

ANONYMOUS

Witness Name: GRO-B

Statement No: WITN1667001

Exhibits: 0

Dated: November 2018

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF GRO-B

I, GRO-B will say as follows: -

Introduction

1. I live at GRO-B I was born on GRO-B I have been married for GRO-B years to my wife, GRO-B I have one daughter named GRO-B. I have not worked for thirty years. Before retiring I used to work in a factory.

How Infected

2. I have severe Haemophilia B. I was diagnosed when I was born in 1951. I used to have to go to the hospital quite a lot as I used to get bleeds in my knees. I was treated in GRO-B General in GRO-B I was under the care of Dr. GRO-B At that time, I was not given any blood products; if I did have a bleed the doctors would just tell me to put cold water on my knee.
3. I believe I was first given infected blood products in 1981 at GRO-B General. I was treated with Factor IX.

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4. I remember going to the hospital for an injection. The GP used to go up to the hospital every morning at 10.30am and if you wanted an injection he would give you one.
5. Then one day a doctor, I believe it was Dr. GRO-B was waiting outside my house and said "can you come and have a blood test?" He said that a nurse had pricked herself with a needle. That's when I got suspicious.
6. I do not actually remember being told I had Hepatitis C. I wasn't given any advice about Hepatitis C. I think it was about 1996 when I was told of my diagnosis. My notes say that I was told in GRO-B General, GRO-B by Dr. GRO-B I cannot remember any doctor discussing it with me in 1996. It took the doctors a few years to tell me, but I cannot remember which year it was. I remember being shocked but it was a long time ago.
7. I wasn't given any information about the risks of passing on Hepatitis C. It was disgusting that I was not given any information about how to manage the condition. However, my wife, GRO-B was offered an injection which the doctors said was to protect her from contracting Hepatitis C from me.

Other Infections

8. I do not believe I have received any other infections other than Hepatitis C.

Consent

9. I believe I was tested without my consent, because I was never asked to come and get tested for Hepatitis C or HIV, I was just told I had Hepatitis C. I think they should have asked for my consent before testing me.
10. I cannot comment as to whether I was tested for research purposes, I just don't know.

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Impact

11. As a consequence of being infected with Hepatitis C, I have cirrhosis of the liver. It is stable. I do not have any medication for it at present but the doctors keep an eye on it.
12. The mental impact of having Hepatitis C was that it worried me a lot.
13. Physically, I was short of energy and I was always tired.
14. I received my first treatment for my Hepatitis C about 15 years ago. The doctors put me on Interferon and Ribavirin. I was supposed to be on the course for 6 months, but I only lasted 10 weeks on the course. It drove me 'haywire'.
15. I couldn't eat anything for 6 months without being sick and vomiting. I went from 16 stone to 7 stone in 6 months. My eyes went bright orange. I couldn't walk without getting out of breath. My blood count dropped to 6. If it had fallen any lower I would have passed out.
16. I was given water retention tablets, which left me with 6 litres of fluid built up in my stomach. My stomach was sticking out because of it. After I stopped the tablets, my consultant told me to pay her a visit where she then admitted me to hospital. I was told that they had given me a longer course of water retention tablets by mistake and because of this the fluid had built up in my stomach. I had to have the 6 litres of fluid drained from me which was agonising. I was bed bound for some time and as a result I had terrible sores all over my body which led to me having a big hole in my back.
17. I had to spend a lot of time in hospital. On one occasion I woke up at 3 am and saw a vicar by my bed. He had come to give me last rights as they thought I was going to die. I was absolutely terrified when I saw the vicar. Thankfully, I pulled through.

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18. In 2016 I started a new treatment for Hepatitis C. I was on a course of tablets for 3 months. The side effects were a lot better than the previous treatment. The doctors have said I am now clear of the Hepatitis C.
19. I didn't face any obstacles with getting treatment; they just offered the Hepatitis C treatment to me. This was at **GRO-B** Hospital in **GRO-B**
20. Being infected with Hepatitis C made me want to give up on life. I was depressed and it made me cry sometimes.
21. There was stigma associated with Hepatitis C. It frightened everyone that found out. So, I kept everything quiet, I just didn't want to lose my friends. I kept my diagnosis of Hepatitis C between my immediate family. It did cause family upsets. We are a close family, so we just carried on with our life as normal. It is my daughter **GRO-B** that now gives me **GRO-B**. My wife is terrified of needles.
22. It's only in the last few years that people have been putting two and two together; **GRO-B**'s got haemophilia, so he must be one of them'.
23. I carried on as normal as I could but I was stressed on the inside. I would put on a brave face and cry behind closed doors.
24. My condition affected my wife and she has given a separate statement about this (WITN1668001).
25. My condition also affected my daughter and she too will provide a separate statement about this.
26. As I was diagnosed after I had left school, it did not affect my education. I worked in a factory for years.
27. Furthermore, having Hepatitis C did not affect my career, as it was my joints that caused me to leave factory work.

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Treatment/Care/Support

28. I have not faced any difficulty with getting any treatment as a result of my Hepatitis C. I never needed a dentist as all my teeth were taken out when I was younger.

29. I have never been offered any counselling or psychological help. I honestly did not even know it was available.

Financial Assistance

30. When I was at stage 1 in terms of the Hepatitis C, I used to get £3,000 a year from the Skipton Fund.

31. In 2015 when my current consultant, Dr. [GRO-B], told me I had liver cirrhosis (which is stage 2) I then received a payment of £50,000.

32. I also receive £1,500 a month. This has been ongoing since 2015.

33. I have not received any other payments for my Hepatitis C.

34. Dr. [GRO-B] had to find out so much information from [GRO-B] Infirmery to fill out the financial assistance forms. I also filled out some parts of the forms before Dr. [GRO-B] sent the forms off for me. I feel the process was quite straight forward. There were no pre- conditions, apart from the means test that the Trusts use. I am quite happy with everything.

Other Issues

35. I have no further comments to make on this matter.

Anonymity, disclosure and redaction

36. I would like to apply for anonymity.

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Statement of Truth

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

Signed..... **GRO-B**

Dated..... 3-12-2018