

Witness Name: Dr Thomas Rowland Yapp

Statement No.: WITN3562001

Exhibits: Nil

Dated: 12/08/2019

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF DOCTOR THOMAS ROWLAND YAPP

I provide this statement in response to a request under Rule 9 of the Inquiry Rules 2006 dated 3 July 2019.

I, Thomas Rowland Yapp, will say as follows: -

Section 1: Introduction

1. Dr Thomas Rowland Yapp
Princess of Wales Hospital, Colty Road, Bridgend CF31 1RQ
DOB 11/06/1965
MB BCh FRCP (UK) MA.
2. Consultant Gastroenterologist, Royal Gwent Hospital, Newport 04/2000 - 04/2003,
Consultant Gastroenterologist, Princess of Wales Hospital, Bridgend 04/2003
onwards.
3. No membership of any committees or groups relevant to the Inquiry's Terms of Reference.

Section 2: Responses to criticism of Elaine Huxley

4. A review of the notes reveals that my predecessor, Dr John Morris, discussed treatment (with Interferon) with the patient in November 2001. Reference is made to the NICE guidance at the time and the need for a liver biopsy. The notes suggest that

the patient was not keen on undergoing a liver biopsy at first but agreed in 2003. This revealed a minimally active chronic HCV hepatitis (Ishak necroinflammatory score 2/18, fibrosis stage 0/6). At this stage, a joint decision was made not to treat with single agent Interferon, and a subsequent letter in 2005 describes a conversation about her 'minimal disease' and 'that by waiting she does not lose anything as treatments may become better and easier to tolerate'. Ms Huxley was offered combination treatment (Interferon + Ribavirin), when it became available in Bridgend, in 2006 and started the treatment in early 2007. I am sorry that she now feels that she was not given enough information at the time to make her choice with regard to the treatment.

5. The cost of medication does sometimes come up in conversation with patients (with a range of conditions, including HCV), when looking at management options but this has never influenced my decision to treat or not. At the time of her diagnosis, treatment was limited to single agent Interferon, with low success and high side-effect rates. The move to combination therapy (Interferon + Ribavirin) conferred a number of benefits, but was not widely available locally until 2006. This is because of a lack of nursing resources (see below*) and we could only treat one or two patients at a time. Patients with severe or moderate HCV-related liver disease were given priority.
6. In 2007, like many District General Hospitals, we had no specialist nurses in Hepatology and Blood Borne Viruses*. Treatment was organised through a day unit (Programmed Investigation Unit, PIU) and run by a very experienced senior nursing sister. The notes document regular blood monitoring and clinical review, and Ms Huxley was taught how to give her own subcutaneous injections, in keeping with many self-administrated regimes (for a range of conditions). There is no record of patient dissatisfaction with this approach at the time. I am sorry if she felt 'frightened, unsure and unsupported' but I believe that every attempt was made to avoid this.
7. All patients were (and are) advised of the potential side effects at the time of the decision to treat, and again by the nursing sister on PIU at the time Ms Huxley started her treatment. The notes state that the patient felt bad for the first two weeks but that the side effects improved with time. She did develop a complication whilst on holiday, requiring surgery but at review, when a break in treatment (or drug holiday) was discussed, the patient declined this.

Section 3: Other Issues

8. It is disappointing to hear of Ms Huxley's complaint against the care she received, not least, as there was no reference to this at the time and her treatment was over 10 years ago. I believe that she benefitted from waiting until combination therapy was available in Bridgend and any perceived delay in her treatment did not lead to a significant worsening in her liver disease.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed 

Dated 12.08.2019

Table of exhibits:

Date	Notes/ Description	Exhibit number

