

ANONYMOUS

Witness Name:

GRO-B

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Statement No: WITN2545001

Dated: 22nd January 2019

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF

GRO-B

I provide this statement in response to a request under Rule 9 of the Inquiry rules 2006 dated 12th December 2018. I adopt the paragraph numbering in the Rule 9 request for ease of reference.

I, GRO-B will say as follows:-

1. Introduction

1. My name is GRO-B My date of birth is GRO-B and my address is known to the Inquiry.
2. I live with my wife and have two grown up daughters.
3. As a result of contaminated blood I was infected with hepatitis C (HCV).

2. How Infected

1. I was approximately 15 when I found out I was a haemophiliac. I had been in and out of hospital from being a small child. They were not sure why at this

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time, but I was having trouble with bleeding issues. My Mother passed away when I was days old and I was being raised by my Nan and Grancha. Nothing at this time was discussed about haemophilia, but I am now aware there were others in the family with haemophilia.

2. I started work in [GRO-B] for a [GRO-B] I was there whilst awaiting an apprentice position at [GRO-B] as a plumber, which I got a few months later.
3. I know exactly when I was infected. I started working a manual job for [GRO-B] [GRO-B] in [GRO-B] and everything was going OK. In early [GRO-B] I had been feeling ill in work all day but carried on as normal. I walked up my hill to get home and got as far as my front door but I didn't have the strength to open it. My wife answered the door to me and I fell through it and collapsed. My wife called the doctor who sent me straight to hospital.
4. I was taken to the [GRO-B] Hospital in [GRO-B] where I had a blood transfusion on around [GRO-B] because I had had an internal bleed. I remember the date because my daughter was born on this day and both myself and my wife were in hospital at the same time. I was given about 7/8 pints of blood and was told that this was the maximum the hospital can give to a person as it's about all the body can stand. I was given Factor VIII in [GRO-B] and I think the Consultant was a [GRO-B] I also had Cryoprecipitate in the [GRO-B]s and [GRO-B]s at the [GRO-B] I don't remember ever being told of any risks to having blood transfusions and the potential exposure to infection from blood products.
5. After the transfusion I remember being in the hospital bed and feeling absolutely rubbish. I started to, what I can only describe as, vibrate violently. I remember a guy in another bed calling a nurse and shouting that I was having a bad time. I was settled with what I would describe as little injections like little bombs in each thigh. I found out afterwards that the vibrating was my body rejecting some of the transfusion.

3. Other infections

1. I do not believe that I received any infection other than HCV as a result of being given infected blood products.

4. Consent

1. I am unsure if I was ever treated without my knowledge or consent. I did take part in a trial when I was diagnosed with hepatitis C (HCV) so that may have been for research purposes but I couldn't say for definite.

5. Impact

1. In [GRO-B] I was asked to go to [GRO-B] hospital in [GRO-B] as I was unwell due to working with extreme flu symptoms. I saw a lady doctor, [GRO-B] and she said to me '[GRO-B] we know exactly what you have got and we are sending you to the [GRO-B]'. I wasn't told at this point what they had found to be wrong with me. I went to the Haemophilia Centre at the [GRO-B] and saw [GRO-B] who took me into his office and said '[GRO-B] you have hepatitis C (HCV)'. He told me that they wanted to start straight away to see what they could do for me.
2. In [GRO-B] I started a 12 month trial of Interferon. All my treatment before at been done at either a hospital or with a GP but now I had to inject myself with Interferon every day at home. I would come home from work have a bath and my tea then go upstairs on my own and prepare to inject myself as I didn't want my family to see me that way. As soon as I injected myself this would knock me out until my alarm for work the next morning. I had to inject myself in the thigh which would be black and blue from the daily needles. I didn't even know if I was injecting myself correctly. I was still working at this time despite the chronic fatigue as I loved my job and didn't want to give up and had a family to support.

3. The interferon injections continued for the full 12 months and I felt like I wasn't improving or getting better. After the initial 12 months I was told by the doctor that my hepatitis C (HCV) was at bay and I didn't need any further treatment. At that point I thought that I was cured and the treatment had got rid of the hepatitis for good. Unfortunately the hepatitis C (HCV) returned within a month and I began combined treatment of Interferon and Ribavirin in 1997. This treatment involved injecting myself with Interferon again on a daily basis and taking Ribavirin in tablet form. I again constantly felt ill and fatigued. Again after 12 months I was told the hepatitis C (HCV) was at bay. GRO-B told me that although it had disappeared on the test it was only lying dormant and it will never leave my body. During my treatment I suffered with bad depression.

4. I had an accident on my hand in the early GRO-Bs when I was cutting the trees in the garden. I cut through my finger with a hedge cutter. I went to the GRO-B GRO-B hospital in an ambulance but they sent me straight to GRO-B hospital in GRO-B where they tried to stop the bleeding. Luckily the doctor at GRO-B was the GRO-B of one of the GRO-B haematology doctors GRO-B GRO-B and he called GRO-B to the hospital to inform him. I had to have treatment and an operation to stop the bleeding and fix the wound and then had a number of skin grafts on my hand.

5. I was told by the haematologists to stop working due to my accident on my hand. I had always taken any time I needed off sick from work as holiday leave. By this time I wasn't doing such a manual job but still worked for GRO-B GRO-B at the Haematology Centre in GRO-B told me that I had to give up work completely. I had always loved working so I really did not want to give up my job but had already ignored the doctors telling me for a number of years beforehand that I needed to give up work. The decision was taken out of my hands at this time and I had to finish a job I had worked hard to achieve.

6. I am always constantly worrying that although my hepatitis C (HCP) is currently in remission there's always the chance that it can come back and I'm

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always expecting it and feel like I'm living my life on a knife edge. I have my liver checked yearly and had a scare 2 years ago. I had a scan on my liver and was called in to see [GRO-B] at the Haemophilia Centre at the [GRO-B] in [GRO-B]. There was another guy with [GRO-B] who I didn't know, and cannot remember his name, and he was asking me lots of stupid questions I didn't understand. They then began saying about my liver being fatty which worried me. [GRO-B] did say that it was fine and there was nothing to worry about but I didn't believe him and was worried about my liver for a long time. I was finally told in [GRO-B] that my hepatitis C (HCV) was still dormant, but this is something that is always at the back of my mind that can return.

7. Instead of being outward I became insular. My wife and daughters are the best that money can buy but they must have got fed up with me. Being infected with contaminated blood changed my life and my family's life completely. I just wanted to be well for them. I changes as a person and became very depressed. Life changed with depression.

6.Treatment/Care/Support

1. I get deep depression even now. I believe it is partly to do with all the injections I had to give myself. I was never sure what I was doing was right and I was injecting myself with powerful stuff which had a lot of nasty side effects. I haven't been right ever since I had the transfusion in [GRO-B]. I have had bad depression through it all and the doctors don't listen. I have seen doctors about my depression but nothing has really worked. I have been prescribed tablets but they didn't do me a bit of good. I have good days and bad days but most of the time now I don't really want to leave the house. This has affected family life over the years.
2. In some respects I feel that I have been "lucky" (if you can call it lucky!!) as some of those infected have had both hepatitis and HIV and some have passed it to their wives and children. A lot of the haemophiliacs who I knew

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have passed away but life hasn't been easy for me. I went to GRO-B on holiday with my wife and had flu like symptoms on the flight out. This quickly developed into bad pneumonia and I was in hospital in GRO-B for most of the 2 week holiday. Once they knew I had hepatitis C (HCV) they segregated me in the hospital. I felt like I had done something wrong and was a criminal.

7.Financial Assistance

1. I have had some of what the MP's call compensation and receive this quarterly from GRO-B. This amounts to around £1,155.00 per quarter. MP's keep saying that they are giving those infected compensation but it's a pittance when not well especially when told to give up work and losing my income.

8.Other Issues

1. I was invited by The Haemophilia Centre, to a meeting hosted by GRO-B at the GRO-B. We were shown a film which I can only describe as the worst horror I've ever seen. It explained how blood had been taken from prisoners in the USA and sent to the UK and not been tested for infections. As you can imagine this was a huge shock as we had only ever been told that I had hepatitis C (HCV) from contaminated blood and not how the blood came to be contaminated. I'll never forget being shown the video.
2. David Owen who was Labour's Health Secretary at the time said that there were millions of pounds set aside as he knew something big was going to happen around infected blood. The Conservatives then got in power and by the time Labour were back in power the money David Owen had set aside was gone and spent elsewhere. The various Governments have known what has been going on and have hidden things for so many years.
3. I would like to say that GRO-B at GRO-B in GRO-B was a lovely man. Instead of putting you straight under the knife he would always do

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everything he could to avoid surgery. He was a quietly spoken Doctor and I always felt he was there for me. He has retired now but I'd like him to know that he was greatly appreciated by myself and my family for his care and attention.

4. Life hasn't been easy and I have been altered by the transfusion. At times I didn't know what day of the week it was and my children didn't see me much as I didn't want them to see me when I was at my worst and injecting myself daily. Family life suffered and my wife and children lost precious time that we should have been enjoying together.

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Statement of Truth

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

Signed.

GRO-B

Dated...22.01.2019.....