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Witness Name: GRO-B

Statement No. WITN2584001

Dated: 11th February 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. I am married to GRO-B and have a

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14 year old daughter called [GRO-B] I am one of [GRO-B] children and I work as a [GRO-B]

2. I had two brothers who were infected by contaminated blood but in this statement I intend to speak about my brother [GRO-B: B1] infections of HIV and Hepatitis C.

2. How Infected

1. [B1] was a Haemophiliac. He suffered with severe Haemophilia A.
2. To my knowledge, the blood products he received were Factor VIII, Liberate and Replinate
3. He attended the [GRO-B] and his Consultant was [GRO-B] [GRO-B] was his Consultant for years.
4. To my knowledge the date from which my brother was given infected blood products was [GRO-B]
5. My brother was infected as a result of receiving contaminated blood products to treat his haemophilia. I believe this was Factor VIII. He was a haemophiliac from a young age and attended at the [GRO-B] [GRO-B] regularly if he had a bleed. The hospital was approximately 80 miles away and he would often have to stay overnight.
6. To my knowledge no information was provided to [B1] or my parents about the risks of receiving Factor VIII of the risk of infection from this treatment.
7. [B1] was confirmed to have been infected with HIV, Hepatitis C, and Hepatitis B.

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8. I am unsure as to how [B1] found out he had become infected. I was young at that time and my family did not tend to talk about his infection openly. [B1] was a person who kept personal things to himself.
9. I do not know what information was provided to him at this time or whether it was adequate enough for him to understand precisely what the effects of the infection would be, but I know that the family were never provided with any information in relation to infecting others or any safeguards in relation to infection.

3. Other Infections

1. [B1] suffered with HIV, Hepatitis C and Hepatitis B. He also had regular bouts of mouth thrush as a result of the HIV virus.

4. Consent

1. In relation to consent, I am not aware that my brother was treated or tested without his knowledge or without the knowledge of my mother and father. [B1] lived at home with my parents for most of his life so I would think they would have been aware of the treatment he was receiving at that time if adequate information was provided to them.

5. Impact

1. I believe that when [B1] received confirmation of his infection it affected him big time. His life just seemed to spiral downwards. He began to drink, and would go on drinking binges from time to time. On occasions he would go to parties and I know that he 'dabbled' in drugs at these parties. I think it was a release for him and a way of coping with the stress and sadness connected with such an illness.

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2. **B1** was very much a "closed book". He would tell you what he wanted you to know. He did not tell his closest friends of his diagnosis as he did not like a fuss and he was also aware of the stigma associated with his illness.
3. His physical appearance would fluctuate, sometimes he would look good, but then other times it would look extremely unwell, and look jaundiced. **B1** health was very up and down. I remember that in or around **GRO-B** he was extremely ill and we thought we were going to lose him. He was attending the **GRO-B** for treatment, although I am unsure as to what treatment he received. Then I believe the Haemophilia Department moved to the **GRO-B** **GRO-B** so he attended there.
4. I am not aware that he had any difficulty obtaining treatment or whether any treatment was withheld from him.
5. **B1** would suffer from regular bouts of mouth thrush as a result of the HIV virus. He would attend at the **GRO-B** dental department for any dental treatment he needed.
6. He would also attend the **GRO-B** for regular dental check ups and treatment instead of going to a local dentist even though it was about **GRO-B**.
7. I feel there has been a mental effect on me as a result of my brother's illness. I feel angry that he has been taken from us through no fault of his own. I feel sad because of the loss of my brother and it has left a big void in my life.
8. I fell frustrated because I have been unable to share my feelings with close friends because of the stigma. We did not discuss **B1** illness within the family and we were, as a family, not offered any counselling or support. So for me, there has been nowhere

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and no-one to vent my feelings to. I am emotionally strained as a result and constantly have a "feeling" in the pit of my stomach. I think I have symptoms of Post Traumatic Stress.

9. I often think about [B1] I have a lot of memories of us as children. As a youngster, [B1] would pay me pocket money to iron his shirts and polish his shoes. He liked to look smart and had a very dry sense of humour.

10. I feel sad at my parents losing not one child but two to this awful illness. [B1] died on the [GRO-B] He dropped down dead in his bathroom.

11. I try to have a positive outlook on life these days. I try to live life to the full and make the most of it. I feel I am a lucky person, compared to [B1] [GRO-B: B2] my other brother who died.

12. My family were not able to talk about [B1] illness as we lived in a small town and people were ignorant to the facts about [B1] illness. They would think that it was dirty and a taboo word. It was a terrible strain on the whole family.

6. Treatment/Care Support

1. I do not believe [B1] or the family were ever offered counselling or support for his illness. He needed looking after to cope, but I do not think help of this kind was offered to him.

7. Financial Assistance

1. In relation to financial assistance I have not got any information in this respect as [B1] was a private man and would have kept this information to himself. However, I do know that even though he

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was living at my parents' home, they were never offered any financial assistance to care for B1

8. Other Issues

1. I do not have any further documentation to provide as evidence.
2. I would like to raise with the Inquiry as to why it took so long for the Government to acknowledge there was a problem and to set up an Inquiry to look into the facts. If they had done this sooner, then a lot more families could have been spared such a traumatic experience.
3. I find it sad that some of the people registered with the Inquiry will not live long enough to see the end result.

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Statement of Truth

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

Sig

GRO-B

Dated 11/2/19