

In accordance with [Restriction Order 2](#) , the Inquiry has provided excerpts of the witness statement for Witness 3. The Inquiry will only provide excerpts of the statement that do not contain information that is capable of leading to the identification of the Witnesses

## Scottish Hospitals Inquiry

Excerpts of the Witness Statement of

### Witness 3

#### OVERVIEW

1. My [REDACTED] is [REDACTED] [REDACTED] was diagnosed with Acute Lymphoblastic Leukaemia (ALL) [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] was treated in the Royal Hospital for Children (RHC) and Queen Elizabeth University Hospital (QEUH) between [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] was an in-patient during this time, except for a period she spent at home from [REDACTED].
2. [REDACTED] spent time in wards 2A and 2B of the RHC which are known as the Schiehallion Unit. The Schiehallion Unit treats children with blood cancer. [REDACTED] also spent time on [REDACTED]. Following the closure of the Schiehallion Unit in 2018, [REDACTED] was also treated on ward 6A of the QEUH which was supposed to be the 'new' Schiehallion Unit. [REDACTED]. I can speak to the experience which I had with [REDACTED] on ward 2A and ward 6A.

**SEQUENCE OF EVENTS: THE FAMILY'S EXPERIENCE AT RHC AND QEUH**

**Admission to hospital: [REDACTED].**

3. [REDACTED] was taken to the ICU and we were all sitting in the family visitors' room not able to believe the things that were happening. [REDACTED]. We were just sitting waiting for news. They let us all in, one at a time, to see [REDACTED] but she was unconscious.
4. Professor Gibson came in later that night and told us that she had looked under the scope and that [REDACTED] had leukaemia. I just couldn't get my head round it.
5. We all sat there all night talking and discussing and then they were talking about the treatment she was going to start but I couldn't really take it all in.

**Experience on ward 2A: [REDACTED].**

6. In Ward 2A we had kitchen facilities. It was well decorated out for the children who were older, things like cartoons on the wall. The only thing I would say is that it wasn't very clean. [REDACTED] but not everyone's cleaning is up to the same standards and when the cleaners were finished I went round on my hands and knees with wipes and stuff to wash the floor [REDACTED].

**Experience in the QEUH (adult hospital): late 2018**

7. It was October 2018 when [REDACTED] was moved to ward 6A. We didn't have a kitchen there. There was nothing, so if you wanted something you had to go to the canteen. If I was on my own, I would have to ask an auxiliary to sit with if I needed something to eat. You had to wait until they were available. Sometimes they were busy but nine times out of ten they were available and you could get away.

8. Sometimes you had to go away and get your thoughts together for ten minutes, so I had to go and just walk about the hospital and go back up again and feel different. Sometimes I would get really upset for nothing. I didn't know why I was upset. I knew why it was, but just out of nowhere I would start bubbling. The nurses would come in and give me a cuddle and tell me to go for a walk. So I would go away out for 10 or 15 minutes and then come back and I would be okay. You can't look after a sick kid if you're not okay yourself.
9. There were really poor facilities in ward 6A and we were moved a lot. One of the rooms they moved us to really stank, the stink that was coming through the fan was horrific. It was awful. We asked to be moved but there wasn't anywhere to move us to. We asked to be moved back to the room we'd just come out of but they said they'd already started deep cleaning it so we couldn't. We had to stay in that awful room all night. We got moved the next day.
10. We weren't given any reasons for the moves, for some reason they were just always cleaning. If they knew the infection control people were coming, which they must have got wind of, they were all cleaning, the cleaners, the auxiliaries and the nurses.
11. We sometimes didn't get any notice of a room move but it used to take us about three hours to pack up. It was very stressful. On one occasion, ■ had to be moved twice in one day. ■ didn't bother, she was just always happy and she got wheeled ■. So it wasn't stressful for ■, she was just in different surroundings, but packing up and then unpacking was stressful for whoever was on shift that day. It was like moving house.
12. And then before we unpacked any of her clothes or took any of her toys out her bag we cleaned everything. We even cleaned the wardrobe before we would put any of ■'s clothes in. We thought it was maybe not properly cleaned so we cleaned it again. We were always sort of cleaning anyway. If ■ was sleeping you would go around and clean. When ■ was awake you tried

to play with her and spend time with her but when she was having her wee naps in the afternoon we just cleaned.

### **WATER: EVENTS INVOLVING WATER SYSTEMS**

**Water incidents:** [REDACTED].

13. When we first went into hospital in [REDACTED] we didn't know there was anything wrong with the water. We used it to clean our teeth, we showered in it, we bathed [REDACTED] in it, we cleaned her teeth with it. It wasn't that first year, so it would be [REDACTED] – I don't know when – that we were told not to be using the water. They gave us bottled water. [REDACTED]. The nurses told us not to use the shower.
14. We weren't told why we couldn't use the water, but on a few occasions a man came to check the water in the wee hand sink in [REDACTED]'s room, where you washed your hands when you came in, and I asked him what he was doing. He said he was checking the temperature. [REDACTED]. He wasn't checking the temperature, he actually had a sample bottle and he took water away.
15. Later on, I don't know when, they put filters on the taps and we didn't know why. They gave us like a wee disposable sink thing that was on wheels. Every room got one, like a disposable thing that you could use instead of the bottled water. Although it was still bottled water that was going through it.
16. We weren't told why they were putting filters on the taps, we just saw them and thought what's that? But it seemed like they were coming in and putting them on when you went out to go to the bathroom or went for a drink or something and there was only one person in the room.

**HEALTHCARE ASSOCIATED INFECTIONS**

17. ■■■ started to get infections pretty much at the very beginning. Her temperature spiked and she used to get antibiotics quite a lot. She got built up with the steroids and then she got put on the chemo. And she had infections really quite a lot.
18. When ■■■ had infections we weren't allowed to use the kitchen. You had to go into isolation, which is a double room. So we would go into the first room, leave your bag, 'phone, everything. Scrub down, put an apron on before we could even go in and see her. She would be screaming because it was a glass partition that she was watching you through and she was wanting you. She would scream and try to get out the cot to you. But we had to do all this before we went in. If you took a bottle in, just of water or anything, you had to wash it all down. You couldn't eat anything, a sandwich, crisps, anything.
19. The isolation rooms are different from the other patient rooms on the ward. The other patient rooms are just single rooms. You just go in, you don't take your shoes off or anything. But in the isolation ones you had to remove your outdoor shoes and jackets and everything, basically.
20. ■■■ was in these rooms quite a lot. If she had a runny tummy she was moved. One of the times she was moved and we weren't allowed to use the kitchen, I was absolutely choking for a drink when I was in with ■■■ overnight and I had said to one of the nurses could I please have a drink? They said, we'll get back to you whenever we're ready. They never did come back. I was so close to drinking the tap water.
21. ■■■. I always made sure I had stuff with me after that.
22. When ■■■ had these infections her temperature always spiked. She was just burning and they used to try and get her temperature under a certain level. They sometimes got her temperature down by using cooling cloths and a fan above the bed and then she didn't need antibiotics, but if they couldn't get it down they started her on the antibiotics.

23. They had to stop [REDACTED]'s chemo treatment when she got infections in her line because once there's an infection in the line you can't put anything through it.
24. [REDACTED] had to have her line changed on a number of occasions. [REDACTED]. And so they had to take her to theatre. I had to hold her until she went to sleep. It was just hard to carry her down to get x-rayed to see if it had moved and it had moved. [REDACTED].
25. Just the thought of [REDACTED] have to go to theatre again was tough. She had to go to theatre for lumbar punctures and she had to go and get chemo put into her. It was hard to be with her when she was put to sleep for her surgeries because I didn't know if she was going to wake up again. I stayed with her until she was under and then we had to leave and sit outside. That was awful.
26. We were asking questions like why did she get infections and why did it happen all the time? [REDACTED]. Once the infection got into the line that was sort of plasticky, it just grew. Bacteria grew inside it so they couldn't use it then to put anything else in. So then that had to get removed again. You've only got so many times a line can go in, in your lifetime, never mind in what was just a couple of months.
27. I don't know who it was but we were told that [REDACTED] picked up one of the infections in the kitchen. It was when we were all using the kitchen, all the different families. All the kids in the ward had runny tummies. So then they shut the kitchen. That was the only answer we got, that was the only time they told me. But they shut off the kitchen for every family. They had a water machine and that went away as well. They just closed it down. I think we were moved after that so we were never in that kitchen again. It was not good for the families when they closed the kitchen.

## OTHER ISSUES RELATING TO HOSPITAL CONSTRUCTION

### **Hospital build issues: impact of construction works**

28. I noticed there were windows falling out and everything. There was scaffolding up at the adults' entrance to the building. The scaffolding was up for months. There was a shop, a WH Smith shop, and it was all scaffolding and I think four windows had fallen out in the middle of the night, because I asked somebody what had happened. The windows actually just fell out. This was in the adults' hospital, which had a different entrance.

## CLEANLINESS

29. I would like to make some observations about the cleanliness in the hospital. The cleaners told me they were only allocated, 10 minutes per room. Sometimes they didn't have time to wash the floor. It wasn't adequate enough to do the whole room and the bathroom. ■. So we used to clean the bathroom ourselves. We used to clean the shower room, because it was us that were using it. We cleaned ■'s room, dusting and washing all her ■ down.
30. We did this a couple of times a day. ■. That causes germs. And they told us she was taking too many infections. They told us everywhere had to be spotless. So we got OCD with the cleaning. I used to be on my hands and knees with wipes, antibacterial wipes, washing the floor. I felt as if the floor was never washed properly. ■.
31. ■. I just felt she couldn't go on that floor, it was filthy. We had slippers, we never wore outdoor shoes or anything into her room. We wore aprons all the time and gloves. We scrubbed down as if we were nurses and doctors, because ■ was taking too many infections.
32. When they did the deep clean of every room in ward 2A in ■ they had white suits on. It was like when you see forensic people on the television, it was one

of those suits they had on. It was like a big hose thing they were using, like a steam cleaner. But we never saw them doing [REDACTED]'s room. We just moved and didn't go back for a nosey.

33. The cleaners also told us there were sick people everywhere and different things that were on in different wards. Some of the kids had all come down with runny tummies. But some of the cleaners spent most of the time talking to you rather than cleaning. The nurses did a lot of cleaning, the auxiliary nurses. If they were in the room, they would help you clean. If they saw you cleaning the floor, they would be like, "You shouldn't be down there".

### **CLIC SARGENT**

34. CLIC Sargent was for the children and their families when they were in hospital. It's about ten minutes from the hospital, just a walk through the grounds. They were fantastic. I'd never heard of them before, but they were absolutely fantastic. They couldn't do enough for you. They had a washing machine, tumble drying facilities. I think there were ten rooms. The whole family could have been in it.
35. They had a laundry room, there were five washing machines and five tumble driers. So you were able to wash the clothes and tumble dry them. And it was really, really well organised.
36. They gave you vouchers so that you could order your food. You didn't have to pay for anything. [REDACTED]. When we first went, we could fill a freezer and get what we wanted. I would go and make their dinner if they were in the hospital. I would have [REDACTED] dinner ready and then I would go to the hospital so they could come home and eat it. The facilities were great in there. We wouldn't have been able to cope without it.



**CONCLUDING COMMENTS**

37. Apart from the cleanliness I never had any issues with the hospital. The staff were absolutely brilliant. They treated ■ as if she was part of the family. ■ had a great time.

38. The nurses were lovely. When ■ went up the stairs, to ward 6A, it was the same nurses that came with her. ■. She thought it was great. The nurses were really nice to her ■ they were lovely. Lovely people, the nurses. They didn't mind you asking anything, they were all lovely and very good to ■.

39. I don't think I would like if someone close to me was going in there, because there's lots of things like, they didn't tell us what the infections were, they didn't tell us what they were called or why ■ was getting so many infections. They kind of brushed all that away. But ■ kept on and on and on at them. They just never answered any questions I asked them at all. I felt as if they kept a lot away from us.

40. They should have come clean and then ■ would have been more prepared,.

41. I just felt they really let us down a bit by not being truthful and answering questions to ■. ■ used to ask a lot of questions as well. I didn't ask that many questions really because I can't take stuff in.

42. I believe that the facts stated in this witness statement are true. I understand that this statement may form part of the evidence before the Inquiry and be published on the Inquiry's website.