

ANONYMOUS

Witness Name: **GRO-B**
Statement No: WITN2830001
Dated: 3rd March 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 18th March 2019. I adopt the paragraph numbering in the Rule 9 request for ease of reference.

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

1. Introduction

1. My name is Mrs **GRO-B**. My date of birth is **GRO-B** and my address is known to the Inquiry. I am a widow with two children aged **GRO-B**. My **GRO-B** year old son still resides at home with me. I am employed part-time at **GRO-B**.

2. My husband, **GRO-B: H** died on **GRO-B**. He died following a brain haemorrhage.

2. How affected

1. **H** had Haemophilia A, and was infected with Hepatitis C ('HCV') and HIV through infected Factor 8. He was aged **GRO-B** when he died.

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2. As a child, [H] attended a boarding school in [GRO-B] in [GRO-B] therefore he received treatment at a clinic in [GRO-B] and when at home, the Haemophilia Centre at the [GRO-B]
3. I began a relationship with [H] in [GRO-B] and we subsequently married in [GRO-B]. [H] never told me that he had been infected with HIV. It was only following his death that I discovered that he had been infected. Following his death, I discovered medication when sorting out his belongings. I subsequently learnt that the medication treated HIV. I spoke with [H] parents and they were also unaware that he had been infected. My father in law contacted [GRO-B] and they confirmed that he had been infected with Hepatitis C and HIV.
4. They said that he had been told of the infection in [GRO-B]. I therefore had to be tested for the infection, but luckily I was not infected. It was very stressful whilst waiting for the results and I was very anxious. I found it difficult to comprehend how [H] had not told me of the infection, especially given the worry I felt when waiting for my test results.
5. I am unaware of whether [H] received information about the risk of infection at the time he received the blood products. I am also unaware as to the circumstances of how [H] was informed that he was infected.

3. Other infections

1. [H] was infected with HIV and Hepatitis C.

4. Consent

1. I am unaware of whether [H] was treated or tested with his knowledge, consent or with adequate information.

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5. Impact

1. On the day that [H] died, [H] myself and our two children (who were aged [GRO-B]) were on holiday in [GRO-B]. We were due to return home from holiday on [GRO-B].
2. On that morning I awoke to discover [H] collapsed on the bathroom floor. He died and I was advised that he died of a brain haemorrhage and he had abnormal lymph nodes. The children and I had to remain in [GRO-B] for a further 4 days, and the following day [H] parents came out to join me.
3. [H] suffered with severe nose bleeds for approximately 2 to 3 years prior to his death. During the year before his death, [H] began to look very ill. He lost a drastic amount of weight and looked gaunt. He contracted chicken pox and shingles and he attributed his weight loss to these illnesses. I can also remember that whilst we were on holiday, he was also passing blood in his urine.
4. I am uncertain of what the treatment that [H] received for the infections. I do not know if he faced any difficulties or obstacles accessing the treatment or whether there were other treatments he could have received.
5. [H] death had a devastating impact upon me and the children. The circumstances of his death, and the fact that it was so sudden and unexpected, meant that it was such a shock for the children and myself.
6. I felt that I had to put a brave face on for the children and therefore I did a lot of crying when the children were in bed.
7. [H] death caused financial loss because he had been in full-time employment and therefore I lost his income. I was not prepared for this loss and I struggled to pay the mortgage. [H] parents provided financial assistance, by way of a loan and I have subsequently repaid that loan.

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8. I also found it a struggle bringing the children up alone as a single carer because I worked early morning shifts, starting at 6.00 am. This meant that on certain days of the week I had to send the children to the homes of family for them to sleep and this caused me to feel guilty.
9. I have found that since [H] death I get stressed very easily and I now suffer with high blood pressure for which I receive medication. I have never engaged in counselling, I have just bottled up my feelings and kept everything in. I have also not been able to form another relationship.
10. It has been awful to go through life events without [H], such as our daughter's wedding, the birth of our grandchildren and our children's graduation.
11. I did not inform the children of the infections until they were 18 years old. My daughter has been very emotional about what has happened, and my son is very angry.

6. Treatment/Care Support

1. I am unaware of whether [H] faced any difficulties or obstacles in obtaining treatment, care and support. I tried to get my son referred to a psychologist, because he was very angry. He was placed on a waiting list but he was never seen by a child psychologist. My daughter was offered counselling via the school but no other support.

7. Financial Assistance

1. I received monthly payments from MacFarlane Trust. This was arranged by [H] social worker after I attended the [GRO-B] and ended in [GRO-B]. In March 2017 I received a one off lump sum of £10,000 which was paid by the Skipton fund after providing a death certificate that [H] confirming that [H] had been infected by contaminated blood.

2. In November 2017, I received a lump sum of £41,625 from Welsh infected blood scheme ('WIBBS') this was a payment that would have been the equivalent of 3 years of the following monthly payments. This payment was a one off payment to widows. After this payment I haven't received financial payment by WIBBS.

8. **Other Issues**

1. At the time of preparing this statement, I had not considered my husband's medical chronology. Following sight of the chronology I may wish to comment further.
2. I am single and only work part time, because I look after my granddaughter 4 days a week. I therefore only receive a low income and have no pension provision. I worry how I am going to manage with the little wage I have left after paying my bills and when I retire. The little amount of savings I have I use to supplement my income each month. This will not last forever, and I have no provision for when I retire.

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Statement of Truth

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

Signed.. GRO-B

Dated.. 3-3-19