

**PE1651/PPPPPPPP**

David Maclennan submission of 18 March 2019

Hello, my name is David Maclennan, I am a 64 year old male living in the Highlands of Scotland.

I was put on Antidepressants in my late 30's after been diagnosed with depression by my GP.

Over the course of the next several years I tried out every type of AD without any great success with my GP at a loss until latterly in 2007? he put me on Venlafaxine which turned into a horror drug, I suffered a nervous Breakdown which I now have never completely recovered from also gave me complete loss of libido.

I was immediately taken off Venlafaxine and put on Fluoxetine with a repeat prescription for 20 x 5mg Diazepam tablets which I needed to order almost every Month, I had no tapering or advice about the Venlafaxine and spent the next 6 years with long spells off work until I took early retirement.

In 2008 I had an MRI scan which found that I had Frontal lobe brain damage and scarring from a vehicle accident I had in 1973 for which I was never X-rayed.

There was no change of plans , I was just kept on AD's.

I had a Company Health plan where all my records were sent to a top Neuropsychiatrist for a second opinion ( Best Doctors - I have all the documentation)

The Psychiatrist recommended that I be taken off all Medication carefully as the pschycotropic medication could be causing my symptoms, and get an EEG? to monitor Brain activity, this letter I took to the Local Neurology dept. and was just ' brushed away' with the Neurologist stating- "who do these people think they are!" and if the Diazepam is working then just keep taking it!!!

I was devastated as I thought at last I would have been getting somewhere!

In 2013 I was referred to a Psychiatrist as the Meds were not helping me function well and he now Diagnosed me with GAD which given my symptoms of high Anxiety I accepted - looking back he never related my Anxiety to the Medication, I believe I never suffered from serious Anxiety until I was started on Venlafaxine originally.

The Psychiatrist suggested I start "VENLAFAXINE !!" again as it was supposedly the best for GAD but I resisted for a couple of sessions and had my Fluoxetine increased which made me feel worse so was persuaded to try it , I did tell him about

my previous experience but he did not think my regime of taking it was correct.

I had no problems switching over to Venlafaxine but it only left me with a lingering sense of Anxiety and pressure of work meant I was off ill again until I had to take early retirement in 2014.

I have tried to come off the Venlafaxine twice now, tapering down slowly over a couple of months until the 'brain zaps' eased and both times I have had around a Month of feeling like I was normal again until suddenly out of the Blue I was walloped with excruciating Anxiety and Suicidal thoughts which started with a foggy head escalating to unbelievable levels of Anxiety which I tolerated for a week until in 'do or die mode' I took a small (37.5mg) dose of Venlafaxine which lifted my Anxiety to manageable levels within an hour.

I understand now that I have a need for this Horrible drug which I am now back on through my Doctor (75mg XL) which did not help me in the first instance and now wonder if I will be trapped in this catch 22 situation which means me taking a medication I cannot get off and is possibly damaging my nervous system even more daily.

There is no where I can go for any support, GP's or Psychiatrist's don't recognise withdrawal as being a problem which in my case my health now is massively worse than it ever was before I started AD's - there was no warning given about side effects or withdrawal problems and certainly I personally do not believe anyone with a Brain injury should be given Venlafaxine.

I am now in the situation that if the Venlafaxine I am now back on stops working for me and these unliveable 24/7 levels of Anxiety return I have no doubt I will have to consider ending my life as there is no support indeed had I been single I would now have committed suicide.

Scottish Government, please help as there seems to be so many other sufferers out there that are living a nightmare after following Doctors orders to the letter and have now had their lives ruined. It is probably too late for me now but others have to be stopped from going down this unnecessary path, if I was given CBT or counseling in the first instance I believe my life would have been so much different today but I was given AD after AD for so many years

I give you my full permission to access my medical records to prove my story is authentic, some of the dates may be a bit out as my memory is not too good, but that is my story.