

Witness Name: Tracey Gillies
Statement No.: WITN6932059
Exhibits: Nil
Dated: 29/05/2023

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF TRACEY GILLIES

I provide this statement on behalf of NHS Lothian Health Board in response to the request under Rule 9 of the Inquiry Rules 2006 dated 21 November 2022.

I, Tracey Gillies, will say as follows: -

Section 1: Introduction

1. Please set out your name, address, date of birth and professional qualifications

My name is Tracey Gillies, my date of birth is GRO-C 1966, and my professional qualifications are MBChB FRCS. My address is NHS Lothian, Waverley Gate, 2-4 Waterloo Place, Edinburgh, EH1 3EG.

2. Please set out your current role at the Lothian Health Board and your responsibilities in that role.

My current role is as Executive Medical Director with consequent responsibilities and as Responsible Officer for NHS Lothian.

3. Please set out the position of your organisation in relation to the hospital/other institution criticised by the witnesses (for example “NHS Foundation Trust (‘the Trust’) operates from Hospital X and Hospital Y (formerly Hospital Z)”).

NHS Lothian is responsible for healthcare provision for the population of the Lothian area.

Section 2: Response to Criticisms by W5126

- 4. Please insert your response to the criticisms made by witness W5126, as laid down in the Rule 13 Notification sent to you on 20 October 2022.**

The criticisms I have been asked to address are:

Paragraph 40-45

40. At one point, I became so breathless that I went to my GP who asked me to attend Western General Hospital in Edinburgh immediately. My treatment at the Western General during this time was truly horrendous, and I do believe it may have been as a result of the stigma associated with HCV. I was in hospital for 4 days on this occasion.

41. I informed the consultant treating me at the Western General about the HCV treatment I was on, and I asked him to contact my consultant at the Edinburgh Royal Infirmary in order to find out whether I should take my Interferon injection, but he didn't bother. Instead he kept questioning me about the source of my HCV in front of a number of other doctors, making me very uncomfortable. I told him I did not know how I came to be infected and I don't dwell on it because it doesn't matter, but he seemed very keen to know.

42. This consultant also made jokes about the treatment I was on, even joking with the nurses that Ribavirin 'sounds like a Mexican dance'. They refused to let me take my Interferon injection, which alarmed me as I did not want to jeopardise my treatment by missing a dose. My partner had brought the injection to the hospital and asked the hospital staff to keep it in the fridge, but they had forgotten about it and left it out. I was already so unwell that it was awful to have to worry about these additional issues.

43. The first night I was in hospital I was kept in a store cupboard type of room, all by myself. It was definitely not a room where patients were usually kept. I think they wanted to keep me isolated as they thought I was infectious, but there was nowhere else free to put me as the hospital was so busy.

44. The next day they moved me to a winter ward which was usually closed at that time of year. It was just me and a Turkish lady who did not speak English on the ward, and it was absolutely filthy. There was a used adult diaper left in the bathroom for days, showing it wasn't being cleaned regularly. I even saw a nurse drop one of her gloves on the floor and put it back on, which is so unhygienic. It was not the way you expect to be treated in hospital and it felt like they were scared of treating me.

45. I was told that the breathlessness I was suffering could be as a result of a blood clot on my lung and I would need to wait until Monday for further tests to confirm this. I was pretty much left alone and ignored after that. I told the doctors that I felt they weren't taking me seriously and I was concerned that I was missing the HGV treatment I knew I should be taking. I do think my poor treatment may be as a result of prejudice, as I think they might have thought I was a junkie due to me having HGV.

I am sorry to hear of the witness's experience and poor care at the Western General Hospital in 2008. The attitude described of staff is not as it should have been and I am sorry that the witness experienced this. I apologise wholeheartedly to the witness for this experience.

Section 3: Other Issues

5. If you hold evidence you consider may be relevant to the Inquiry's investigation of the matters set out in its Terms of Reference, please insert here.

None.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed

GRO-C

Dated

29/05/2023