

Witness Name: Malcolm James Slater
Statement No.: WITN0599002
Exhibits: WITN0599003 - 6
Dated: 7 May 2019

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

SECOND WRITTEN STATEMENT OF MALCOLM JAMES SLATER

I provide this further statement in response to a request under Rule 9 of the Inquiry Rules 2006 dated 17 October 2018.

I, MALCOLM JAMES SLATER, will say as follows: -

Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is Malcolm James Slater. My date of birth and address are known to the Inquiry.
2. I provided a first written statement dated 28 February 2019. I have since learned that statement was incorrectly labelled as Statement No: WITN0000599. It should instead be labelled WITN0599001.
3. I provide this second statement to address an issue that has come to light since my first written statement. I requested my medical records from the various hospitals under which I have been treated. Upon receiving copies of records relating to my treatment at the Oxford Haemophilia Centre, I have discovered that false information was included in my medical notes.

Section 2. Medical records

4. I attach four entries from my medical records as exhibits: a letter from Dr Trowell of the Oxford Haemophilia Centre to Dr Winter, my GP, dated 27 January 1982 (**WITN0599003**); a letter from Dr Trowell to Dr Winter dated 31 January 1983 (**WITN0599004**); entries from my GP notes between 1980 – 1984 (**WITN0599005**); and a record of virology test results dated 1982 (**WITN0599006**).
5. I have annotated the letters from Dr Trowell to Dr Winter with handwritten notes of my reactions to certain comments.
6. I obtained these documents when I recently requested copies of my medical records from each haemophilia centre that I had attended.

7. The process of obtaining my medical records was relatively straightforward for most of the hospitals I attended.
8. I had difficulty obtaining records from the Churchill Hospital in Oxford, where I was a patient at the haemophilia centre from approximately 1980 – 1985. I have been sent approximately thirty pages of notes relating to my treatment at the Churchill Hospital during that period. Other hospitals have been able to provide far more documentation.
9. I was surprised that the Churchill Hospital did not have more documents relating to my treatment, as I regularly attended the haemophilia centre, and it was through their treatment that I received infected Factor VIII and contracted Hepatitis C.
10. After receiving infected Factor VIII, my wife and I were then monitored at home for a period of time with regular blood tests, as set out in my first written statement.
11. Upon receiving the exhibited documents I was shocked to see that they included statements which were not true.
12. In a letter from Dr Trowell of the Oxford Haemophilia Centre to Dr Winter, **(WITN0599003)** my then GP, dated 27 January 1982, Dr Trowell confirms that he thought I had contracted hepatitis, possibly from Factor VIII cover administered for an operation. He wrote: "I have also advised him to avoid alcohol and I know that he has already cut down considerably on his alcohol consumption."
13. This gives the wrong impression. I have never been a big drinker. Even when I was a student, I didn't drink much because I commuted to university in London from Sussex. When I first met my wife, I think we went to the pub on half a dozen occasions in a year. Then when we lived in Cirencester, I think I went to the pub on perhaps three occasions over three years. When I did go to a pub, I would usually have half a pint of beer. Very occasionally I would have a second half, so one pint in total. My wife used to try to persuade me to go to the pub more, but I was not interested in alcohol.
14. I did not drink at home either. I would generally only have one drink at Christmas if my mother came to visit. I drank to excess on one single occasion in 1979 when a friend visited us at my cottage in Surrey. In actuality I probably did not actually drink very much alcohol on that occasion, as I so rarely drank that alcohol had quite a powerful effect when I did drink it!
15. I stopped drinking altogether when I became ill with hepatitis. Since my son was born, I have not drunk at all bar the odd sip of my wife's drink if we are on holiday.

16. To say that I had cut down considerably on my alcohol consumption by 1982 is incorrect. When I read this statement, my first thought was "Dr Trowell is in fantasy land", which I have also written on the exhibited letter.
17. I had totally cut down on alcohol and there was very little drinking to begin with. I remember meeting with Dr Rizza, Dr Matthews and Dr Trowell and making it very clear how little alcohol I drank before getting ill. This meeting would probably have been after my operation in 1981.
18. The letter of 27 January 1982 does not make any reference to diet, except to say that I had been vomiting after eating fatty food.
19. In the letter dated 31 January 1983 (**WITN0599004**), Dr Trowell wrote: "There is also no doubt that he is still sensitive to increased quantities of fat in his diet and I think finds it difficult to remain with any strict dietary regime or in fact to give up alcohol for any significant period of time. Both of these may to some extent influence his symptoms and I think that the amount of alcohol he consumes could explain to some extent his slow recovery."
20. The comments about alcohol and diet are totally incorrect. By January 1983, the only thing I was drinking was bottled water because it was the only thing I could drink and keep down. I was vomiting a lot. I had lost a lot of weight as this went on for a few weeks. The thought of food made me vomit.
21. I remember that one of the doctors advised me to avoid fatty foods, as these could trigger diarrhoea or vomiting. I implemented that recommendation, and it helped a little bit, but I had not been eating much anyway.
22. My diet was already pretty healthy by the time of my operation in 1981. I had already been making dietary changes for unrelated reasons; when I got married in 1980, I started to want to become vegetarian. I was eating vegetarian meals a few nights a week, and progressed to become fully pescetarian by 1983. By January 1983 I was not eating things like chocolate or puddings.
23. I was shocked when I saw these comments in my medical records. My immediate reaction was that they were passing the buck or trying to cover this up. I felt really angry when I read the comments; I felt angry for myself, my wife and my children, but also for other haemophiliacs – I met other haemophiliacs when we were waiting to be seen at the haemophilia centre, and I know a lot have died because of this.

24. I now wonder whether these comments were made as part of a cover up, and whether they did the same thing to other haemophilia patients at the Churchill Hospital. I feel very let down.

Section 3. Other

25. I remember Dr Rizza being very upset when he told me about infected blood products. This would have been in 1983 or 1984 at the Churchill Hospital. He said he felt guilty in a sense that so many of the patients who received factor products in 1981/2 were now seriously ill with limited life expectancy. This was the first time anyone confirmed to me that patients were becoming seriously ill through infected blood products. It was verbal.
26. It was Dr Rizza who told me that the Factor VIII I received pre and post operation had been contaminated. He was extremely apologetic and explained that quality checks prior to distribution to hospitals for use had not been performed in the USA (from where blood supplies had had to be purchased) or in the UK following importation. He was critical of the lack of "quality control" in the supply chain, especially as it had transpired much of the imported blood or blood products had been obtained from drug addicts and prisoners in US prisons who sold their blood. We spoke about the supply chain in the USA and my clear impression was that Dr Rizza was appalled when he discovered so many recipients of the blood products (Factor VIII in my case) were by now experiencing very serious illnesses. I remember Dr Rizza being highly embarrassed by it all. He was extremely apologetic.
27. I met with Dr Rizza and Dr Matthews pre and post my receiving infected Factor VIII. However, I have little recollection of Dr Trowell. He was not always with Dr Rizza and Dr Matthews when we met. I have tried to find information in my Churchill Hospital records regarding my contact with Dr Trowell but the copy records supplied to me have been of little help. I find that surprising.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed

GRO-C

Dated

7 May 2019