

ANONYMOUS

Witness Name: **GRO-B**

Statement No.: WITN0472001

Exhibits: Nil

Dated: 10 December 2018

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF **GRO-B**

I provide this statement in response to a request under Rule 9 of the Inquiry Rules 2006 dated 14 November 2018.

I, **GRO-B**, will say as follows: -

Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is **GRO-B**. My date of birth and address are known to the Inquiry. I am a retired man and I live alone in a house I own. My wife passed away 2 years ago.
2. I intend to speak about my infection with Hepatitis C. In particular, the nature of my illness, how the illness affected me and the impact it had on me and my life with my family.

Section 2. How Infected

3. I have suffered with bleeding problems from birth. As a child, the doctors always used to call me a "bleeder". It was like it was a swear word.
4. I remember one particular occasion when I was injured at work. I cut my hand and was taken to hospital. They couldn't stop the bleeding and doctors were getting blood for me from all over the hospital. They were even bringing it to the hospital in ambulances. It was so bad that they

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even had to put the blood back into my body through needles in my ankles. This is when I was diagnosed with what they thought was haemophilia.

5. Whenever I had a bleed that needed treating, I was originally given Anti-Hemoglobin through a drip. This was mainly when I was having medical procedures and tooth extracts.
6. When Factor VIII was discovered, I was given this instead of the Anti-Hemoglobin. They gave me it in the form of an injection. It fastened up the job and stopped me bleeding quicker.
7. The first time I was given Factor VIII was in 1983 or 1984. I was a licensee in a pub at the time and one of the barrels hadn't been put on right. It fell off and trapped my leg, causing internal bleeding. I was taken to the Royal Hallamshire Hospital in Sheffield and given Factor VIII to stop the bleeding. This was the beginning of the finding out.
8. Here, I was diagnosed with Von Willebrand disease. As time had gone on, doctors had started recognising different bleeding disorders and fortunately I wasn't as bad as a haemophiliac. However, the Von Willebrand was severe, severe enough for me to need Factor VIII.
9. I was never told about the risks associated with Factor VIII. They probably didn't know about the risks or they wouldn't have used it. At least, if I had been told, I wouldn't have taken it.
10. I went yellow soon after being given the injection of Factor VIII for the first time. This happened whilst I was still in hospital. My whole body went yellow and it wasn't related to the leg injury. It was all in my blood, even my eyes were yellow; it created all kinds of complications inside me. My family were so shocked at the colour of me. My son was horrified and thought he was going to lose me.

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11. Doctors carried out tests because I was turning yellow but they didn't tell me what I was being tested for. They just kept saying that I was jaundiced and that my liver and kidneys were infected.
12. At a much later date, I remember sitting down with two top doctors, eminent doctors I'd call them. It was out of the ordinary to be treated like this and I knew there was something really wrong. They said, "you are infected and we must tell you because you might infect your wife". They didn't make it clear what was wrong with me or what my infection was: Hepatitis C, Aids, HIV, I just didn't know and still don't really.
13. My medical notes show that I tested positive for Hepatitis C on 23 February 1994.
14. They didn't tell me anything about my infection either, but I found out about it in the papers. It was everywhere: Hepatitis C, HIV, AIDS. In this time period, rock stars and other famous people were living promiscuous lives and getting infected with AIDS. Freddie Mercury and all those other people had died from it.
15. I was just a normal, family man and this was a very bad stigma. I was frightened to death that my wife would find out. I loved her to pieces and had to hide it from her. I was also frightened it could be transmitted and that terrified me.
16. Since my infection I am still given Factor VIII whenever I have a tooth out and after any procedure really. The doctors monitor my blood and give me Factor VIII accordingly. They give me however much it takes. It's a good thing when done properly, I have been able to have operations I couldn't have had in the past.

Section 3. Other Infections

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17. I don't believe that I have received any other infection. However I would like to reiterate that I'm still very confused about what I actually have.

Section 4. Consent

18. I was definitely tested for Hepatitis C and possibly other infections without my knowledge or consent.
19. I also have lots of blood tests now and the doctors never discuss them with me. They just ask how I'm doing and leave it at that. It's basically just a "hello, we want some blood, we will see you in 6 months time".

Section 5. Impact

20. My infection doesn't really affect me in the sense of pain. The pain was only in my head, it was all emotional. I can't show you a scar, I can't show you loss of limb and I can't show you my emotions, but I have to suffer with them.
21. When I found out I was infected, I wanted to stick my head in a cloud and leave it there. I just didn't know how to handle the situation. I was a young family man and I had to go home and tell my wife. Well, I didn't tell her. I couldn't. I knew what the next question would be: "where have you been?".
22. I just couldn't come around to accepting it. It was publicised as a sexually transmitted disease and this made it even worse. I didn't know where to go from there and I thought I couldn't go on really. I just couldn't handle it to be honest.
23. I now suffer from polymyalgia rheumatic. I don't know where this has come from.

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24. I was never given or offered any treatment for my Hepatitis C. I have heard about the cocktails of drugs but I never got any medication.
25. I can't go to the dentist. Instead, I have to go to the dental hospital. They always used to treat me differently. They would cover up in big gowns and get rid of them afterwards.
26. I kept my infection secret and left it there for a long time, even from my wife and son. When I did tell my son I sat him down and told him I had AIDS or Hepatitis C or something, from the American blood I was given when I had my leg injury.
27. When I told my wife it was because I had to. We had been rowing for days and I was very withdrawn. This was really unlike us and she thought I was with another woman, so I had to tell her. I couldn't do it myself though, I had to take her to the hospital with me and get the doctor to do it. This was years after I found out.
28. My life has been a shambles with it. I've got this, I've got that, I've got the other. I've even been told I might have that mad cow disease. I could have done without it all. If I hadn't had a lovely wife and son god knows where I would be now. It's only thanks to them really that I kept going on.
29. The infection didn't affect my education, work or finances. I was physically able and so carried on working. The family all rallied round once they knew and I managed to keep earning a living. I was afraid that the stigma would affect the pub business and people would stop coming if they knew, so I kept a low profile. I just had to make sure the business was still run.

Section 6. Treatment/Care/Support

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30. I have never received any treatment, care or support. In my years, there was no such thing, people just got on with life.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

31. I have received financial assistance from the Skipton Fund and England Infected Blood Support Scheme (EIBSS).
32. The hospital did the Skipton application for me and I got a lump sum of £20,000.00 in 2010 or 2011. They applied on my behalf and I answered questions verbally. It only took a month or so to sort out. I was also told this was half of the payment and to expect another one later in life.
33. I receive £166.00 a month from the EIBSS. I'm not sure when this started. I have also been receiving £1500.00 a month from the EIBSS since 2017 and got winter fuel payments of £700.00 this year and last.
34. I didn't write off for the later payments. I just received a hospital letter saying that I should expect monthly payments and a years worth of dates to expect them.
35. I received a form after I had started receiving payments saying that I needed to sign it. I didn't and then received another stating that the payments would stop unless I filled it in, so I did and the payments continued.

Section 8. Other Issues

36. I find it strange that I was still in the dark when I came out of hospital yellow. No infections had been mentioned until years later.
37. Doctors told me that my jaundice was from drinking, but I have never been a big drinker.

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38. I have massive confusion over whether I was infected with AIDS, HIV or Hepatitis C.
39. I have letters warning me that I may have variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease (vCJD) with advice documents attached. However a later letter dated 18 November 2004 confirms that I have not received the batch made from donors who developed vCJD. This letter only covers the Royal Hallamshire Hospital and it does not otherwise confirm that I don't have it. I have never been tested.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed _____

GRO-B

Dated

13-12-18