

Witness Name: Dr Christopher McKenna

Statement No.: WITN7691001

Exhibits: Nil

Dated: 23/05/2023

## **INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY**

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### **WRITTEN STATEMENT OF DR CHRISTOPHER MCKENNA**

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I provide this statement on behalf of NHS Fife in response to the request under Rule 9 of the Inquiry Rules 2006 dated 13 April 2023.

I, Dr Christopher McKenna, will say as follows: -

#### **Section 1: Introduction**

- 1. Introductory paragraph to include your date of birth, address, occupation and employment history.**

My name is Christopher McKenna, my date of birth is GRO-C 1978 and my professional qualifications are MBChB FRCP. My address is NHS Fife, Hayfield House, Hayfield Road, Kirkcaldy, KY2 5AH.

My current role is as Executive Medical Director with subsequent responsibilities as Responsible Officer for NHS Fife.

NHS Fife is responsible for the provision of healthcare to the population of Fife.

#### **Section 2: Response to criticism by Inquiry Witness W7581**

- 2. The criticisms I have been asked to address are:**

##### **Paragraph 23**

My daughter was born at Forth Park hospital in **GRO-B** 1997 but due to being "high risk" I was not allowed a natural birth and was told not to breastfeed. It was a terribly upsetting experience with all the hospital staff in full PPE. I was also advised that items I had touched would have to be burnt.

**Paragraph 2 (page 6)**

The impact of this news on me was huge, as I was not allowed a natural birth at Forth Park hospital for the birth of my daughter, but had to have another caesarean and during the birth all the hospital staff came in full PPE. Anything I had touched including the bedclothes etc. were burnt and I was not allowed to breastfeed my child.

**Paragraph 9 (page 8)**

I feel that I have had difficulties with treatment in particular around the time I mentioned previously regarding the birth of my second child. The way I was treated by the surgeons and consultants at Forth Park made me feel extremely uncomfortable, and frightened in having to see everyone dressed in full PPE and hearing they were burning anything I touched.

I have had access to a copy of the maternity records for the patient from 1990 to 1997. I have not had access to the GP record or any other secondary care record. I have also discussed this case with Dr Rennie Urquhart, the patient's Obstetrician, who is now retired but still contracts with the Board as a medical appraiser. He has also had access to the aforementioned record. My response is based on what I have seen in the record and feedback from Dr Urquhart.

The patient was admitted to Forth Park Maternity Hospital on **GRO-C** 1997 for an elective caesarean section. Due to her previous infection with Hepatitis C she was treated as a high risk patient. Hence the Board followed standard infection control protocols for high risk cases. Prior to her admission to hospital Dr Urquhart took specialist advice from the Centre for Liver and Digestive Disorders at the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh, whose advice was that despite negative PCR's the patient should be treated as high risk; as at that time there was still uncertainty as to whether or not she would be infectious.

Dr Urquhart conveyed this information to the patient in a letter dated 7<sup>th</sup> March 1997. The Board considers that it was following safe and standard practice for that time and that they took reasonable steps to obtain specialist advice.

The Board acknowledges that this could have been communicated and handled in a more sensitive manner and recognises the significant impact this has had on the patient's wellbeing. The Board wishes to apologise unreservedly to the witness for the distress caused and should she find it helpful, the Board would be happy to arrange a meeting to hear her concerns further.

### **Section 3: Other Issues**

None

### **Statement of Truth**

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

Signed

GRO-C

Dated

23/05/2023