

Witness Name: Corey P. V. Twyman

Statement No. WITN7343001

Exhibits: Nil

Dated: 04 / 04 / 2023

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

WRITTEN WITNESS STATEMENT

OF

COREY PAUL VICTORIA TWYMAN

I provide this statement in response to a request under Rule 9 of the Inquiry Rules, 2006 dated 28th October, 2022.

I, Corey Paul Victoria Twyman, will say as follows:-

Section One - Introduction

1. My full name is Corey Paul Victoria Twyman and I was born on GRO-C 1990, my parents being Jane Elizabeth Twyman (born: GRO-C 1970) and Andrew Binns (born: GRO-C, 1964, died 14th March, 2014). I am a single man, working within the National Health Service as an Assistant Psychologist, and live and work in North West England. My home address is known to the Infected Blood Inquiry.
2. I have one sibling, my sister Martha Binns (born: GRO-C 1996), and I am aware that both Martha and our mother are also providing the Infected Blood Inquiry with witness statements.

3. When my father died of liver cancer when I was just twenty-three years of age. He had been diagnosed as having the genetic disorder Alport Syndrome in his late teens, a condition which impacted upon his kidneys. This meant that he had to be treated using whole blood, from which he contracted Hepatitis C (which I will also refer to as Hep' C and / or HcV within the body of this statement). Hepatitis C impacted upon his liver, that became cirrhotic, eventually cancerous, and caused his untimely death – when he was only forty-nine years of age.
4. Using this witness statement, I intend to inform the Infected Blood Inquiry of the nature of his illness(es), how they affected him, the treatment he received, and how his condition led to his death and the effects ill health and his eventual passing had on my family and I.
5. Having said that, I have to acknowledge that at the relevant time for most of the events I will seek to address, I was a child or young person, and that to a large extent my parents acted to shield me from what was going on and in so far as Hep' C was concerned, kept it from us entirely.
6. As a consequence, my knowledge is limited and my statement is primarily concerned with the impact his health issues and death have had for my family and I, as opposed to the progression of his condition, the detail of which had been kept from me.

Section Two - How Affected

7. From an early age, although I didn't know the actual details, I understood that my father was unwell. I did know that he had something called Alport Syndrome, and that it affected his kidneys, but not a lot more.
8. Following his death, and of more recent times, my mother has opened up to me a little more as to what happened and the health issues he faced, but it wasn't until very recently, in 2022, that we began to have more depth in our discussions concerning his health difficulties, including his having contracted Hepatitis C, and the major impact this was to have.

9. Whilst I was still a child, my parents separated for a while, and as a consequence my mother and I moved around quite a bit, and I was distanced from my father as a result. However, when I was about three or four years old, we moved to Lancaster, where she had been at university, and our dad joined us there.
10. From about the age of five or six, I understood that my dad was poorly, and that his kidneys were failing, so he had to undertake dialysis treatment which had a major impact upon us as a family. I learned that this was not the first time his kidneys had been found wanting, and that in his early twenties, sometime around 1980, he had had to have a kidney transplant.
11. At the time he had been living and studying in London, away from his parents' (in GRO-C) and that following the transplant the donor organ worked effectively for a while, but he then suffered as various complications arose, and eventually he had to have a second transplant to replace the donor kidney he had initially been given.
12. Apparently, during the course of this surgery, and I don't know if it was the first transplant, or the second, he had been given blood. This was in 1980, but in around 2000, doctors treating him at the Royal Lancaster Infirmary conducted tests, discovered that he had contracted Hepatitis C, and determined that the source had been the blood he had been given some twenty years before.
13. My father had become a patient of the Royal Lancaster Infirmary when the second replacement kidney he had received was also affected by the Alport Syndrome, and he again required dialysis on a regular basis. Unfortunately, the Royal Lancaster Infirmary didn't then have the facilities to accommodate patients such as my father, requiring frequent dialysis, so he was referred on to a hospital in Manchester who then took on his care.
14. This became rather burdensome, as he would have to travel from home on Lancaster to the Manchester Royal Infirmary, over fifty miles away, where his treatment would take up most of the day, and sometimes he would have to go there three or four times each week.

15. At the age of seventeen, following a major row with my father, I moved out of our family home, and as such learned less for myself of what was happening with him and his health as it deteriorated. I know that at some point he suffered a stroke, which further disabled him, and he therefore had to walk with a stick and that he lost some muscular function in his face and down one side of his body. Although some of his function returned, with time, it was never fully restored.
16. Sometime around the middle of 2012, my father was diagnosed as having liver cancer. He underwent chemotherapy to address this, but his health continued to deteriorate and in December 2013, he was given just six months to live. In the event he never made that, and died just three months later (on 14th March, 2014).

Section Three - Other Infections

17. I do not know of any other infections my father had, or had been given as a result of the blood he had received in 1980. All I am aware of is that he had Alport Syndrome which affected his kidneys leading to dialysis and then a transplant. A second transplant followed, and on one or the other, or both of these occasions, he had been given blood.
18. The blood he had been given was apparently contaminated, according to the doctors who were treating him in 2000, when his second donor kidney began to fail, and he had contracted Hep' C as a result. Hepatitis C can impact upon the liver, and this appears to have been the case, and he went on to develop a liver cancer which although treated, using Chemotherapy, he was unable to recover from and died.

Section Four - Consent

19. I am unable to assist the Inquiry as to any issues of consent.

Section Five - Impact

20. As a child growing up, I did not pause to dwell on my father's health to any great extent, my parents had always sought to make his ailing somehow 'normal,' so as a child I just adapted to it, accepted it and carried on, as for me it was nothing exceptional, even where he had to go for dialysis and was occasionally admitted – that was just how things were, for me, so *that* was normal.
21. The only thing that stuck in my mind as a child, was that unlike other fathers within my peer group, my dad didn't work, which I understood was due to his ill health, save for a brief period when I was maybe ten or eleven years old when he worked for the retailer, Millets.
22. I can remember an incident which occurred when I was only about twelve or thirteen, which absolutely terrified my mother, sister and I. It is only recently, when I have been told more of his condition, that I can start to understand what happened, but it was really frightening at the time.
23. My dad was having treatment for Hepatitis C, whilst at the same time undergoing kidney dialysis. Apparently, as a dialysis patient, the dosage of the medication he was taking for Hep' C should have been reduced, but it wasn't and as a result his body struggled to process the drugs and he became seriously unwell, so much so that he had to be admitted to the Manchester Royal Infirmary as an emergency case as effectively, the medication was poisoning him.
24. At the time, he suffered a major bleed and had to be taken away by ambulance where he ended up in Intensive Care. I didn't witness this myself, nor do I have any recollection of this period of time, other than my having visited him, once he had been stabilised, at hospital in Manchester where he had to remain as an inpatient for several weeks.

25. My father also suffered from bouts of depression and had mood swings. I do not know how much of this may have been attributable to his having had Hepatitis C, and / or how much could have been the result of the HcV treatment he was given, but he had these symptoms all the same with them coming and going, sometimes he was better but sometimes worse – they came and went, he was 'up and down,,' and it was very hard to know what to expect from him.
26. We were not what could have been considered to be a wealthy family, especially with my father having rarely worked, but we got by. I know that my father's parents helped my mum and dad to purchase a house, in 1996 and that must have improved their financial position, but money was always tight. As a family, we never enjoyed any foreign holidays, but for the most part my sister and I were looked after and had what we needed.
27. I believe that my parents had initially sought to conceal the gravity of his condition from us, which was easier when they had separated, but once he returned to live with us, being on regular dialysis meant that they could not do so, and so we learned of his kidney problem and its treatment, but not of Hepatitis C. Accordingly, all that I saw or learned of at the time, was that he had failing kidneys, the result of Alport Syndrome.
28. When he wasn't being treated, as he was unable to work, he looked after my sister and I whilst our mother worked. There were no other family members living locally upon whom we could rely for assistance, so my parents had to make the situation work for them, and us. This meant that they shared our care, with dad looking after us when he could, and mum when he couldn't. Often this meant her working in the evenings, once he had returned home from dialysis, but it also meant that for after-school activities, there was always one of our parents at home.
29. I cannot say that my father's health adversely impacted upon my education, as I did okay at school, so any impact can only have been minimal, but I remember my earlier school years, as my father came to collect me from school, rather than my mother, as he didn't work.

30. As I entered my teenage years, and he had to be admitted or spend more time in hospital, it didn't really affect me, as it was what I had grown up with – for me it was 'normal,' so I didn't really let it impact upon me, it was how it had always been, and was going to be for my family.
31. My poor understanding of what was actually going on with my father's health is, in part, due to the fact that his actions and medical necessities were 'the norm' in our household, and because my father was not the kind of person to have moaned and groaned about things, so we never discussed what was going on to any extent, and as I have said, I only learned of his having had Hep' C much later in my life -no one told me at the time.
32. Not knowing that my dad had HcV, and our parents having not told anyone else, meant that fortunately I did not experience any of the stigma which this condition can attract. My father had 'kidney problems,' that was all that anyone else knew, and there were no issues attached to that.
33. All the same, my relationship with my father did have a detrimental impact upon me across most of my childhood and into my youth. I cannot say for certain that this was entirely due to his health, but certainly they impacted upon his interactions with me, general fatherhood, which was wanting, and the level of care and support he afforded me as I grew up.
34. For most of this time he was an unhappy, often angry man, and our relationship became quite strained as the years passed. At seventeen, my father and I had a major bust-up, and I left home, feeling unable to stay in his company any longer.
35. By this time, although they had split and then reconciled when I'd been an infant, my parents had again separated, but were still living together in the family home with my sister and I. Following our row, my mother also decided to leave, which she did, initially going to stay with a friend whilst I went off on my own. My sister, younger than me, remained at home with dad, and my sister and I remained close, but the family relationship was irreversibly damaged.

36. At the time of this happening, I had been studying for my A' Level examinations, but wasn't all that interested in my studies, so I gradually dropped out. I had been doing some work as a chef, a job I went into full-time, and fortunately for me, I was able to move in with my employer, so I had a job, an income, and a roof over my head which may otherwise not have been the case. I only went back to my parents once, to live briefly with my mother, but by then she had found somewhere of her own and was living alone.

37. My parents came to an arrangement concerning my sister. Who would live for some of the week with my dad and the rest with my mother. My sister is six years younger than me, and as such we passed through school at different times, and having moved out I was distanced from the day-to-day occurrences in her life, but I know that she found the situation hard and struggled in different ways, at school, at home, and socially, a situation which wasn't helped by my having moved away, to Manchester.

38. She started experiencing mental health issues, and dropped out of taking her A' levels. At home, she began to have the same problems with my father as I had experienced, and in spite of the arrangements my parents had established for her, went to live with our mother. Initially she still visited our dad, but after a while that stopped too.

39. I cannot help but wonder if, were my father to have been a happier, less aggressive person had he not been so ill.

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40. I am quite sure that my father would most probably have taken the news that he had contracted Hepatitis C in his stride, as with medical issues he was quite accepting and understanding, having been so unwell over so many years, but he would nevertheless have been really annoyed, even if he did not necessarily verbalise his anger, or any feeling of injustice with the hand he had been dealt – his anger manifested itself in other ways and was quite often taken out on us, hence my mother, sister and I having all had to leave him.

41. My father died when I was still quite young (24), by which time we had resolved our issues with one another, as we always had done, by *not* talking about them, but we saw one another every few months and even spent his last Christmas together, as a family with my sister and mother.
42. Sadly, we hadn't been able to have any conversations together, where we may have been able to discuss his having had Hepatitis C and its impact for him, as he saw it, least still how he may have come by the virus, how he learned of it, and so on. Even were we to have been able to discuss things, I believe that I would have been too young to have the level of compassion and understanding I have now and as such to have actually appreciated anything I may have learned.
43. I would have liked to have had those conversations, and to have learned of what he actually had to endure, but Hepatitis C infection robbed me of that opportunity, and now I will never know.
44. I have no reason to believe that Alport Syndrome was passed on to either my sister or I, and whereas I know that she was actually tested, I do not know if I was, or wasn't, but I have no cause to believe that I have inherited the condition myself.
45. On the evening before he died, my father and I went for a walk, albeit that I pushed him in a wheelchair he then had to use. Towards the end of his life, his physical condition appeared to deteriorate rapidly, and the following day he was admitted to Lancaster Hospital. In spite of our past differences, my mother, sister and I were all with him in the hospital when he died, together with his parents.

Section Six - Treatment / Care / Support

46. I firmly believe that some form of psychological support or counselling would have been of benefit to my father, and by default may have proven to be of benefit to us all as a result, but in so far as I am aware, none was ever offered, or available.

47. I believe that some counselling would have been of benefit to my mother as well, helping her to deal with what was happening and to best address the problems our father had, with my sister and I, but again, I do not believe any was ever made available.
48. As a family, we tended to deal with issues by not talking about them, ignoring them as if they may just go away. We didn't talk about our problems, such as when dad lost his temper or pushed things around, even smashing things up, we just brushed things under the carpet. I believe that it would have been hugely beneficial for us to have been able to sit down together, acknowledge that his anger was not alright, and that it was actually okay to seek help dealing with his aggression, but we never did.
49. Personally, at the time I did not appreciate the need to seek any assistance, and never felt that the situation warranted my approaching the NHS for some support, but of more recent years I have sought counselling myself, as a private patient, and have found that it has been both beneficial and necessary. However, as I have been finding this myself, it is questionable as to how many sessions I can afford, at approximately £50- a consultation, so my attending a counsellor has been on an 'as and when' basis, it is not continual.

Section Seven - Financial Assistance

50. I believe that my father once received a payment of approximately £10,000- from The Skipton Fund, but do not know the detail and have no information as to any other financial help he may have been given.

Section Eight - Other

51. Although my father had faced significant health issues over a protracted period before he was given contaminated blood, I nevertheless believe that his having contracted Hepatitis C, and the treatment he received for Hep' C infection, served to worsen his health and was a major contributory factor in his eventual death.

Statement Of Truth

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

Signed:

GRO-C

Dated:

04.04.23