

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY
Witness Name: Ronwyn Cartwright
Statement No.: WITN7488001
Exhibits: NIL
Dated: 20/03/20

WESTERN SUSSEX HOSPITALS NHS FOUNDATION TRUST

**WITNESS STATEMENT OF
DR RONWYN CARTWRIGHT**

I, Dr Ronwyn Cartwright, of Western Sussex Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, WILL SAY as follows:

1. I provide this statement on behalf of the Western Sussex Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust in response to a request under Rule 9 of the Inquiry Rules 2006 based on both my direct involvement in the events detailed below as well as the information provided to me by the third parties referred to in the statement below.
2. This statement is provided in furtherance to the letters and disclosure provided to the Inquiry on 21 June 2019 and 26 November 2019 and to provide explanation and additional detail around the searches that were undertaken in relation to that disclosure process.
3. I am a Consultant Haematologist. I have been working in the Trust as a substantive consultant since January 2017. Prior to that I worked in the Trust as a locum consultant from October 2015.

4. I have been the Clinical Lead for Haemostasis and Thrombosis since April 2018. Prior to that date the Clinical Lead for Haemostasis and Thrombosis was Dr Sarah Janes, who was employed in the Trust between 1997 and March 2018.

A. Background

5. The Western Sussex Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust was established in 2009 following the merger of the Royal West Sussex Hospitals NHS Trust (St Richard's, Chichester) and the Worthing & Southlands NHS Trust (Worthing)
6. During the period in question, 1970 to 1980, St Richard's Hospital was registered as a regional Haemophilia Care Centre. To my knowledge a total of 132 patients (both living and now deceased) have been registered with the St Richard's Haemophilia Centre. This includes all bleeding disorder patients (Haemophilia A/B, acquired haemophilia, Von Willbrand's disease, other factor deficiencies). The longest NHD registered patient, also registered with St Richard's Hospital, dates back to 1969.
7. Most patients registered at St Richard's Hospital were also registered with a tertiary Comprehensive Care Centre (Royal Free Hospital, London; St George's Hospital, London; St Thomas' Hospital, London; Great Ormond Street, London; Canterbury Hospital; Basingstoke Hospital, Hampshire, and Oxford University Hospital). During this period, Worthing hospital did not have regional care centre status. Patients with bleeding disorders, from the Worthing area, were registered with tertiary centres (mostly St Thomas' Hospital, London). Thus they were managed according to advice supplied from tertiary centres.

B. Information repositories for which the Trust has control, responsibility or oversight and searches undertaken of those repositories (Q 2 – 3).

8. Following receipt of a request from the Infected Blood Inquiry on 19th July 2018, we initiated a search of the Haematology departments at both Worthing and Chichester sites. Repeat searches were conducted on request in October

2018, June 2019 and February/ March 2020. Further detail on the Worthing and Chichester site repositories searched is set out below at paragraph 15.

9. I was assisted primarily by Dr Santosh Narat, Consultant Haematologist (also Clinical Lead for Transfusion) and Mrs Zoe Sammut, Chief Biomedical Scientist for Blood Transfusion.
10. A number of administrative staff from the laboratory and the secretarial pool have assisted in searching for relevant documents and evidence.
11. The Trust does not have direct control, responsibility or oversight for any papers stored at external archives such as universities, Local Authorities or the National Archive. A direct enquiry was made by Ms Katherine Goacher, Head of Legal Services WSHT to the West Sussex County Archive who store a number of papers relating to former health bodies. Ms Jennifer Mason, Senior Archivist (Collections Management) confirmed there are no deposited records of Blood Registers for either hospital or the former Health Authorities.

C. List of searches undertaken to comply with the Inquiry's request dated 15 August 2018 (Q. 1)

12. Searches of both hard copy records and online records systems were conducted as set out below.
13. Key words for computer based document searches included "Haemophilia", "factor eight", "factor nine", "plasma product", "bleeding disorder", "HIV" and "hepatitis".
14. Our search in October 2018 was primarily focused on Hepatitis C virus (HCV) relevant data collection, as requested by UKHDCO. This included looking through patient specific records (radiology and blood results; clinic letters). The completed data sheet was returned to UKHDCO. We understand that you have a copy of that data from UKHDCO but please advise if that is not the case and you require us to provide a copy.
15. As part of the investigation process, former members of medical, laboratory and secretarial staff were contacted for advice and guidance as to where

documents were historically held. The searches conducted at St Richard's Hospital, Chichester and Worthing Hospital included;

- a) A manual search of filing cabinets and files held in the Haematology consultant and secretariat offices was undertaken at St Richard's Hospital]. Search conducted by Mrs Lizzie Wheeler (Haematology secretary) and Zoe Sammut (Chief Biomedical Scientist for Blood Transfusion).
- b) A manual search of filing cabinets and files stored in the Blood Transfusion paper archive store at St Richard's was conducted by Mr Adam Holloway (Medical Laboratory Assistant) and Mr Tim Williams (Biomedical scientist).
- c) A verbal discussion between Dr Ronwyn Cartwright (Consultant Haematologist) and Lizzie Wheeler, who was the secretary responsible to haemophilia patients (since retired), was held. A computer search identified a number of patient specific letters in a file called "Haemophilia".
- d) Mrs Zoe Sammut spoke to the Trust's Clinical Governance department (Mr Spencer Bailey) over the telephone. Zoe enquired as to whether he was aware of any current or archived policies relating to Haemophilia management. He stated that he was not aware of any such archived documents. He could not recommend any additional places to include in the search.
- e) Dr Sarah Janes, retired Consultant Haematologist and former Centre Lead was contacted on three occasions via telephone call and an email. Dr Sarah Janes advised that during the 1970's/1980's St Richard's Haemophilia centre was led by Dr Chris Bateman who was the only Haematologist in St Richard's hospital. Dr Bateman would have attended annual meetings with UKHDCO and regularly discussed all severe haemophilia patients' care with a tertiary care centre (Basingstoke Hospital, Royal Free Hospital and St Thomas' Hospital). During this time Regional centres including St Richards, were advised by UKHDCO how to treat patients, what patient information and what communication was

required. St Richard's Haemophilia centre has kept full patient specific traceability logs, containing information about which patient received which specific products. Dr Janes reiterated that historically there were no formal minutes and policies, but rather the guidance was shared from tertiary centres or UKHDCO and followed accordingly.

f) In March 2020 Mrs Zoe Sammut contacted Mr Malcolm Robinson, former Blood Transfusion Manager, who worked for the Trust between 2007-2019. Mr Robinson advised that Blood group record cards were stored in the "small store room". All blood bank books (for Worthing) were scanned by Hugh Symons (scanning company) . He confirmed that any clinical information would be with secretaries (who had already been consulted as set out above).

g) Mrs Sammut also contacted Mr Stuart Burnett (retired Pathology Manager). Mr Burnett previously worked in the laboratory at St Richard's. He was unable to recall any arrangements for off-site storage or archiving. Mr Burnett advised us to check Southlands store. An excel spreadsheet listing the data stored at Southlands did not show any relevant information.

16. Copies of the Hospital Transfusion Committee and Hospital Transfusion Team meeting minutes from 2001 to date are held. These do not contain information on blood products given to individual patients.

17. We have found only limited evidence of policies, communication, patient information leaflets and minutes in relation to Haemophilia patients. These documents were submitted to the Inquiry as part of our response dated 26th November 2019. A courier collected photocopies of the ledgers and policies and original patient's leaflets on 2/12/2019. They were received by the Infected Blood Inquiry on 3/12/2019.

18. The documents already provided to the Inquiry include the following:

- a) Complete copies of the ledgers detailing traceability of all products administered (“1979-1991 Ledger of Human Anti haemophiliac Fraction”; “1985-1991 Record of Factor VIII”; “1991-1996 Blood Products”). These log books allow patient specific traceability information;
- b) A copy of St. Richards Hospital guidelines for the acute management of patients with inherited bleeding disorders Policy dated 1998; and
- c) The management of Haemophilia A,B and Von Willebrands Disease;
- d) Information leaflets (Mild and Moderate Haemophilia How will it affect my life; Factors that matter Haemophilia prophylaxis; Haemophilia and school; Haemophilia Issues and options for women who are carriers; and Haemophilia information for teachers and playgroup leaders).

D. Additional documents identified as a result of further searches

19. As part of our third and final search (February/ March 2020) we have found additional documents which we submit to evidence:

- a) Haemophilia Clinic letters: the contents of these letters detail communication with, and specific information given to patients with haemophilia and other bleeding disorders. We identified documents in relation to seven (7) patients which may possibly be relevant to the Inquiry. Five (5) of those patients had received blood products provided by Bio-Products Laboratory (BPL). One of the plasma donors used by BPL to make clotting concentrates in 1996 and 1997 was subsequently diagnosed as having variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease (CJD). All patients that had received a relevant transfusion during that period were contacted by the Trust. However, CJD is not detectable in blood. There are very few cases recorded in which CJD has possibly been transmitted by blood products. There is no definitive test to confirm a diagnosis of CJD other than examination of the brain tissue. One patient is noted to have Hepatitis C

following Factor VIII replacement in the early 80s. The final patient was diagnosed at Worthing to have Hep C possibly due to historic blood transfusions (from previous treatment at other Trusts) and the patient was informed and treated appropriately. As the Inquiry advised in its correspondence of 15 August 2018 that it did not require individual patient records these letters have not been included. However, they can be provided on request.

- b) Communications (The National Haemophilia Database: your questions answered October 2007; Guidelines on the care of children with Haematological problems March 2004; Pathway for Haemophilia Database policy 2015 & 2019) (these have been provided separately to the Inquiry).
- c) Look back exercise documentation performed at Worthing Hospital to trace the 'fate' of possibly infected blood donations and to contact those patients who may have received infected blood by transfusion to offer counselling, support and testing for:

- 1. Variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease in 2003/2004

- 2. Hepatitis C in 1995

(These have been provided separately to the Inquiry). The individual patient letters and contact sheets have not been included as we consider those to be individual patient records. However, these can be provided on request.

E. Destruction of records (Q. 4)

20. During these investigations we did not find any evidence of a destruction register or indication that blood product and transfusion records had been destroyed. We therefore do not know, what, if any, documents have been destroyed.

21. As set out above, my statement is based on both my direct involvement in the events detailed (from the period where I have been employed by the Trust) as well as the information provided to me by the third parties referred to therein. I have provided a response to the questions to the best of my understanding and recollection.

STATEMENT OF TRUTH

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

Signed:

GRO-C

Date: 20th March 2020