

On 9th June 2021 the Inquiry heard evidence from Mr. Bruce Norval, Campaigner and Researcher.

Mr. Norval has been involved with the following groups as an independent campaigner: Manor House Group, Tainted Blood, Haemophilia Society (as a Trustee) and Haemophilia Scotland.

Mr. Norval began his evidence by providing some background to his own personal experience as a sufferer with moderate haemophilia B, and his treatment with Factor 9 concentrates from the Protein Fractionation Centre (PFC) at Liberton. Mr. Norval explained he had volunteered to take part in a trial at St. Thomas' Hospital, London and described the insensitive way in which he and his wife were informed of his hepatitis C infection in 1990, by a doctor stood in a clinical room doorway. He said his wife had been pregnant at the time.

He explained how the news of his infection had left him bereft and angry, and feeling like he had let his wife down. He then went on to speak about the difficulties he had encountered with trying to keep himself in employment whilst his health deteriorated.

Inquiry Counsel asked Mr. Norval to explain what fuelled his interest in researching hepatitis. He said that the sense of betrayal by the NHS had fuelled his interest and that he had channelled all his frustrations into it. He said he was surprised at how little data there was available at that time, so this prompted him to write to politicians with Freedom of Information requests to collect the data. He explained how he collaborated with other campaigners how they had shared information, sometimes spending hours at a time on the telephone, to try to put together the 'jigsaw', as he referred to it.

Mr. Norval expressed his view that the Government deliberately created diversions to distract people from what was really going on e.g. uplifts in payment schemes etc.

Inquiry Counsel referred to the substantial documentation and research material held by Mr. Norval, acknowledging that he had assisted the Inquiry in providing material to them. Mr. Norval explained that during his research, he soon came to realise that there were a substantial number of documents missing from the archives, such as the hepatitis record books which had existed up to 1985, but then were destroyed. Mr. Norval is of the view that they were deliberately destroyed, because of their content and what it would reveal. He said that he had destroyed about 3000 documents after the Penrose Inquiry through his frustration with the process and outcome of the Inquiry.

Mr. Norval explained that during his research, he noted that the language and terminology used by clinicians and medical experts had changed over time. It was evidence that they had deliberately taken the word 'viral' out. His view was that the change in terminology was so that cases did not need to be reported, under the Notifiable Disease Regulations.

Mr. Norval explained the extent of control that Haemophilia Centres and Consultants had over everything, including patients and their GPs.

Inquiry Counsel asked for Mr. Norval's observations on a publication authored by Dr. Rosemary Biggs of the Medical Research Council (MRC), concerning the role and significance of medical research in blood disorders and the relationship between the MRC and patients. Mr. Norval's view was that the haemophilia community had been seen as suitable subjects for research and data collection and that the infected blood scandal had not been an 'accident'. He said they already knew that the risks were there.

Inquiry Counsel also asked for Mr. Norval's observations on a further document authored by Dr. Biggs regarding the treatment of hepatitis A and B and Von Willebrand's Disease, including the dangers of transfusion, the choice of treatments for haemophiliacs and the need for future observation for the prevention of hepatitis. He spoke of his biggest horror being that he may have passed a virus to another person. He said it was ridiculous how each haemophiliac patient would have their treatment, and then go out into the wider public, to work or school etc and quite easily infect others without even knowing.

Mr. Norval was asked to speak about his research concerning the Military in World War II. He spoke at length about blood donation and of the 'manky' blood that had passed between individuals through vaccination. His view was that infection was purposely being spread en masse for research purposes, and the forces were ideal for this.

Mr. Norval believed that the viruses they could not test on chimps were being tested on humans. Mr. Norval provided substantial information concerning vaccination procedures within the Military. He considered that military personnel were not suitable blood donors, they were vectors of infection.

Mr. Norval explained his belief that infected military personnel were sent home to infect their family households with hepatitis B, C and other viruses, thereby producing other individuals for follow up research exercises.

Inquiry Counsel asked Mr. Norval for his observations on the 1969 outbreak. He talked of problems at that time with centrifuges breaking down and sometimes spraying blood. He spoke of the risks resulting from such occurrences. Mr. Norval spoke about the Royal Society of Edinburgh proceedings and the dangers of potent therapeutic therapy. He suspected immunoglobulins were taken from haemophiliacs to be used on the wider population.

Inquiry Counsel then asked Mr. Norval about pasturisation, yield loss, the use of Factor IX concentrates and its side effects. Mr Norval described the unsatisfactory and inadequate conditions at the PFC Laboratory.

Mr. Noval expressed his concern for what is happening presently. His fear was for the impact on children, and the lack of current data being recorded.

Inquiry Counsel asked Mr. Norval about his campaigning activities and the stigma he had experienced through his campaigning. He explained in great detail the types of stigma he suffered even to the extent of making him homeless and on the streets at one point.

He also explained how life becomes a reaction, and spoke about the attitude of medical professionals to him because they are aware of his campaigning. He stated that they labelled him as a troublemaker.

During the course of his evidence, Mr. Norval spoke about a play that had been written about his experiences. He said it had helped greatly with his mental health which had deteriorated quite rapidly after the Penrose Inquiry. He explained the proceeds of the play will go towards a memorial trust.

For a full transcript of the evidence of Bruce Norval visit <https://www.infectedbloodinquiry.org.uk/evidence> where you can read the transcript or watch the evidence via YouTube video.