

ANONYMOUS

Witness Name: GRO-B

Statement No: WITN0600003

Exhibits: none

Dated: 27/06/2022

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

SUPPLEMENTARY WRITTEN STATEMENT OF: GRO-B

I provide this statement as a supplementary to my initial statement of 14 November 2019 made in response to a request under Rule 9 of the Inquiry Rules 2006 dated 3 September 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 1966. My address is known to the Inquiry. I have two children. My daughter GRO-B is 25 years old and my son GRO-B is 27.
2. I was infected with HCV through the administration of a contaminated blood transfusion. In this statement I intend to provide an update to the Inquiry on my condition.
3. I also wish to remain anonymous as per my last statement.

Section 2. Update

4. Since my last interview in 2019, my health has deteriorated and my life has changed a lot.
5. One of my biggest concerns is that I have not received any hepatology check-ups or care since 2015, which is nearly seven years ago. After I finished my second round of successful HCV treatment in around May 2015, I received a follow up appointment in the November of that year for a blood test and that was it.
6. At the November 2015 hepatology appointment, I was told that I had chronic liver cirrhosis and it was stage two. I was also told that I would be seen by their department at least once a year for check-ups, but since then, I have had no communication from them.
7. I do not currently know the condition of my liver as I have not had hepatology appointments. I did have a routine liver function test done at my GP surgery three years ago and I was informed the results of my LFTs were concerning, but nothing was done about it. I haven't had a biopsy in years, and I have never received a fibro scan.
8. I try to block out how serious my liver could be, it could be cancerous. My best friend's wife died of liver cancer so it is quite close to home for me, but I try to keep a positive mind and block out the pain.
9. I am very concerned about this. I keep trying to get hold of my GP to ask about hepatology check-ups and ask for a referral, but they never have any appointments available. I really believe there should be a way of prioritising those that need urgent care.
10. I also wish to highlight that during my appointments for HCV treatment with Dr [GRO-D] in the Hepatology Department at University Hospital of Wales, he was always very dismissive and unfriendly. I felt that I was

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treated as if I was just a number to him and he would act as if he was doing God's work. Whilst I understood he was one of the top Hepatologists in Wales, he should not have spoken to patients like they were so small. His behaviour would make me hate going for my appointments; he made my experience stressful and I didn't want to see him.

11. The nurses were generally lovely to me and would make you feel the opposite. However, I felt that everyone seemed to assume that if you had HCV, then you are an alcoholic or drug taker.
12. During my HCV treatment, I was initially given a hotline to call which I had on speed dial during my treatment, and I would be able to call if I ever had any issues. I found this service very useful and it is a shame that it did not continue.
13. In relation to other health issues that I now suffer from and a possible side effect of HCV, I am due to have an endoscopy and colonoscopy on the 27 June, as a result of a constant cough that I have had for the past three or four years. I have found this side effect very difficult and I am worried about the upcoming endoscopy.
14. I also experience strong pains in my liver, it feels like a stitch but I experience this pain at any time and not just during exercise, and this really worries me.
15. I feel like my physical and mental health has deteriorated a lot over the past three years. I am very fatigued and have depleted energy levels. My memory has got progressively worse and my two children have often commented on how I can be quite forgetful.
16. As a result of my chronic arthritis, I constantly have achy joints and try not to move too much as it hurts. This has caused me insomnia and has increasingly got worse and worse as a result of the pain; meaning I

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only get to sleep for a few hours a night. I keep on taking more painkillers and supplements to help the pain but to no avail.

17. I used to run cross country but now I am unable to do any sort of exercise and even walking up a hill makes me feel like death. I become very out of breath and get a stitch as if I had run. The stitch is always so painful and feels like something is about to burst around my liver after the smallest bit of exercise. I am relatively young being in my fifties and so this concerns me.

18. My hips, left arm and knee are the worst and I have to wear a knee support. Whenever I do something somewhat active, I feel the effects for a few days after, as if I had over exerted myself.

19. I like to paint and keep up the maintenance of my house, and I still try to but it takes me a lot longer to do because of my conditions which I find frustrating and time-consuming.

20. Not only has the infection affected me physically and mentally but it has affected my personal relationships and social life. To this day, the infection has riddled my mother with guilt. This has affected our relationship and we are no longer in contact. I have a better relationship with my father who is more understanding. Although, I am often moody and have low moods as a result of it all. My social life has been nothing the past few years and I haven't been able to leave my house.

21. I had to retire earlier than planned because of my deteriorating health and give up my business, as I cannot run them anymore. I worked in the car industry; I loved my cars and I loved my job, it was never like work to me. I never wanted to give this up.

Section 3. Other Issues

22. I cannot believe how much the Inquiry has spent; I believe it is over £60 million. Where has all this money gone? It is about closure, but no one has received any sort of closure yet. It is all so energy sapping, including all the constant update letters and emails.

23. I have thoughts on the financial support. I am unsure why they decided to have a cut off period for the financial support. I believe that the compensation should go all the way back to when the infection occurred and taking into account when it was discovered. I have been given lumps sums and of course the monthly payments, but not from when I was told in 1997, and the period from being infected in 1983 should be well compensated too. What has been given is not enough.

24. Also, in relation to the 14-year period, from when I was infected to when I was told, would have been different if I had known. I would have made sure my lifestyle was alcohol free, diet different too. I don't drink and eat well to hopefully look after my liver and live to an age longer than expected.

25. I am glad that I was lucky to have only had HCV, where some people were infected with HIV, and some dually infected. It is all in all a horrendous situation to be put in when you have trusted the medical profession.

26. As mentioned previously, they also then went on to apparently lose my medical records, and also attempted to charge me to try to find them. It is criminal.

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Statement of Truth

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

Signed

GRO-B

Dated

21.6.2022