

Witness Name: Elizabeth Redmond

Statement No.: WITN4066001

Dated: 30 January 2020

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF ELIZABETH REDMOND

I, Elizabeth Redmond, in response to the Rule 9 request from Deirdre Domingo, Deputy Solicitor to the Infected Blood Inquiry dated 10 January 2020, addressed to the Department of Health, will say as follows:

1. Please set out your name, address and your role within DHNI

- 1.1 I am the Director of Population Health in the Department of Health (Northern Ireland) and am based in Castle Buildings, Stormont Estate, Belfast. As Director of Population Health I am responsible for development and oversight of policy specific to protecting and improving population health. I report through the Deputy Chief Medical Officer (Public Health), Dr Naresh Chada, to the Chief Medical Officer, Dr Michael McBride.
- 1.2 The Northern Ireland Executive sets out its priorities by way of the Programme for Government, focused on achieving outcomes of societal wellbeing. The Programme for Government framework is used as the basis for the Outcomes Delivery Plan, which sets out the actions that departments are taking to give effect to the Executive's stated objectives of improving wellbeing, by tackling disadvantage and driving

economic growth. I am the Senior Responsible Officer for four indicators within the Outcomes Delivery Plan: increasing healthy life expectancy; reducing the inequality gap in healthy life expectancy; reducing preventable mortality; and reducing the proportion of children born at low birth weight. Population Health Directorate (PHD) comprises four branches: Health Protection, which includes responsibility for blood safety and the response to the UK Infected Blood Inquiry; Emergency Planning; Health Improvement Policy; and Health Development Policy.

2. Please outline how psychological services are commissioned and funded in Northern Ireland

See last paragraph

3. If psychological services are the commissioning responsibility of DHNI (either generally, or specifically in relation to those who have been infected with a chronic and serious disease such as HIV or HCV or HBV) please provide details of the services which are commissioned and are available to people who have been so infected, or whose partners or family members have been infected, and who have suffered psychological difficulties as a result

See last paragraph

4. If psychological services are the commissioning responsibility of the Regional Health and Social Care Board (either generally, or specifically in relation to those who have been infected with a chronic and serious disease such as HIV or HCV or HBV), please outline the kinds of services that DHNI would expect to be available to people who have been so infected, or whose partners or family members have been infected, and who have suffered psychological difficulties as a result

See last paragraph

5. The Inquiry understands that: (a) in October 2018 NHS England announced funding (of up to £50 million) for a new screening service to be put in place to provide long term support and treatment for people with physical and mental health issues following the Grenfell Tower fire; and (b) a free and confidential NHS service (the Grenfell

Health and Wellbeing Service) is available to children and adults affected by the Grenfell Tower fire.

Please confirm whether there is any equivalent or similar service in Northern Ireland for people infected or affected in consequence of infected blood or blood products. If so, please provide details of the service(s). If not, please explain why.

- 5.1 A Clinical Psychology Service is provided by the Belfast HSC Trust in the Clinical Health Psychology Department on the Royal Victoria Hospital (RVH) site. It provides a dedicated service for individuals or family members affected directly or indirectly by the Infected Blood Inquiry (IBI) and by associated health conditions. The service commenced in January 2019 when non-recurrent funding was provided by the Department of Health (NI) for three years from 2018/19 to 2020/21 inclusive
- 5.2 There has not been a systematic whole-programme approach to psychological support for those infected and / or affected in Northern Ireland, analogous to the UK government's response to the Grenfell Tower fire. This may be explained to some extent by the fact that the life-changing and tragic impacts of contaminated blood and blood products became evident gradually over a period of decades, as the number of individual cases accumulated, rather than occurring as a single calamitous event with multiple casualties such as the Grenfell Tower fire. Even as the scale of the impacts of contaminated blood and blood products has come to light, the case for a dedicated, systematic psychological support service in Northern Ireland has only become apparent through the proceedings of the Infected Blood Inquiry. With the restoration of devolved government in Northern Ireland, the Department is reviewing the Infected Blood Payment Scheme (NI) and the need for psychological support will be considered as part of that review.

6. Please outline how HCV treatment is commissioned and funded in Northern Ireland

See last paragraph

- 7. Please describe the current treatments that are available for HCV in Northern Ireland, their effectiveness and availability, including any restrictions and/or delays that may be experienced in accessing treatment.**

See last paragraph

- 8. What scans, blood tests and/or other checks and/or monitoring are, or should be, offered to a person who has been diagnosed with HCV, how often and over what period of time?**

See last paragraph

- 9. Following successful treatment, such that the person has received a sustained virological response (SVR), what follow up scans, blood tests and/or other checks and/or monitoring are or should be offered, how often and over what period of time?**

See last paragraph

Questions 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8 & 9 are matters which shall be addressed by the Health and Social Care Board and/or the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed _____

Dated 30 January 2020