

ANONYMOUS

Witness Name: **GRO-B**
Statement No.: WITN2960001
Exhibits: 0
Dated: 12 September 2019

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF **GRO-B**

Section 1: Introduction

1. My name is **GRO-B** My date of birth is **GRO-B** My address is known to the Inquiry.
2. I am married and have two adult daughters.
3. My mother is **GRO-B: M** who was infected with Hepatitis C. She and my siblings have provided statements to the inquiry. For information about how my mum became infected please refer to her statement W1826 – statement of **M**

Section 2: How Infected

4. My mother, **GRO-B** was infected with Hepatitis C as a result of a blood transfusion following the birth of my sister in 1981. My brother and sister were tested when my mum was diagnosed - neither was carrying the virus.

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5. I am not aware that my mother suffered from any form of haemophilia or bleeding subsequent to the transfusion.
6. In terms of whether information was provided to my mum in advance of her receiving the blood transfusion, as above, please refer to her witness statement W1826.
7. Mum has set out in a lot of detail how she came to find out that she had become infected with hepatitis C. For this detail, please refer to witness statement W1826. My mother was infected with Hepatitis C (HCV), which was discovered many years later during a routine blood donation clinic that she attended.
8. The infection with HCV was detected by blood tests during a blood donation session in London. We had moved as my father's employment moved to London. It was at that time, I think 1992, when mum was declined as a blood donor. I wasn't present at the session but my mother was sent home. She wasn't aware, prior to that, of there being any potential for her to be carrying such an infection.
9. As tests were carried out relating to the infection, an analysis of the potential ways in which she could have picked up the infection were looked at and the transfusion following my sister's birth represented the only significant event. My mother has never used needles nor at the time had travelled to countries potentially regarded as higher risk than the UK. My younger brother and sister were tested for the virus and proved negative, indicating that my mother did not pick up the virus before the birth of my sister.

Section 3: Other infections

10. I believe that my mum was infected with hepatitis C only.

Section 4: Consent

11. In terms of the consent process, again, please refer to my mum's statement W1826, as above for further information.

Section 5: Impact

12. Please refer to my mum's statement W1826, as referenced above. I provide information below about the impact that I believe the infection has had on my mum's life and on my life.
13. I remember times when my mother was ill during different treatments. Each time she contemplated starting a new one it was with a lot of anxiety because of the impact – not on the same scale perhaps as a cancer patient but I'm not sure it was that far off. During those treatments it took a lot out of her and everyone around her, both in terms of support, in its impact on her getting out and about, in taking part in family events and – for us - in seeing someone go through that.
14. During the periods of her treatments, family life was heavily impacted by the severe debilitating effect that some of the treatments had on my mother, on her mobility and at those times it would dictate what we could do together as a family. The likelihood for success of any of the treatments that she undertook was understood to be low and each negative result re-enforced this and this hung over us as a family. At the same time, we regarded the start of any of the treatments with some dread because of the impact that they had on the whole family.
15. While we had support from family members and from my father's employer, my mother's employer was unsupportive, negative and contributed to significant levels of stress in the house. The employer responded badly to the stigma of the illness and to the impact the infection and its treatment had on my mother's

ability to work, which varied according to the different stages of various treatments that she tried. The injustice of this stung, particularly given the nature of the employer, being associated with the church and there was a lot of resentment towards the school for some time.

16. My parents and younger sister eventually moved to Herefordshire while I was at university in London. This move to Herefordshire came about from the way that **GRO-B** handled my mother's illness, making her redundant while she was on her first drug treatment. The intent when they moved was to run a **GRO-B** in which my parents had more flexibility, based on a previous business that they had run together in London.
17. Initially the family moved to **GRO-B** and my sister moved schools. My parents looked for a new house capable of supporting the new business. My brother and I had both started studying at university and were away during term time but had no fixed base to return to during holidays.
18. The move of the family home and schools put stress on my parents and my younger sister **GRO-B**. For a significant period we had no family home. My father was also still working in London at the time and we had to rent accommodation in London for him during the week and he would travel to **GRO-B** most weekends unless my mother and sister joined him in London.
19. Eventually my parents bought a new home in **GRO-B** with the intent to start a **GRO-B** there. This was a long way from mine and my partner, **GRO-B** base as a new family in London.
20. The large house took a lot of effort initially to transform and to maintain and the regular travelling for my own family, with our own new-born daughter was tiring. Trying to get the most out of the weekends with mum and dad was hard and it was also difficult for my parents to support us at this new stage of life, now being so far from London.

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21. I think it's fair to say that my mum being infected with HCV shaped a lot of **GRO-B** life up until my father died and many big decisions were heavily influenced by it.
22. A smaller point is the earlier feeling of injustice that the government at first denied accountability and then set some arbitrary cut-off on the fairly meaningless compensation.

Section 6: Treatment/Care/Support

23. The experimental treatments were very debilitating, painful and created periods of time when my mother could not work. Getting onto the different programs was itself difficult.
24. No counselling has ever been made available to me even though I would have clearly benefitted from it at the time.

Statement of Truth

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

SIGNED

GRO-B

DATED

12/9/19