

Witness Name: Annie **GRO-B**

Statement No. | WITN2257001

Exhibits: None

Dated: 19th November 2018

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF ANNIE **GRO-B**

I provide this statement in response to a request under Rule 9 of the Inquiry Rules 2006 dated 19th November 2018.

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

Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is Annie **GRO-B** My date of birth is **GRO-C** 1937 and my address is **GRO-C** **GRO-C**. I am Robert **GRO-B** mother. I intend to speak about my son's experience of being infected with hepatitis C. In particular, the nature of if his illness, how the illness affected him, the treatment received and the impact it had on him and on me as his mother.
2. My son is Robert **GRO-B** He was born in 1967. He lives with me and he has lived with me for the last ten years.

Signed

GRO-C

Dated 19.11.18

Section 2. How Affected

3. GRO-C Robert was given Factor 8 after blood loss. We didn't even know anything about Factor 8. He was working in Glasgow and had an operation on his back. Then he was told that he had hepatitis C. He was in his twenties when this happened. He collapsed in this flat and he couldn't walk. It was a shock. I don't know why he was given Factor 8. We didn't know anything about it. It is horrendous. He is not able to work and it ruined his life. He has haemophilia because I am a carrier.
4. Robert's haemophilia is not severe, he just needs Factor 8. I couldn't really answer what type of haemophilia he has. He just needed blood after his operation. I don't know whether he has haemophilia A or B. We were not told that this could cause any major problems. However, now it has been a worry.
5. Robert was given Factor 8. I am not very sure as to whether he was given any other blood products. I would check the medical records to find out. At the time, I just trusted the doctors.
6. Robert was normally treated at Raigmore Hospital in Inverness, where he was treated by Dr Taylor. When he had his operation, this was at the Royal Infirmary in Glasgow. I cannot remember the names of any doctors. I only ever saw nurses. Robert was at the haematology department for a week.
7. Robert was given infected blood products in the late 70's early 80's when he had a back operation when he was around 12-13 years old. The bottom disk was removed from his back. He didn't know, he discovered this when he was 30 after registering with Haemophilia Glasgow in 1999. He kept it a secret from everyone. I believe he was scared at people's reactions to it.

Signed .

GRO-C

Dated 18.06.19

8. We were not told at the time that receiving Factor 8 would cause any problems. We were not told about the risks of becoming infected and we were not sure what Factor 8 was.
9. As far as I know, Robert was only infected with hepatitis C. We didn't know what this was either. GRO-C I will worry about Robert every day of my life.
10. We were told that Robert had hepatitis C when he had his back operation.
11. It was Robert only who was told about the hepatitis C, I wasn't told anything. He must have been told that he had contracted this from Factor 8.
12. I don't know whether adequate information was provided for him to understand and manage the infection. He was told that it would affect his liver. He didn't have any symptoms or if he did he didn't tell us because this came as a shock.
13. I think he should have been told earlier. I think that somebody must have known about it, but no one ever told us.
14. My views about how the results of tests and information about the infection were communicated to us is that parents were not told anything and we should have been told too and not kept in the dark for so many years. Something needs to be done. It's just not right and it has caused us depression. He had to stop pursuing a good life, with a good job and lovely friends. It's not easy living with someone with depression. I worry that he will do something drastic.
15. I don't know what, if any, information Robert was given about the risks of others being infected as a result of the infection. I know that it can be contagious through sexual intercourse, but that is not a problem. We didn't tell anyone. We were not told anything about how it could be passed on to others. I wonder if they were hiding something.

Signed ..

GRO-C

Dated 19-01-19

Section 3. Other Infections

16. I don't believe that Robert received any infection or infections other than hepatitis C as a result of being given infected blood products.

Section 4. Consent

17. I do not know whether my son was treated or tested without his knowledge or without his consent, but I do know that he was treated without being given adequate or full information.
18. I don't think that Robert was treated or tested for the purposes of research.

Section 5. Impact

19. The effects of being infected with hepatitis C were horrible for my son.
20. The mental and physical effects of being infected with hepatitis C were bad, it destroyed his life. Robert had a flat, a job, a good life. He had to leave Glasgow, come back up here and give up his life. Before this happened, we enjoyed spending weekends in Glasgow with him. He tried to go back, but couldn't do it. He got depression. Now he has to live on benefits and he has to live with me. I don't know what's going to happen when I die. His friends and his brother are not enough. He doesn't want to get out of bed, go out with friends, he is tired all the time and suffers from back pain and pain in his legs. It has been awful for me, too. I cannot understand why I have this in my life. It keeps me from going anywhere. I have to be a good mother. We don't have any money. My son cannot get a mortgage or do anything.
21. There have been no further medical complications from hepatitis C. At least, I am not aware of whether or not there have been any. I don't know if hepatitis C has affected his liver. Next time he has an appointment, I am going with him because I want to know

Signed ..

GRO-C

Dated 19-01-09

how bad his liver is. He is on medication for the hepatitis C. As a mother, I need to find out. He might hide things from me because he knows that I worry.

22. My son can be happy one minute and flat the next. He is not a young man anymore and has not been able to have the life that he wanted in Glasgow. I wonder, when I die, what is going to happen to him. I just worry so much.
23. As concerns treatments, I know that he is on tablets, but I never ask because he is a grown man. He has so many tablets. I know that some of them are for his liver, but I don't know much about the medical stuff. I do wonder if my son would still be alive if it wasn't for all the tablets.
24. I don't think that he has faced any difficulties or obstacles in accessing treatment.
25. I am unsure as to whether there are treatments which my son ought to have been given that have not been made available to him, I would need to speak to the doctor to find out.
26. I don't know if the treatments that my son has received are the cause of his depression becoming worse. Sometimes he can get really angry and I don't like it when he is angry.
27. Growing up, my GRO-C not allowed to go to the dentist except for the one at Raigmore Hospital, but when GRO-C go to a dentist now, they know all about the haemophilia and the hepatitis C. I am not very sure of whether or not my son has ever been refused treatment because of his hepatitis C.
28. Being infected with hepatitis C has really affected my son in a bad way. He is not the same anymore as he used to be and is very early to return home, for example he would return at 9 p.m. on a night out and doesn't want to go out socially anymore. I don't know if he is going to get worse when he gets older. I am getting older and I am not well. I will not be around anymore when he is older. I am in the house every day, we cannot go on holiday. Sometimes I am scared to speak to my son because he is so angry. He doesn't

Signed ..

GRO-C

Dated ...19-01-19...

talk or share much about his hepatitis C, I think he doesn't want me to worry about how bad it is going to get. However, I am his mum and need to find out. It's becoming more of a reality now that I have spoken to you about it because this is not something that we have discussed with anyone, I have always kept it to myself. This has been a shock. Health is more important than money. My son couldn't last in a job because he has not been able to work because of poor health, although he is very clever. If he wasn't living with me, he couldn't afford to live. Living on benefits is no way to live. The damage has already been done. I wonder if they knew about it.

29. Robert cannot help the way he behaves, later he apologises. He is never violent, but he gets very angry and grumpy. If he was ever violent, I couldn't live with him in that situation.
30. There is definitely a stigma associated with hepatitis C. The cause of hepatitis C for my son is not the same as for many other people. People are alarmed about hepatitis C and want to keep away from you. I wonder why we were not told as we were his parents and should have been told. I think his brother knew before me. People get hepatitis C as a sex disease. If they knew about it, then they shouldn't have used Factor 8.
31. I didn't have to quit my job as a result of Robert becoming infected with hepatitis C. Robert himself had to quit his job, and although he did try to go back a few times, he couldn't because he couldn't keep a job. He was also depressed. He tried a few things but just couldn't do it. He was popular and hard-working, but he started being tired all the time. I would love to see him going back to work and move out. His choice of lifestyle wouldn't have been to still live with his mother as a grown man, but I don't think there is a cure for hepatitis C.

Section 6. Treatment/Care/Support

32. Robert after many years has started to receive counselling fortnightly. It does help him to an extent, but it is not enough. I am not sure whether it is helping him. I don't ask questions anymore because I am going to get the same answer anyway.

Signed ..

GRO-C

Dated 19-01-08

Section 7. Financial Assistance

33. I don't think my son received any financial assistance. I think he got something a long time ago, but I am not sure. He keeps these things private. He doesn't talk about anything. He just tells me the odd thing. He might be trying to obtain more assistance now, but I am not sure. The Scottish Government have done nothing about it, and he has been infected for many years. I think it would help him if he got some form of assistance. He could move out. He has got no funds and that is why he lives with me.

Section 8. Other Issues

34. We have never been involved in litigation or in the Penrose Inquiry. Robert has been campaigning in Glasgow a couple of times. This was with the Haemophiliac Group, I don't think they got anywhere. I am not sure. My son came back very angry.
35. I cannot identify any documents that might be relevant to the Inquiry. I don't have anything, I have not even been told the essentials about Factor 8 or hepatitis C. We should have been involved as his parents. We would never have agreed to the Factor 8 if we had known. They should help him out and give him funding. As a parent, I am just disappointed that they knew about Factor 8 from America and still gave it to the children. It was the only treatment available and they had to have it, but we weren't told anything about it.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed

GRO-C

Signed

GRO-C

Dated

18-01-2019