

Witness Name: Norma Anne Shippin

Statement No.: WITN6945001

Exhibits: None

Dated: 5 November 2021

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF NORMA ANNE SHIPPIN

I provide this statement on behalf of the Central Legal Office response to the request under Rule 9 of the Inquiry Rules 2006 dated 22 September 2021.

I, Norma Anne Shippin, will say as follows: -

Section 1: Introduction

1. I am Norma Anne Shippin and for the purposes of this witness statement am based at Anderson House, Breadalbane Street, Bonnington Road, Edinburgh EH6 5JR. My date of birth is [GRO-C] 1959. I have been enrolled as a solicitor with the Law Society of Scotland since December 1983 and have been employed as a solicitor in the NHS Central Legal Office ("CLO") by the Common Services Agency – known as National Services Scotland – since October 1984.
2. My role in CLO has been to provide legal advice as a litigation solicitor to various Health Boards and National Boards. In 1995 the CLO changed the basis of feeing from Central funding to cost recovery from the NHS Bodies and I was appointed as Managing Partner to oversee the business part of the organisation although I continued to provide litigation services and was also one of the Litigation team leaders.

3. In December 2012 the Director of the CLO and Legal Adviser to the NHS in Scotland, Ranaid MacDonald, retired and I was appointed to that role firstly on an interim basis and then from May 2013 on a permanent basis. Sadly, Mr MacDonald died in 2020.

Section 2: Response to Criticism of W2287

4. As Director of the CLO I have been following the progress of the Infected Blood Inquiry ("IBI") and attended some sessions in London during the early stages. I have been kept informed about the evidence by the CLO solicitors who are assigned to represent the interests of the Health Boards and National Services Scotland.
5. In June 2021 I was informed by the CLO solicitors that certain evidence had been given by William Wright and this was of great concern to me. At page 156 line 10 to page 160 line 22 of the transcript dated 10th June 2021, he made comments which are critical of the CLO in relation to the handling of the Scottish look back exercise, specifically at page 159 lines 5 - 7 where he stated that *'people, as a consequence of the Central Legal Office's advice, in February 2000, were allowed to die'*.
6. This was a very serious allegation and would appear to arise from the Note of a meeting held on 10th February 2000 and attended by Professors Lowe and Ludlam, Haemophilia Directors at Glasgow and Edinburgh respectively, and Lynda Towers of the Scottish Government [ARCH0003312_020]. Paragraph 9 of the Note records that Professor Ludlam sought advice on whether haemophilia directors should be looking back to try to identify what happened to patients whose whereabouts and status were unknown. Mrs Towers (who had no connection to the CLO) responded that the CLO was representing the Trusts and SNBTS and the haemophilia directors *"should therefore follow CLO advice on whether any further investigation or the tracking down of patients was necessary"*. Mr Wright's allegation appears to proceed on the basis that the CLO was indeed asked for, and gave advice, the effect of which was to deter the carrying out of an exercise of investigating or the tracking down of such patients.
7. As soon as I was informed about Mr Wright's allegation by the CLO solicitors I asked for an internal search to be carried out to see if there was any evidence of advice of the sort described having been asked of, or given by, the CLO. None was found.

8. I was also told that Professors Lowe and Ludlam, being the clinicians directly involved, were also asked about this matter when they gave oral evidence to the IBI in December 2020. I was reassured to be told that the evidence from both was to the same effect namely that such advice was not sought from the CLO.

9. I have nothing further to add.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed GRO-C: Norma Anne Shippin

Dated 5/11/21

Table of exhibits:

Date	Notes/ Description	Exhibit number
	None.	

