

Witness Name: Louise Marsden
Statement No: WITN1371003
Exhibits: 0
Dated: June 2019

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

SECOND WRITTEN STATEMENT OF LOUISE MARSDEN

I, Louise Marsden will say as follows:-

1. My name is Louise Marsden. I live at
 County Antrim My date of birth is 960.
2. I make this statement in response to a request under Rule 9 of the Inquiry Rules 2006 dated 4 June 2019.
3. As a result of receiving contaminated Factor IX blood products, my husband William Trevor Marsden was infected with Hepatitis C and possibly other viruses, as detailed in his first statement dated 11 April 2019.

HIV TESTING

4. In around 1983, my husband Trevor received a letter from the Royal Victoria Hospital in Belfast inviting him to attend a meeting about HIV and AIDS. This was the only information we had about the meeting in the letter.
5. All we knew at that time about HIV and AIDS was what we had learnt from the media, which was all doom and gloom.

6. I attended the meeting with Trevor. My memory of the meeting is very clear. It took place in a room, which was like a classroom. It was so busy that Trevor and I had to sit on desks.
7. The meeting was very short. It was conducted by Trevor's consultant at that time, Dr Elizabeth Mayne and her colleague, [GRO-D] who I believe was the head of the Haematology department, although I'm not sure of his exact title. Trevor had never had any consultations with [GRO-D] as far as I know.
8. What Dr Mayne and [GRO-D] said at the meeting was like a fait accompli. They said that all of the Haemophiliacs in the room would be tested for HIV. The Haemophiliacs were not asked whether they wanted to be tested. They said that HIV was transmitted by blood and as the Haemophiliacs had been receiving blood products, they were erring on the side of caution (my words not theirs) and testing people. There was nothing significant said or any real concern expressed. I felt that Dr Mayne and [GRO-D] only told us what they had to, there was no extensive discussion. It was only years later that we discovered from a visiting Consultant that the blood the Haemophiliacs were being treated with was being sourced in prisons.
9. The only choice they then gave the Haemophiliacs was whether or not they wanted to know their test results.
10. Before people were asked whether they wanted to know their test result, I recall Dr Mayne leaving the room to give people an opportunity to talk about it.
11. Things in the room became very heated. People knew very little about HIV and they hadn't been told anything about it by Dr Mayne or [GRO-D]. The people in the room were most concerned about what HIV was at that point. They wanted to know more about it and how at risk they were. Nobody was counselled about HIV. I recall being like a rabbit in headlights. Trevor and I were only in our early 20's.

12. I was a young mum at that time and my head was screaming. It was extremely stressful. I asked myself if Trevor tested positive for HIV, how it would impact us as a family.
13. Dr Mayne then came back in the room with a woman with a clipboard. Dr Mayne went round the room asking each Haemophiliac whether they wanted to know their HIV test result.
14. Dr Mayne was the kind of woman who shot from the hip. Nobody was really prepared to speak up against her.
15. When Dr Mayne asked Trevor whether he wanted to know his HIV test result he said no. She went to ask the next Haemophiliac. At that point I put my hand up. I panicked that she was going to ignore me. I said to Dr Mayne that I wanted to know. I said that we had young children and that I thought everyone needed to know.
16. Dr Mayne then said to the lady with the clipboard to put down that Mr Marsden didn't want to know, but that Mrs Marsden did. She smirked as she said this. She had previously addressed the other people in the room by their Christian names. I felt that she was being patronising towards me.
17. On the way home in the car, Trevor and I discussed what we would do if he was HIV positive. Our daughter Nicola had been born in 1982 and I remember thinking that we could give her to Trevor's parents if he was HIV positive and needed me to care for him. I also thought that we couldn't expose Nicola to HIV. I thought they could tell her that we had been killed in a car accident. Trevor and I discussed this.
18. We had our daughter Lucy in February 1984 and we would have discussed her as well if we had had that meeting as late as 1985, as I have heard suggested by another witness. I therefore believe that the meeting took place in 1983, but it is hard to be precise as the meeting was so long ago.

19. I don't recall Trevor having a HIV test. He wasn't being seen at the hospital regularly at that point. He may have gone to the hospital to have a test, but I can't recall this.
20. As detailed in my first statement, when we found out that Trevor had tested positive for Hepatitis C, we were told that the Royal Victoria Hospital had stored samples of Trevor's blood and were able to retrospectively test his blood to identify when he became infected. As I can't recall Trevor attending the hospital for a HIV test, I question whether Trevor's stored blood samples were used to test him for HIV.
21. We received Trevor's HIV test result by letter from the Royal Victoria Hospital. It was addressed to Trevor and stated that Trevor didn't want to know his test result but that Mrs Marsden did. The body of the letter stated that Trevor had tested negative for HIV, so Trevor saw his test result, even though he had indicated that he didn't want to know the result.
22. I believe we have seen a copy of the letter sent to us by Dr Mayne after the meeting with Trevor's test result in Trevor's medical records, but it has not currently been possible to locate this.
23. Before we received Trevor's test result, there was no calming of the situation. People were left hanging. There was no advice about what to do in the interim. It was very stressful for Trevor and I as we waited to receive his test result. I can't now recall how long we had to wait.
24. The meeting with Dr Mayne and GRO-D also sticks out in my mind as it was the first time I had been with a number of other Haemophiliacs. Most of the men were around Trevor's age and were using walking sticks and crutches, which was really shocking to me. Trevor explained to me that they would have had bleeds to their joints. Many of the men seemed like they had the bodies of old men.

25. I used to work in financial services and I believe that the Haemophiliacs Dr Mayne spoke to at the meeting should have been cautioned that if they tested HIV positive, there were likely to be implications for them. Testing HIV positive precludes people from obtaining life insurance. I think all of the Haemophiliacs at the meeting should have been given the opportunity to consent to their HIV test.

26. As Trevor tested negative for HIV if there were people who tested positive I don't know how they were informed. I would like to think that it was not just by letter.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed ... GRO-C

Dated..... 18/6/19