

ANONYMOUS

Witness Name: GRO-B

Statement No: WITN3633001

Exhibits: 0

Dated: October 2019

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF GRO-B

I, GRO-B will say as follows:-

Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is GRO-B. My date of birth is the GRO-B GRO-B and I live at GRO-B. I am currently living with my partner and my daughter. My son lives with his father in GRO-B. I am a full time GRO-B.
2. I make this statement in relation to my late father GRO-B who was born on the GRO-B and passed away on the GRO-B GRO-B at the age of GRO-B as a result of receiving contaminated blood products.
3. My mother GRO-B (GRO-B) and my sister GRO-B GRO-B (GRO-B) have also provided statements to the Inquiry.
4. This witness statement has been prepared without the benefit of access to my late father's full medical records.

Section 2. How Affected

5. I would like to rely on my mother's statement in regards to how my father was infected, the circumstances in which he was informed about his infections,

ANONYMOUS

and the information he was provided on diagnosis. I was too young at the time to recall such information but a summary is below.

6. I am aware that my father had severe Haemophilia A. I was told that he was diagnosed at a very young age as there was Haemophilia within the family.
7. I am aware that when my father turned GRO-B years old he was given Factor VIII (FVIII) blood products. He then started to administer FVIII at home after being taught how to inject himself.
8. My father was treated at the Haemophilia Centre at the GRO-B GRO-B and his treating doctor was GRO-B.
9. As a result of receiving FVIII contaminated blood products my father was infected with Hepatitis C (Hep C) and Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV).
10. My parents only found out that my father was possibly at risk when a Panorama documentary was televised in 1985. I didn't find out about the infection until much later in my life. My parents shielded us from it.

Section 3. Other Infections

11. I do not know if my father was infected with any other infections other than HIV and Hep C.

Section 4. Consent

12. I wish to rely on part of my mother's statement in relation to this section.
13. After speaking to my mother, she believes that my father was tested without his knowledge. They took blood tests all the time but he was not told why or what they were doing with it. My father assumed it was to test his platelet levels but I believe that the doctors must have known what they were looking for.
14. Every time my father attended the hospital to get home treatment or had a consultation, blood was always taken. They used to threaten him all the time;

they told him they would take away his home treatment if he did not do what they asked.

Section 5. Impact of the Infection

15. My father was an energetic, strong, fiery, outgoing, and very protective of his 3 daughters. He supported his family and wanted to create a better life for us all. He dedicated himself so he was able to support us. He studied hard for his **GRO-B** which he achieved and all of a sudden he was a shadow of his former self. He was thin, weak, and required a lot of support.

16. I had never seen my father cry before his diagnosis and then I started to see him cry a few times. That was hard for me. I wondered why the strongest man in the family was crying. My father went from being my strong protector to being very poorly, weak and a fragile man.

17. My father had a liver transplant in **GRO-B** When he came home we were hoping his health would go back to normal, but it didn't. He was swollen, had jaundice and lost a lot of weight. The ambulance would pick him up frequently because of his symptoms. His kidneys also started to fail and I believe this was as a result of my father's infections.

18. The night before he died I overheard my father crying to my mother. He was saying he did not want to leave us. **GRO-B**
GRO-B
GRO-B

19. My father passed away in hospital on the **GRO-B** as a result of a kidney failure.

20. I believe that my father received AZT treatment for the HIV.

21. I found out my father had Hep C when I was **GRO-B** years old. I did not know he had HIV until around 9 months ago. When I was growing up my parents sheltered all 3 of us from my father's infections. We did not even know he had Haemophilia. My mother and father were so good at making sure we

ANONYMOUS

didn't know so that we would not worry. They must have gone through a horrendous time.

22. I'm glad that my parents kept my father's HIV status from me because when my mother told me he was not very well I thought it did not seem too bad. If my mother told me he also had HIV I would not have been able to cope. I knew at the time what HIV was and that it was something you should be frightened of because it was a death sentence.

23. My father was in hospital in London a lot and my mother was always with him. Therefore, my Nanna and Grandad would look after us. It was a bit of a heavy time for us all. My sisters went down to the hospital once or twice to see him but I could not bring myself to go. When my father moved to **GRO-B** Hospital I went to see him a couple of times. It sounds selfish but it was too hard for me. I didn't want to see young female nurses picking my father up from hospital beds.

24. I felt robbed when my father died. They took something away from me and they had no sympathy or consideration.

25. At the time there was a lot of stigma surrounding HIV, which is one of the reasons why my mother and father kept the HIV status from us. In the media there were people who were being targeted and facing abuse because of the infected status. They were scared about what would happen to us if his infected status became public knowledge. They only had each other to talk to. My father had to travel to **GRO-B** Hospital for his treatment because he was known in **GRO-B** as that was where he **GRO-B** **GRO-B**
GRO-B
GRO-B My mother is still very private about the matter.

26. My father's infected status affected all of his children differently. I think my younger sister was aged **GRO-B** when he passed away. When our mother and father were in London my younger sister was attacked and we had to go to

ANONYMOUS

court. My mother did not tell my father this because it would have crushed him that he was not there to protect us.

27. My middle sister became a different person after my father died. She went wild and did not look after herself. She never talked about our father, and when we did talk about him she would leave the room. We had a gardener who bumped into my sister a year after our father passed away and he asked her how our father was and she told the gardener he was fine because she could not bear to speak about what happened.
28. When my father was having his transplant I think I struggled the most because I found it difficult to visit him at the hospital. I hated hospitals. After my father passed away my mother stopped me from completely falling apart. I was in GRO-B when he passed and I was dreading going into the house. When I went to my mother's house she gave me a lot of support. She created a feeling that everything was going to be okay.
29. Approximately a year or two after the death of my father I believe it hit my mother like a tone of bricks. She keeps everything close to her chest but I know she couldn't sleep and she was on antidepressant medication. She was bottling it all in for so long just so she could protect us.
30. My mother has never met anyone else. She would not entertain being with someone else. My parents were together from the age of GRO-B they married at the age of GRO-B and had me at the age of GRO-B. He was her soul mate and if she was not with him she would not be with anyone.
31. I have a little boy who has haemophilia and I find this hard. I don't trust the health care professionals because I blame them for what had happen to my father. They told me that the medication that is used to treat my son now is safe but they have not been through what I have been through, so I find it difficult to trust them. They didn't lose someone because of contaminated blood products.

ANONYMOUS

32. To have a son who suffers from haemophilia is hard but to not have my father to support him is horrible. It would have been amazing to have the support of my father. My son would have had an adult's insight and would have known what it is like to have haemophilia. Just having a **GRO-B** in the family would have been amazing. There are two grandsons who have haemophilia and they have been robbed of the connection they would have had with their grandad. The rest of us don't know what its like to have a bleed.
33. My father's work was affected as a result of the infections. My father worked really hard to become a **GRO-B** and he made a lot of sacrifices. He came from a working class background. He went to **GRO-B** for **GRO-B** years to study **GRO-B** to secure a better life for us all. He was not with us when he did his degree so he had to sacrifice spending time with us. He was **GRO-B** years old when he graduated. He only **GRO-B** for a short time so I feel like his sacrifice was for nothing.
34. There were huge social implications to my father's work because he was scared of losing his job. I don't believe his bosses treated him fairly. The big bosses all came round to the house to see him one evening. My mother took my sisters and me out of the room and my father sat there all swollen and with jaundice having to explain himself to his bosses.
35. When my father was in London on **GRO-B** my mother had to find accommodation and travel to the hospitals which became expensive. When he was not in hospital my mother was at home looking after him. When my father became unwell my mother was doing a midwifery course but she had to give that up to care for my father. My mother was bringing up 3 girls while trying to look after my father so she did not have time to study as a result. After my father passed away she went back to employment and started working in a **GRO-B**
36. My mother could not keep the family home because she struggled financially. My father's mobility car was taken away from her and she could not afford another car.

37. The house we lived in was the family home. It was the home my father worked incredibly hard for. Initially we all lived in a student flat for a short period of time and after that we moved in a 3 bedroom house and then a 4 bedroom bungalow. My parents worked so hard to get the family home. It was amazing but suddenly it was all taken away. Everything was unravelling.

38. At GRO-B years old my whole world fell apart. I did not have a father figure in my life. When my father was really poorly the 3 of us girls went a bit off the rails and these were important years in our education. I was doing exams, and my youngest sister was starting high school and all of a sudden our parents were miles and miles away and we did not fully understand what was going on.

39. My father passed away when I was in GRO-B. My mother had to go down and speak to my GRO-B. Some were less sympathetic than others. While I was struggling to come to terms with my father's death one tutor was not very nice about it. I had a few weeks off but then I was back at GRO-B trying to get back on top of things.

40. My father always wanted us to go to university; it was embedded into us to get a degree and a good job. He was a huge influence to us all. I did go to university after he passed away but I struggled financially. I am still paying off my student loan. I could not rely on my parents to help me financially like I would have been able to. I still managed to get my degree but I found it really tough. Sometimes I wonder if it was worth it. It also would have been good to have had my father when I was struggling with studying as he had been through university himself.

Section 6. Treatment/care/support

41. As stated above, as a result of watching the Panorama documentary my father realised that he was at risk of infection. He collected all of his FVIII, put it in a bag and took it to the GRO-B. He told them he would not be using it anymore and if he had a bleed he would come into the hospital. He also said from this point onwards he would only accept Cryoprecipitate treatment. GRO-B GRO-B labelled my father as mentally unstable after this incident. They

ANONYMOUS

branded him a lunatic. I don't think the medical staff were very supportive or sympathetic.

42. I don't believe my father was offered counselling.

43. I was never offered counselling or psychological support as a result of what happened to my father. I think it would have helped had it been offered to me.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

44. I would like to refer to my mother's statement in relation to the financial assistance that my father received.

45. I have not received any financial assistance from any of the trust of funds that were set up.

Section 8. Other Issues

46. There are no other issues.

Anonymity, disclosure and redaction

47. I confirm that I do wish to apply for anonymity and that I understand this statement will be published and disclosed as part of the Inquiry.

48. I would be willing to give oral evidence to the Inquiry.

ANONYMOUS

Statement of Truth

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

Signed

GRO-B

GRO-B

Dated 28.10.19