

ANONYMOUS

Witness Name: GRO-B

Statement No: WITN1549001

Exhibits: WITN1549002-5

Dated: November 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. I was born on GRO-B 1953 and I live at GRO-B.
GRO-B
2. My brother, GRO-B: B (born on GRO-B 1951), was co-infected with the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), the Hepatitis B Virus (HBV) and the Hepatitis C Virus (HCV) from contaminated Factor VIII (FVIII) concentrate. His health deteriorated, advancing to AIDS Related Complex (ARC) and he died on GRO-B 1990, aged 38.
3. This witness statement has been prepared without the benefit of access to my brother's full medical records.

Section 2. How Affected

4. [B] had severe Haemophilia A. He was treated at the Birmingham Queen Elizabeth Comprehensive Care Haemophilia and Thrombosis Centre in Edgbaston under the care of Dr I Franklin and Dr Hill.
5. Shortly after [B]'s death, my mum and I instructed J Keith Park & Co. (as recommended by the Haemophilia Society) to investigate a possible claim against the South Birmingham Health Authority (and/or others) arising from the prescription to [B] of the AZT drug. [B] had instructed Ault McGrath & Co. in or around 1989 to proceed with a claim arising from his HIV infection. Along with other haemophiliacs it was necessary for [B] to sign a waiver in order to obtain the Government settlement monies.
6. Both law firms identified the Armour Pharmaceutical Company in the USA as the source of the contaminated FVIII.
7. [B] was infected with HIV some time between 22nd November 1984 (the date of his last negative test result) and 16th January 1986 (the date of his first positive test result). During that period of time [B] was treated with Factorate manufactured by the Armour Pharmaceutical Company. I refer to Exhibit WITN1549002 being a copy of [B]'s UKHCDO annual treatment record. [B] knew that Armour was responsible for the infection.
8. I refer to Exhibit WITN1549003 being a copy of a Preliminary Medico-Legal Report prepared by a Dr T M Tilsey. J Keith Park & Co. had a scant number of [B]'s records. When they tried to retrieve the records they were told that the records had been destroyed even though it wasn't that long after [B] had died. [B] was not told of his HIV diagnosis until he was admitted to hospital in March 1986 (with a serious viral infection affecting his brain, vision and co-ordination).

- [B] did not tell me, my mother or any other member of the family of the fact of his HIV infection until 1988.
9. [B] was infected with HBV in 1976. I am uncertain as to whether [B] knew that he was infected with HCV. The Report identifies [B] as being 'Core antibody positive since 13.5.81. Probably Non A Non B Hepatitis diagnosed due to chronic liver disease February 1988'.
10. [B] not given any warnings about any risks associated with FVIII products. [B] was told that FVIII would be beneficial to him, allowing him to administer the treatment at home and to continue working without disruption. I refer to Exhibit WITN1549004 being an extract from a client questionnaire completed by [B] that includes confirmation that he spoke to a Ward Sister in charge of the Haemophilia Unit about the risk in 1982/83. He was informed "that the risk of infection was not great and I (he) was not to concern myself unduly" [B] asked for and was refused NHS FVIII (as opposed to USA FVIII) in or around 1984/85 on the basis that another haemophiliac would have to be taken off NHS treatment for him to have it.

Section 3. Other Infections

11. I refer to Exhibit WITN1549005 being a copy of [B]'s Death Certificate. It records that [B] was also infected with the Cytomegalovirus (CMV).

Section 4. Consent

12. I do not know if [B] was tested without his knowledge and consent. I do not think he was given adequate information about the process.

Section 5. Impact of the Infection

13. As a child [B] had it hard. Mum wouldn't let him out to play with the other kids because she was worried he might fall over and have a bleed. He did come out sometimes but never looked well as he used to be in lots of pain.
14. My mum and dad decided to let him go to mainstream school after he had been to the physically handicapped school. She once told me a story about the time at the handicapped school when the other kids (most of them in wheelchairs) used to get [B] to climb up on the roof if the ball went up there as he looked the most 'normal' amongst them. He had a lot of fighting spirit back then but it must have been a nightmare for the teachers and my parents as, in reality, he was one of the sickest.
15. [B] had some good years though and did really well in mainstream school. When he left school, he was 'a bit of a lad' with his cars (motor racing) and football. He even worked away in Germany at one point. He had a few girlfriends and was very popular. He still had many bleeds but on carried on regardless and, unlike me, never married.
16. When FVIII concentrate came out in the form of blood clotting injections it was amazing for him. He could inject himself and we, as a family, had total faith in the Haemophilia Centre at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. We hadn't heard about *infected* blood. It never came into our minds that the hospital would infect their patients with contaminated medication. HIV and AIDS were unknown back then.
17. [B] found out within a small timeframe that he had been infected with HIV through contaminated FVIII. He then didn't tell us for two years. He was reluctant to burden us. He felt very ashamed that he had the disease and was worried about passing it on. He tried to keep us at a distance which was hard on all of us. When we were told we sworn to secrecy. He was in torment and he used to say 'I wish I could get this shit out of me'. My initial thought was that the

hospital would help him but I later fully realised what had happened to him and it was unbelievable to me.

18 **B** developed the following health problems:-

- (a) severe weight loss;
- (b) loss of motivation/morale;
- (c) lethargy;
- (d) an infection in the mouth and gullet (a form of thrus);
- (e) viral infection of the brain;
- (f) difficulties walking;
- (g) blindness in one eye and poor vision in the other;
- (h) difficulties/painful eating and swallowing;
- (i) problems sitting up in bed;
- (j) diarrhoea and blood loss;
- (k) excess sweating;
- (l) hair loss;
- (m) infection/swelling of the right shoulder (requiring incision and drainage);
- (n) liver cirrhosis; and
- (o) body sores.

19 **B** suffered. His health declined dramatically in a relatively short period. He was in so much pain during the last three months of his life that he was prescribed a large dosage of diamorphine pain killers. My mother and I were under an awful lot of stress. The suffering **B** endured was terrible. I was four months pregnant with my son. Mum had a stroke the very day **B** died. **B** took part of my mum with him that day. Mum had another massive stroke and died six years later. The scandal took more than the lives of the infected. I named my son **GRO-B** in honour of my brother when he was born.

20 **B** was a self employed Graphic Designer with his own company. As his health declined he was unable to work. It was tough for him. Mum was financially

dependant upon [B] Dad died in 1969. Mum retired with a small pension and [B] paid the household bills.

Section 6. Treatment/care/support

21. [B] had AZT treatment from 1988 onwards. Referring once again to Exhibit WITN1549004, [B] was not counselled as to the implications of the HIV diagnosis. There was no formal counselling. The HBV infection was mild and [B] received no treatment. [B] received no treatment for HCV and developed liver cirrhosis as a result.

22. A counsellor/psychologist visited us but [B] was by then so desperately ill I would not have known what she would have spoken to him about. She spoke to me a few times but I cannot remember what she said.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

23. As referred to at paragraph 5 above, a payment was made on the condition of waiver to take the matter further. The solicitors at the time seemed to be against us for some reason as if things were being hushed up. Things have come a long way since then.

Section 8. Other Issues

24. This scandal has had a huge impact upon me. It will stay with me forever. A terrible injustice was done. They knew that the blood was infected and they gave it anyway. They murdered the people infected and everything has been brushed under the carpet.

Anonymity, disclosure and redaction

25. I am seeking anonymity and would like this statement redacted before being published and disclosed as part of the Inquiry. I do not want to give oral evidence to the Inquiry.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed.....

GRO-B

.....

Dated.....

3/12/19

.....