

The Infected Blood Public Inquiry NEWSLETTER



THE
HAEMOPHILIA
SOCIETY

A summary of Inquiry hearings from London

The Infected Blood Inquiry returned to London this week for four days of personal testimonies.

For the first time, the Inquiry heard of a death from vCJD. Mark Buckland died at the age of 32 after contracting vCJD as a result of blood transfusions in 1997. The Inquiry heard that it had been known the donor died of vCJD in 2000, yet Mark was not told until 2004 for fear that he would “commit suicide” at the news. His father Peter said he wished his son had had the opportunity to live his last years to the full, and should have been informed of the risk as soon as it was known.

Ade Goodyear spoke of his experience as a pu-

pil at Lord Mayor Treloar School in Hampshire, where he was told aged 15 that he was HIV positive. He remembered branded pharmaceutical treats for the pupils, such as pens and watches. He said: “Looking back now, it was like we were being groomed by the peddlers of death”.

Su Gorman spoke movingly about her husband Steve, who died in December 2018 as a result of his Hepatitis C infection before he had a chance to give evidence to the Inquiry. Su said she wanted to give Steve the “last word” in her evidence and the Inquiry was shown video footage of Steve talking about his hopes of what the Inquiry would achieve.

There was moving testimony from Ruth Spellman, whose husband Bill died as a result of a Hepatitis C infection caused by a blood transfusion. She said that when her husband became chronically ill he would often have to be admitted to hospital but, despite being known to the hospital, he could only be accepted through A&E, often resulting in waits of 10-12 hours. She said she hoped that procedures could be changed to avoid this in the future.

This week has been another difficult and emotional period for all those infected and affected by contaminated blood. Thank you to all witnesses for their courage in speaking out.

Quotes of the week

“I don’t know how you’re supposed to reconcile the fact that you love someone and want to look after them but that you’ve been told they could kill you.”

Ms K on her father who died of HIV

“He’s my only child. That I would have forgotten? And yet the medical profession wanted me to believe that. And I started to believe that I had. I began to doubt myself.”

Shelagh O’Shea on claims by doctors that she “forgot” she’d been told her son Luke had Hep C

“I remember wondering how many more sunrises I would see. I was an ‘us’ thing. We were children, were bonded and we were going to die.”

Ade Goodyear, on being diagnosed with HIV aged 15 while a pupil at Treloar School.

“I found the wording on the forms insensitive. There were references to “you and your partner’s income” or “household income”. I had just lost my husband and my home. It was heart breaking.”

Su Gorman on applying for bereavement payments through the EIBSS following the death of her husband Steve Dymond in 2018.

Inquiry news

Next week the Infected Blood Inquiry moves to Leeds and will conduct its hearings in the Crowne Plaza Hotel from 11-14 and 18-21 June. The Haemophilia Society is holding an informal social event immediately after the first day of the hearings on Tuesday 11 June. The event will take place in the main bar of the Crowne Plaza Hotel from 4pm. Anyone is welcome to attend and we hope you and your friends and family can join us to offer support and companionship to all those affected by the Inquiry. You can just turn up, but it would be helpful to know if you intend to come along. Please email Debra Morgan on publicinquiry@haemophilia.org.uk.