mind. It is like when you have a baby and everyone deals with it differently.

121. My mum died when I was 19 years old and then along came Brian and now everything is on my shoulders. You have to make sure everything is ok for your family I feel like now I have got to keep everyone together and there isn't much time for me, as I have to look after them.

122. If I went somewhere to say I wasn't coping, they would say it is because of the loss but it isn't just because of that, it is all the stuff before. He was diagnosed with a life sentence 30 years ago and this is what I find hard.

123. Due to everything that has happened, my confidence in the NHS has been affected. If any of my kids or grandkids have an operation I would have to be there. I couldn't take what they say on face value.

124.

GRO-C

125.

126. GRO-C

GRO-C

GRO-C As mentioned previously I now don't have much faith in the NHS and as a result I don't go to the doctors myself very much and all that has happened has made me very wary of trials.

127. Brian's passing has not only had a massive effect on me but also the rest of the family. GRO-C, the 10-year-old, sort of gets it but GRO-C is really struggling with it and is the most affected. He will say something like I need to go to the bedroom and I think he thinks granddad will be there. He is the one that talks about him all the time.

128. Liam and Brian were Man City fans and so I said that they could arrange to spread some of Brian's ashes there. It was set up and we all went along. It was a poignant but quite sad occasion.

129. On Brian's birthday, we were all going to Lanzarotte but obviously things changed with the Coved-19. The intention was to spread the rest

of his ashes there but also have a bit of a holiday to help us get over the sadness of the past year. Not such a bad thing. For his birthday, we intended to have a nice picnic and a day on the beach. It is on hold but there will be a time when we can all get together and have a delayed celebration over there to make the occasion. To be fair, Brian would have been happy to be shoved in the garden.

Section 6. Treatment/Care/Support

130. When I first met Brian, he was on Factor VIII treatment and I felt it changed a lot due to funding. One day he would be given one product and then a few weeks later they would say, oh you need to now go on this one due to funding changes. This happened on many occasions. However, for the last 5 or 6 years he was always on the same stuff and for the last 18 months, he was on prophylaxis treatment. Looking back, money was always the root of the issue, using the cheapest possible alternative available.

131. When Brian was first diagnosed with hepatitis C, he was told to watch his alcohol intake and we never really received any other information. There was no particular mention then of possible liver damage and little information on what to expect.

132. He was told to come in for scans but there was no urgency to this and we were not told to look out for anything. Basically, they said you do have it but don't worry about it and no one seemed to be concerned about the hepatitis C.

133. I do think that when doctors dealt with Brian, they felt he was a challenge. When he cut his thumb off in an accident, the surgeon explained he was the first haemophiliac that he had operated on. I suppose it raises extra complications for the doctors and surgeons.

134. Due to the fact he was a haemophiliac, even if we went for treatment to the dentist they would kind of say that things that were happening were due to the haemophilia. Just like if you are a smoker and go in for something and they put it down to that.

135. Counselling was never offered to Brian when he was diagnosed with hepatitis C and when I went with Brian to the hospital, I felt like I couldn't even ask a question, as I was not the patient. I was never asked for my opinion, even though I was caring for him. I never felt included. There was one nurse, I think it may have been Paula Grey, the specialist haematology nurse that would ask how I am in passing but to be fair we just got on with it. This was down to Brian's upbringing; he didn't whinge, he got on with it and I got dragged along with it.

136. He was regularly seen at the hospital, maybe once every 6 months but he did miss a few appointments. I recall one visit to a haematology clinic appointment and Brian went into a room with some doctor that we hadn't seen before. The doctor was confused about what had been done in the past and what he needed to do and for all the world it seemed like he had just been told; 'go in there and speak to that fella'. – He was totally unprepared. If it wasn't so funny it would make you cry.

137. Brian would be up all night before an appointment and then he would sometimes refuse to go as his nerves would get the better of him. When he went, I think the whole thing with Brian, was that it was very much like; 'Oh God it is him again'. This is how they made him feel. They would turn up and say; 'Oh dear it is you again'. There was no asking what we wanted or how they could help. Saying this, the haematologist who saw him over the last several years called Dr Thatcher was fantastic. The doctors before that I can't recall. He was only ever under the Manchester Royal Infirmary and the Haematology Unit was separate but in the grounds.

138. He was regularly monitored for it and yet in the big scheme of everything, hepatitis C was the least of his problems. He had significant problems with his joints, which at the time seemed more important due to the mobility issues.

139. Over a number of years, Brian had many operations on his joints. His ankles had to be fused and I think his right ankle, he had fused five times. Additionally, he had both knees replaced and elbow operations. These joint problems would have happened anyway based on the haemophilia because the bleeds caused his cartilage to wear away.

140. He had an operation on his ankle that went wrong. This caused the bone to crumble and as result that became the priority, where every hospital appointment was for that. They kept saying we will do this scan and that scan. We would talk to the consultants, when he had the scans and they said that he had an infection but they didn't know what it was.

141. He was diagnosed with hepatitis C in 1993/4, well actually this isn't when he was diagnosed – we still don't know exactly when they knew - but this is when we found out about it. Then he went on treatment in 2000 for the HCV. I only know it was around then because we got married in 2001 and he looked like death warmed up, as he was so thin and gaunt. I can't remember now if this was the first or second treatment he underwent.

142. He had one treatment and I'm not sure what it was and he lost all his hair and a lot of weight and his depression was exacerbated. I think he was on this treatment for about a year but I can't be sure. After it was finished, we were told that he had not cleared the virus and it had been unsuccessful. He went through so much during that and for nothing. It is no surprise that your mental health is affected when you put so much into something only for it to rebound and kick you in the teeth.

143. For the following 3 years there was no further offer of treatment, they simply monitored his condition. At the inquest, Hay said something along the lines that the treatment options available for hepatitis C weren't that good and so they just monitored him until they had a treatment that he would tolerate better.

144. In 2004 he went on another hepatitis C treatment course for 6 months and this definitely consisted of interferon combined with ribavirin, so he must have had injections but I can't remember this. Again, this medication was unsuccessful but they said that although it hadn't worked, it had given his liver some time off. At this point, I don't ever remember anyone saying that he has cirrhosis but I suppose I might have been naïve because hepatitis C causes this. Having said that I would have expected it to be spelled out so that they were sure you were aware of the consequences.

145. He had a liver ultrasound scan in 2016, which they said was normal and that there were just fatty deposits on the liver. Then he was given this new scan, called a FibroScan, later in 2016 and he was told he had the highest level of cirrhosis and this is when he was started on the third and final hepatitis C treatment. As you can see, there was quite a gap again between the different treatments, 12 years in fact and this is because they said they were waiting for another drug to come onto the market. Was there really nothing that could be done in that 12 years period?

146. This new course of treatment lasted for 3 months, as he started in August 2016 and was on it until November 2016. This time, the treatment was successful and it cleared the virus. We thought he would be on the treatment over Christmas but he wasn't. He was told to come off the treatment, as there was no trace of the virus and was told to go on and enjoy his life and so I thought he would be fine. He went back for confirmation blood tests and these showed the hepatitis was

completely cleared. This is why when he was diagnosed with liver cancer it was a real shock, in fact it was devastating news in the circumstances.

147. The treatment for the HCV was just something he had to do because of the liver problem they found. However, as I've said, it was his ankle that had taken over his emphasis. He had been in plaster for 9 months and then they said they would add a frame to his leg, which luckily, they didn't do as that would possibly have been a hinderance in the last years of his life. The ankle really dominated his whole life up until the cancer shock and the hepatitis just kind of slotted in. Treatment wise, it was just a few tablets and we didn't realise just how serious the consequences of the virus were as no one ever sat us down and went through what it meant.

148. When Brian was told that the hepatitis C had cleared, I asked a nurse if there was a chance that the infection could come back. She explained that there is not a chance of this happening, unless he gets infected again, which would be very unlikely. The hepatitis C treatment was so good and even they were surprised how well it worked.

149. I certainly don't remember anyone ever saying that there is a chance he could develop liver cancer. Once he had the cirrhosis diagnosis, I went to every appointment after that. Before that he would go on his own but I don't remember anyone ever saying this. It would have been something Brian would have obsessed over and he never mentioned it. He also missed appointments after this point and he would never have done that if he thought there was a chance cancer would develop.

150. The cancer diagnosis occurred because Brian went to his doctor, as he was complaining about pain under his ribs. On previous liver scans, they had said the liver is very high and there are just fatty deposits but now I sometimes wonder if he had the cancer for a lot longer than we thought. It seems strange that in 2015 he was told there was only fatty

deposits showing on the Ultrasound yet within a matter of months he had developed high level cirrhosis, as shown up by the FibroScan.

151. He had a scan in January of 2019 and when he came home he said something was not right. When he went for the scan there was a new person there and this new person scanned him and after the scan was done they said I will just get someone to check it. They were discussing it and someone said I have never seen that before and then they asked if he could make an appointment with the hepatologist. This is how he knew something was wrong as they had never done that before.

152. I am not sure what happened in the interim period although I think he had a further scan in the following weeks and had to await the results of this. I remember that he had to chase the hospital for the appointment initially and then had a great deal of difficulty finding out what the result was. He rang the Haematology Dept numerous times. We even rang the GP surgery, Unsworth Medical Centre but we were told we were overthinking it and they told us to forget about it and get on with our lives and someone would be in touch.

153. On Saturday 30 March 2019, Brian rang me when I was out, to see when I would be home. He would usually do this so he could know when to put sausages or bacon on. However, he just said ok and then put the phone down, which I thought was strange. When I came home, he told me that Mr Greer (hepatologist) had rung because he had seen the test results. He was told to come in on Monday 01 April and was to bring someone with him. There was quite a considerable delay between the test in January and the clinic appointment in April with Dr Greer.

154. I didn't think they were going to say what they said. Brian was worried but I just said you might be overthinking it. However, it was a sleepless weekend for both of us. I know I shouldn't say it but Mr Greer is a lovely man and very unassuming. It's just his style. He explained that

he had looked at Brian's scan and he said they had found multiple liver tumours **(See WITN3983003)**. It had gone into the bile duct and Mr Greer said he will speak to the specialists in Leeds and maybe he would be able to get a transplant. Brian was told that he had 6 months to 2 years to live. It was a lot to take in – I felt sick to my stomach, God knows how Brian felt.

155. We now had to tell the kids. It was so painful watching their faces as their dad explained he wasn't going to be around in the future. There were tears and denial and anger – Paige especially. She took it really badly and couldn't accept the fact that her dad may be leaving her. I never want to go through anything like that again; the experience leaves you numb and with a terrible feeling of helplessness. You want to take the pain away and make it all better for you kids but there nothing you can do or say that will help.

156. What I can't understand is that Brian used to have endoscopies but this stopped because they said that Brian could contaminate the machines. I think that if we had access to this machine, then the cancer could possibly have been detected earlier. To be fair, the endoscope was an appointment Brian never missed GRO-C GRO-C. I think if he had been allowed to have them, he would have gone and he could have been diagnosed earlier. He was told he didn't need them anymore. However, I know that a doctor we saw later on during his care wondered why it was stopped and said he should have continued to have them. Surely the machines could have been cleaned after use? They must be in any case. I know there will be an expense with this but it can be a matter of life and death.

157. We went back to see Mr Greer at Manchester Royal Infirmary a few weeks later, on 16 of April, GRO-C. We were told at this appointment that the Leeds specialists couldn't do anything. Then I think Brian had his first Christies appointment on 17 May, this being the cancer centre. Again, I thought Brian had to wait a long time to see

them, over 6 weeks from the time he was diagnosed. From then on, it went completely pair shaped.

158. The situation for Brian changed very quickly, as I can remember the Macmillan nurse came about 2 weeks after he was diagnosed with cancer and he was really put out. She came to introduce herself and we said surely it will be a good few months down the line before we need you kind of help. Brian said I don't know what you are here for. However, after a week I was begging her to come back.

159. Brian had a swelling on his left testicle, which he found just before he started on the cancer treatment. He was distraught about this and I said let's not panic. He went to the GP surgery and the doctor was dismissive, saying the cancer is not going to travel from the liver to the testicle that quickly. He could have just said that it is not connected and it is just unfortunate but it was the condescending way that he said it that upset us. No thought for what Brian was already going through – a complete lack of compassion.

160. When we first went to Christies, they did say there was a drug that Brian could be given that was the best on the market and they said there is an alternative if that doesn't work. But the problem is haemophiliacs don't tolerate some medication very well and the medication seemed to make things worse. GRO-C GRO-C I am not sure if the medical profession has a great deal of understanding about the interaction between haemophilia and cancer in general.

161. At the time, I would have done anything they said but from going to Christies it went completely mental. We went there to see a clinical nurse and a doctor, who talked us through what would happen and Brian started treatment after 2 weeks.

162. He took 2 Sorafenib tablets a day and again Brian didn't seem to pick up on a lot of it. I knew it was terminal but he didn't appear to have accepted this and he kind of ridiculed the need for medicine. I don't know if he forgot or purposely blocked it out as his memory was terrible. This was a residual effect of the HCV; his memory never fully recovered. He was on the treatment for 10 days and it was horrific. Whilst in Christies, Brian had at least 7 scans but I don't know what these were for. I think he had them because Brian had asked for them!

163. Whilst at Christies, each time that the nurses would tell Brian that he was dying, due to his poor memory, it was like he was being told for the first time. On at least four occasions, I went to the desk to plead with them to stop telling him that he is dying. He would call me in a panic and say they have just told me I am dying. Although he had been told previously that he was terminal, he could not remember and so it would be a shock to him. I asked them to wait until I was there to tell him but this happened on numerous occasions. Can you imagine the anguish and mental turmoil of being repeatedly told you are going to die, albeit you couldn't retain the information.

164. I don't blame anyone at Christies but I wish we hadn't gone on any treatment. He may have died earlier but he wouldn't have been so ill and suffered so much. Within an hour of taking the cancer treatment, he felt so sick.

165. **GRO-C** **GRO-C**. He changed his diet and went vegan as he said he will fight it and not let it beat him.

166. As mentioned, on the cancer medication he was violently sick. When he was at home, we had to take his temperature every day and night and were told to ring a hotline if this was raised. He was on the

treatment for about a week maybe longer and in this time, I called the hotline about 300 times.

167. His temperature was continually high, the nausea was constant and he had diarrhoea. I was advised to stop the treatment and we ended up going to A&E twice as he couldn't keep any fluid down. Then, he had a really high temperature and he was put on antibiotics. They said Brian had an infection but they didn't know what it was.

168. There was one morning at home I went upstairs and he said I don't know what is wrong with me. His whole head had swollen and his ears were swollen so that it looked like he had cauliflower ears. The bed was soaked with sweat and it was like he had wet himself.

169. I rang the helpline again this day and was told to stop the treatment. They said to wait to see the consultant on the Thursday which was a few days away. I am not sure how I got him there in the car. He was throwing up in the back and looked like death warmed up. In the waiting room, he sat bent over and had turned completely yellow. All the people in there had cancer but they were looking at Brian and thinking; "Oh my God".

170. He was adamant that he wanted to come home GRO-C GRO-C and he was home for a week from the 12 July **(See WITN3983004)**. On the Friday, Saturday and Sunday he was really good. He was able to get out of bed and was laughing and joking and for a while I thought we were going to beat it. They had put a drain in to drain the bile out and he came home with this in.

171. Brian used to do his own factor VIII every third day and they changed it to an old Factor VIII that you injected every day and none of the medical staff knew how to use it. It was incredible! They would give him a blood thinner, as he had a clot near his heart, but he would have to show them how give him the Factor VIII, even how to mix it. On some

occasions he injected it himself. When at home, Vicky was doing the Factor treatment because it is intravenous and so the district nurses couldn't do this. So, his daughter was giving him the injections every night, whilst I was holding him up to find a vein.

172. The district nurses, well I felt like they were not available enough. I couldn't get in touch with anyone at night. Out of hours the support was not great. There was always someone on apparently but I couldn't get hold of them. There is not enough known about the complex care needs of a haemophiliac with cancer. When I said to them that he was a haemophiliac they would always reply that they would come back to me after they had spoken to their boss.

173. I wish he had never gone on the treatment. I wish we had stayed at home and just got on with it. For his grandkids to see this it was hard. The older two saw him on the Sunday as they had done the race for life and came over but I said that I don't want anyone to come after that.

174. His kids could come but not any friends or anyone else, as he didn't know they were here anyway. This drain kept filling up with blood and I was trying to hide it from everyone else. We were all sleeping downstairs and I didn't want them to see the blood and get frightened. I called one of the numbers provided by the palliative care people and an on-call doctor came out. He couldn't understand why the drain had been left in and said it should have been closed when he was discharged from Christies. He also had hiccups until he died.

175. At one point a doctor came over to visit Brian, whilst he was at home. It was his GP from the surgery. I don't recall his name. He just turned up to see how things were going. The doctor completely ignored me and asked Brian how he was feeling. At this point Brian didn't even know his own name. The doctor was right next to him and said; 'how are you'? Brian looked at him vaguely and mumbled something? He then turned to me and said that I needed to get the old photos out and set

up a date night to sort Brian out and I just looked at him and said are you taking the piss! They were his parting words. It is like being seen to be doing something for the sake of it, the visit, the same as giving you leaflets about bereavement support but doing nothing practical.

176. On the Thursday I had a mental breakdown. The stress and strain just overwhelmed me and I couldn't do it anymore on my own. It was destroying me both physically and emotionally. I told the authorities we are not doing this anymore and I said I don't care if you put me in prison but I am not doing it. Brian and I had discussed using a hospice in the event of a situation like this and he had agreed it was ok if it helps me. I don't think he knew where he was there anyway as he was so heavily sedated. He only spoke to me once in the hospice. He went in on the Friday and died on the Tuesday. They were fantastic in the Bury Hospice.

177. I often reflect that if they had picked up on the tumour earlier, then he could have survived. It had spread into the bile duct and this is why he couldn't have a transplant. Maybe they wouldn't have given him one anyway but it is something I think about. Even a few months earlier may have made a huge difference for Brian and the chance of a transplant.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

178. We got a payment of £20,000 from the Skipton Fund and I think we must have got another one when he was diagnosed with cirrhosis. With the money we received, we bought a house. You had to be over a certain level of liver damage to get the highest payment and Brian was on this.

179. Due to the payments that Brian received from the Skipton Fund, he was sent a letter in the post asking him to attend an appointment with

the DHS fraud team. I don't know what had happened but he had moved some money and this is why we received this letter.

180. In the letter about the appointment to discuss the fraud it said if you fail to attend the appointment then you will be imprisoned. This happened about 3 years ago, as it was just before his 50th birthday and we were about to go away on holiday. This was another tension filled period for him that he could have done without.

181. In the end, I rang the DHS and said if we can't have the appointment brought forward, we won't be coming, as he will have killed himself! He was taking it so badly. They explained that Brian wouldn't be going to prison and I was able to reassure him.

182. For the appointment, we took the documents from the Skipton Fund and eventually they said we had been incorrectly called in. This mistake caused Brian - and me - significant worry. It is hard to describe the feelings of insecurity and doubt that this type of summons causes. You wonder if you have inadvertently done something wrong and put your way of living at risk.

183. In relation to financial assistance for me after Brian passed, I still get payments of about £1,500 a month. I have just reapplied and they have now upped the yearly income and I think I get the cold weather payments as well. I did say when I first applied that I was still getting care allowance but they said this didn't make any difference.

Section 8. Other Issues

184. The inquest into Brian's death occurred last week, 12 February and the whole family attended this. There are a lot of people affected by infected blood but I know this Inquest it is the first Inquest they have done this side of Manchester. To be honest, there was lots of it I had forgotten and now with time on my hands I sit and think about it, I get

upset and I am not sure how we lived through that. To the outside world I always seemed fine and I still convey that impression but listening at the Inquest reminded me how raw it all still is for me. I don't think I will ever truly be able to put it behind me.

185. As of last week, lots of things are coming back, as I couldn't remember many things previously. Since last Wednesday at the Inquest more memories are coming back and I probably would prefer it if I didn't remember these things.

186. Although things about the past are coming back to me, I don't remember a lot of what was said at the Inquest if that makes sense. For me, I was focusing more on keeping it together for the family.

187. At the Inquest, nothing happened that I didn't think would happen and we got the results we needed. I don't think we would have felt cheated if a different result was reached but it felt good that it came back with cancer as a result of contaminated blood from his haemophilia treatment.

188. I was not surprised by the verdict at the inquest. I thought they might say the cancer travelled to his brain, as he was so confused but I don't know if they would look for this anyway. There was not anything they said I was surprised about.

189. Regarding the Inquest, I do not think that it was right to make us wait 7 months for it to take place. The coroner and everyone I spoke to were nice but the amount of time we had to wait for it has meant it has been drawn out for us. The hurt remained and with no closure, the grieving process could not be properly concluded.

190. It should have taken place on 05 December 2019 but Hay was on holiday. I should have been on holiday this weekend but I have cancelled it because I am still too upset. He maybe should have

cancelled his holiday and it is just all these little things that could have made the difference.

191. I did have an issue with how Professor Hay acted and he was horrible and awful to Jack (from the Infected Blood Inquiry). The judge called him Mr Hay and he corrected her and said my name is 'Professor Hay'. He seemed very arrogant and cold.

192. He then turned to Jack and said something like: 'can I ask you who you are and do you come to all of these Inquests'. Hay's lawyer in the end said: 'You need to turn around and stop talking to him'. Jack didn't deserve to be spoken to like that.

193. I believe that Hay's behaviour at the Inquest was terrible and he should hang his head in shame. I have never detested anyone as much as that man. It is about the way he speaks to people and his attitude of superiority; he always knows best. Maybe if he had shown a bit more humility and consulted others on Brian's care, he – and the others infected in his family - may have had better outcomes.

194. He didn't even speak to me last Wednesday and no condolences were offered. I don't blame him for all of this but I do blame him for the way he has acted, which has made this situation much worse. I blame Hay for this umbrella effect about who Brian got to see and what was said. At the inquest, Hay kept talking over the judge and this highlights the kind of person that he is. However, I didn't say anything to Hay as it wasn't the time or place.

195. At the inquest, they just talked about what medication Brian had been given and nothing else really. Professor Hay answered all the questions that were put to him. He did say he was never aware that the Ahearn's didn't want to see him which is strange because he definitely knew about this, Brian made sure of it!

196. My friend, who is like my sister, came to the inquest and she has known Brian for as long as I have and she said what a horrible, despicable man Hay is and she even commented on his arrogance, having never met him before.

197. I don't blame one person for what has happened, as it is the powers that be but I blame Hay for how it has been managed. For example, when Hay told Brian he had hepatitis as if he already knew, if he would have then apologised it would have made the situation better. Instead all he said was that I thought you would have already known. He was just like you must have been told before and this is what Brian's issue was.

198. Hay kept all of Brian's care to himself, so that even when he was diagnosed with hepatitis C he was not seen by anyone else and Hay said this occurred because at the time there was only him. There was one person in Leeds but there was no one else in the area. He said it was common practice to be done all under their department. I am sure that is true. Surely there were other doctors in that area of medicine? Once Brian made it clear he did not want to see Hay, he was assigned another specialist without much delay.

199. I do not particularly think it would have helped to have been legally represented at the inquest and I felt the judge was very much on my side. I got a date wrong and she was very nice about this. Maybe if it was a different type of case, I would feel different but not for the Inquest. However, I would have preferred it if Hay did not have to be there. He was the first person I saw when I walked in and I didn't want any confrontation. I would get angry and cry and I didn't want him to see me cry.

200. The Inquest said we could have a recording of the proceedings and it may be helpful for you to have a copy of that. At one point, Hay said

obviously this statement, meaning what he told the Inquest would not be what he would read at the Inquiry hearing.

201. Unrelated to the inquest, I would like to speak about an Inquiry meeting that I went to. I think that people there just want compensation and I would prefer the money to go on education. What difference will the money make and what value do you put on a life?

202. I have made a conscious decision for this statement to be my last involvement. I find that at these meetings it is a lot of the same people that want to talk about their story. I feel like saying I have come today to find out where we are up to. I have only come this far because it is what Brian wanted me to do but I personally have had enough and wouldn't have continued.

203. To be honest it will help me once the Inquiry is finished because people talk about it as it is in the news and this reminds me what has happened. The Inquiry brings me back to the bad times and reopens old wounds, meaning I need to pick myself up again and try to move on. I signed up to the newsletter from the Inquiry but I get stressed when I read it. Hopefully, this outcome at the Inquest and setting out my feelings in this statement will bring me some sort of closure.

204. It is what it is and there is nothing I can say that will change what has happened but I sincerely hope it will never happen again. I will be glad when this is done as I feel that although I can try to move on, there will be no sense of finality until there is a decision and it is all out of the way.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed Jackie Ahearn

Dated 16/06/2020

Cabinet Office

Jim Connolly <jim.connolly@GRO-C>

Statement

2 messages

Jim Connolly <jim.connolly@GRO-C> 16 June 2020 at 07:56
To: Jackie Ahearn <GRO-C>

Good morning,

Please find attached the final statement with the two amendments requested

In the past I would have asked you to print it off and sign and return it in the post.

In the current climate I would ask you to type in your name on the signature page at the back and date the line below. Once done, please send back to me on email with a few lines to the effect that you agree with the contents of the statement and that you are happy for it to be used in evidence by the Inquiry. This will act as your 'signature'.

I will let you know when it is in the system.

If you have any questions please let me know.

Kind regards,

Jim Connolly

Infected Blood Inquiry

James Connolly
Investigator, Infected Blood Inquiry,
Fleetbank House, 2-6, Salisbury Court, London EC4Y 8AE
Mobile: GRO-C
E-mail; jim.connolly@GRO-C

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Jackie Ahearn <GRO-C> 16 June 2020 at 09:54
To: Jim Connolly <jim.connolly@GRO-C>

Hi Jim,

Please see attached my signed statement.

Hopefully this is all that you need but if not please get in touch.

Thanks,
Jackie
Get Outlook for iOS

From: Liam Ahearn <GRO-C>
Sent: Tuesday, June 16, 2020 9:53:11 AM
To: Jackie Ahearn <GRO-C>
Subject: Re: Statement

This is my written statement and I am happy for it to be used within the infected blood enquiry trial.

From: Jackie Ahearn <GRO-C>
Sent: 16 June 2020 09:49
To: GRO-C <GRO-C>
Subject: Fwd: Statement

Get Outlook for iOS

From: Jim Connolly <jim.connolly@GRO-C>
Sent: Tuesday, June 16, 2020 7:56:54 AM
To: Jackie Ahearn <GRO-C>
Subject: Statement

[Quoted text hidden]

2020-06-16; IBI-Final Witness statement V2 of Jackie Ahearn.docx
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