

ANONYMOUS

Witness Name: **GRO-B**

Statement No: WITN2995001

Exhibits: WITN2995002

Dated: 23rd September, 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 25th March 2019.

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

Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is **GRO-B** and my date of birth is **GRO-B** 1971. My address is known to the Inquiry. I intend to speak about myself and my older brother **GRO-B: B** date of birth **GRO-B** 1967. In particular I will discuss how we both received Factor VIII blood products and how **B** contracted hepatitis C as a result. I will discuss how his illness affected him, the treatment he received and how the whole experience has impacted on his life and on mine.
2. I can confirm that I have appointed Thompsons Solicitors to represent me for this matter.

Section 2. How Infected

3. I am the youngest of three brothers. **GRO-B** is the eldest followed by **B** and then me. **B** and I have mild haemophilia.

ANONYMOUS

4. When I was around seven years old I had my tonsils out at **GRO-B**, **GRO-B**. I remember after I was discharged, when I got home I had a haemorrhage. The house looked like a murder scene, there was blood everywhere.
5. In 1979/1980 I had seven teeth extracted by my school dentist. I remember after the extractions I was bleeding heavily and the bleeding wouldn't stop. I had to go back to the dentist to have my gums stitched up. The dentist asked my mother if I had ever suffered any excessive bleeding in the past. My mother said yes and told the dentist about the incident when my tonsils were removed.
6. The dentist referred me to the Haematology Department at **GRO-B** where I had blood taken for testing. It was later confirmed that I had mild haemophilia A. My parents and my two brothers were also tested and it was discovered that **B** also had mild haemophilia A. This was quite a shock to the family as we knew very little about haemophilia, and there was no family history of the condition.
7. I remember when my brother and I were given the diagnosis we were both given Factor VIII that day. Neither my brother nor I were having a bleed, nevertheless we were given Factor VIII regardless. My mother was with us and she was never told that there was a risk we could be exposed to contaminated blood. Dr **GRO-D** was responsible for our care. There was no concern about Factor VIII. My mother trusted the doctor and the medical team.
8. As a result of being given contaminated blood products, my brother **B** contracted hepatitis C.
9. When Dr **GRO-D** retired, both **B** and I were transferred over to Dr Taylor at **GRO-B** Haematology Department. I am not certain of the year that Doctor **GRO-D** retired but I think I would have been around ten years old in 1981.
10. Growing up, **B** and I only ever received Factor VIII if we had tooth

ANONYMOUS

extractions or operations. I remember I was given Factor VIII in 1981 for a tooth extraction by my school dentist. **GRO-B**

GRO-B **B** may have received more Factor VIII as he was terribly accident prone. Our mother was very protective of **B** and I. She tried to wrap us in cotton wool and was always reminding us to be careful, so as not to incur a bleed.

11. **B** contacted me in the early 2000s suggesting that I go to **GRO-B** **GRO-B** to be tested. He did not say that he had the infection, he just told me that he was being tested for it and I should get tested too, which I did and thankfully I was negative.

12. **B** was living and working in Glasgow at the time. He did not tell either my mother or I that he had hepatitis C then. I now understand from **B**, that while he lived in Glasgow he was told he had hepatitis C in 1999. He told my mother and I of his infection in 2015.

13. I cannot comment on how **B** found out that he had been infected or who told him. The risks of using the products must have been known back in 1980/81 though, people were being infected with HIV and hepatitis, so I don't understand how it was, that **B** infection was not picked up earlier than 1999.

Section 3. Other infections

14. I remember in 1984, a letter came through the post saying that I had to go to **GRO-B** to be tested for HIV. This was an extremely worrying time as I knew it would be a death sentence if I had it. Thankfully my test came back negative.

15. I was informed in 2004, that I was at risk of having Variant CJD. This has been confirmed in a letter sent to me dated 17 December, 2018 from Dr Craig. I produce a copy of this letter in evidence and refer to it as **WITN2995002**. I understand my brother **B** is also at risk of having Variant CJD.

ANONYMOUS

16. When I received this letter in 2004, I was devastated. I know that once the symptoms start, it is a death sentence. I have sat my stepchildren down and had a very hard conversation with them about it, which was extremely hard.

Section 4. Consent

17. I genuinely believe that my brother and I were tested without our knowledge or consent and for the purpose of research. We both had mild haemophilia and only required Factor VIII if we had operations or tooth extractions nevertheless if we ever had to go to hospital for anything we were always sent to the Haematology Department and had our bloods taken. I remember on one occasion as a child, I had to go to hospital for an ear infection. I was sent to the Haematology Department to have my bloods taken. I have no evidence of this but I believe we were used as guinea pigs.

Section 5. Impact

18. I did not get infected with HIV, HCV or HBV therefore I did not have any mental or physical effects. Nevertheless the mental effects of believing I would be diagnosed at any time with hepatitis C and HIV by being given infected blood has had a drastic impact on my life.

19. In 2009 I was diagnosed with kidney cancer. I understand there to be a link with kidney cancer and hepatitis C. As if kidney cancer wasn't bad enough I thought I had hepatitis C as well. After being tested again, fortunately I was negative.

20. **B** did suffer physically with hepatitis C. As a teenager he always appeared to be tired. **GRO-B** and I would always do the household manual tasks and **B** was always too tired to help. I remember at the time I thought **B** was just being lazy.

21. **B** has suffered with terrible depression over the years. I know he is very

ANONYMOUS

angry that he contracted hepatitis C. It has deterred him from having any career aspirations. He is not able to work now and he is on benefits.

22. There was a terrible stigma with HIV and hepatitis C. I remember in 1984 when I had the HIV test, I was only thirteen. I made the terrible mistake of telling a friend at school about my haemophilia, and that I had been tested for AIDS. This then spread around the school. I was ostracised and bullied very badly along with [B]. It was a terrible time for me and the bullying continued throughout my school life. The bullying was relentless and horrific. It has affected me all through my adult life, leaving me with no confidence.

23. There was a lot of media attention around AIDS and homosexuality when we were growing up. Both [B] and I had homosexual slurs thrown at us in school. I have also struggled to form relationships as a consequence. I always thought I had been infected with some disease that I could pass on to others. For this reason, I didn't lose my virginity till I was twenty one years old.

24. Mum has always been a worrier. When [B] and I were diagnosed with haemophilia, as I said earlier, she tried to wrap us up in cotton wool. She was constantly worried that we would have a bleed. When [B] told us he had hepatitis C it was very difficult for him. [B] had a back operation in 2001 and shortly afterwards he moved back to [GRO-B], to live with my mother, where he still lives now.

Section 6. Treatment care support.

25. I have not received any counselling or psychological support in relation to being at risk of having Variant CJD. It is something that I have to live with every day.

26. I do not know if [B] has been offered any counselling or psychological support. I believe he should have had some support, as he is very depressed and angry about being infected.

Section 7. Financial assistance

ANONYMOUS

27. I am aware that many haemophiliacs who were given infected blood have obtained some financial assistance from the Scottish Government. I was not infected with hepatitis C or HIV and therefore I do not qualify for financial assistance.

28. I cannot comment on the process of applying for financial assistance.

29. I believe [B] has received some financial assistance from the Scottish Government although I cannot comment on what he has received. [B] is a very private person.

Section 8. Other issues.

30. I wish to be anonymous for this statement.

ANONYMOUS

Statement of Truth

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

Signed: **GRO-B** _____

Dated Apr 9, 2020