

ANONYMOUS

Witness Name: GRO-B  
Statement No: GRO-B  
Exhibits: 0  
Dated: GRO-B

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  
GRO-B GRO-B I am a mother to GRO-B  
GRO-B aged GRO-B I am GRO-B to be GRO-B I work part time  
as GRO-B and I also study part time.
2. I make this statement in relation to my late father GRO-B: F, who  
was born on GRO-B and passed away on GRO-B aged  
GRO-B. As a result of receiving contaminated blood products my father was  
infected with HIV and Hepatitis C Virus (HCV).
3. I am aware that my mother, GRO-B and my older sister, GRO-B  
GRO-B are also providing their own statements to the Inquiry at witness  
numbers GRO-B and WITNxxxx001 respectively. I also have a  
younger sister named GRO-B

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4. This witness statement has been prepared without the benefit of access to my late father's medical records.

## **Section 2. How infected**

5. My father suffered from severe Haemophilia A.
6. In my earlier years we lived in [GRO-B] and my father was cared for at the [GRO-B]. I was very young at the time and remember very little from those years.
7. My father moved to [GRO-B] around [GRO-B] and we moved over to join him in [GRO-B] when I was [GRO-B] years old. In [GRO-B] he was cared for at the [GRO-B]. [GRO-B]
8. I recall going to [GRO-B] to get my blood tested. I think this was to see if I was a haemophilia carrier.
9. I would like to refer to my mother's statement in relation to how my father was infected, the circumstances in which he was informed about his infections, and the information he was provided on diagnosis. I was young at the time and was not aware of all this information.

## **Section 3. Other Infections**

10. The only infections I am aware that my father had were HIV and HCV.

## **Section 4. Consent**

11. I would like to refer to my mother's statement in relation to consent to treatment and testing.
12. My mother believes that my father was tested without his knowledge or consent.

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13. My mother has told me that every time my father went to get home treatment or had a consultation for his haemophilia they would take his blood. 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.

14. I do not know if my father was tested for research purposes.

### **Section 5. Impact of the Infection**

15. I was  old when I was told that my father had problems with his liver. I knew that he was on a waiting list for a transplant. I do not know if I was told specifically that he had HCV. I did not really know what HCV was at the time

16. I learnt recently from my mum that my father also had HIV. It was a shock to learn this. My mum explained to us that my dad did not want us to know about his HIV infection and this was why they had not told us.

17. My parents had three daughters. I am the middle daughter. I have an older sister who is  older than me and a younger sister who is  younger than me.

18. At the time we moved to , my father was studying at . He went on to become a . He loved his job and was well respected. He worked hard and he provided for his family.

19. I first became aware that my father was not well around , when I was . His eyes were constantly yellow and he lost his appetite. He was tired all the time. It was like he had become an old man; yet, on the outside he still had the body of a young man. It was very difficult to see him deteriorate like that.

20. My father tried his best not to allow his poor health to slow him down. If he was unwell, he would be admitted into hospital and if he was well, he would be working as he was the main breadwinner. Until the very end, my father

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continued working. His work gave him purpose and encouraged him to carry on. I believe that having to manage the household finances and his own health would have put a lot of physical and mental stress on him.

21. Due to the vast number of hospital visits, my father hardly had any time to socialise and because his general health was so poor, he was not physically able to go out of the house much. He was not able to come out on walks with us, and we never went on holidays abroad. In my teenage years I only recall going on one holiday and during that my father was ill. By the end of the day my father's legs became completely swollen as we did a lot of walking.

22. My father became unable to drive so my mother took over on that front.

23. Because my father spent a lot of time unwell and in hospital, he was not able to be there for us. When he was well he had to work as he had bills to pay.

24. I understand from my mum that as a result of being HCV positive, my father's liver was damaged. My father had to receive a liver transplant as his liver was completely damaged. I was in London with my mother when my father had his liver transplant in [GRO-B]. For more details surrounding the liver transplant, I would like to refer to my mother's statement.

25. After the liver transplant my father's health declined rapidly. On several occasions I recall that my father had to be airlifted from [GRO-B] [GRO-B]. My mother and I would follow behind the helicopter in our car. Whenever he got airlifted to hospital, my father expected to die. He passed away about [GRO-B] after getting the liver transplant, on [GRO-B]. I was [GRO-B] years old.

26. I remember that my mother came home from hospital in the morning after staying the night and informed us that our father had passed away. I went straight to the hospital and I sat in the room with my father. He seemed as though he was sleeping and although he had been so yellow whilst alive, his complexion had gone back to normal. I was alone in that room with my

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father's body for about fifteen minutes. My mother had been called out to speak to the doctor, although I do not know why.

27. I would like to refer to my mother's statement in regards to the treatment(s) which my father was given for HIV and HCV, any difficulties he faced in accessing such treatment and the symptoms he experienced whilst on treatment.
28. My father didn't want anyone to know about his HIV infection so my parents kept it to themselves and did not even tell us, his own children. With regards to HCV, when my dad received his liver transplant my sisters and I were told not to say anything to anyone about what he had. We were told to say it was cancer so that people would stop asking questions. After his death we told people he had died of cancer.
29. Adjusting to life without my father was very difficult for all of us.
30. My way of coping was to avoid conversation about my father's illness and death. If anyone spoke about my father I would leave the room. My younger sister had a similar approach – we just did not speak about it. My older sister had moved out and I did not see her much at the time. The topic became the 'elephant in the room'. I am not an emotional person, but, to this day, if I have to discuss my father I get very upset. Finding out that he had HIV has made things even more hurtful for me. Part of me died when my father died and that will never come back.
31. When my father was alive, my parents always did everything together. They would go shopping together and go out for tea together. If my mother was in the kitchen making coffee, my father would go and join her.
32. My mother took my father's death very hard. Shortly after my father's death, I found a letter written by my mother in which she described how she could not live without her husband and declared that she wanted to die and be with him again - she wanted to kill herself! I confronted her about this. We kept this conversation between us, I did not tell my sisters about it.

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33. My father was the main source of income for our family and he had a good wage, so my mother never needed to work. After his death, we no longer benefitted from his income and things were difficult financially.
34. Our mum had to go to work in order to provide for the family. She was working all the time. We lost out on our family life. Our father was gone and our mother had to work. My younger sister and I were home and we did our own thing.
35. I was GRO-B when my father passed away. I left school at GRO-B partly because my father was poorly, and I supported my mum. I attended hospital appointments with my parents and wanted to be with my father all the time. I had always been very close to my father – I was closer to him than I was to my mother. In my mind, I always believed that he would get better.
36. I had started studying at college not long before he died. I dropped out for a short period after this death but then went back, put my head down and finished my course in beauty therapy while also working on the side.
37. If my father had still been alive today, I believe things would have turned out differently for me. I probably would have been married by now and I would not have moved away from my home town. I would be living near my father.

### **Section 6. Treatment/care/support**

38. I do not know if any counselling or psychological support was offered to my father as a result of being infected.
39. I was never offered any counselling or psychological support. We had to put up with everything on our own and get on with life.

### **Section 7. Financial Assistance**

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

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41. I have not personally received any financial assistance.

**Section 8. Other Issues**

42. I just want the information to be out there. I want people to know what the persons responsible did to my father and other people who became their victims. I do not feel that any amount of compensation will ever be enough as you cannot put a price on a life. Is not compensation I seek, but justice! Somebody should be held accountable for the decisions they made.

**Anonymity**

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

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

**Statement of Truth**

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

Signed.....

Dated.....

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Signed..... GRO-B .....

Dated..... 6/12/2019 .....