

ANONYMOUS

Witness Name: **GRO-B**

Statement No: WITN1074001

Exhibits: 0

Dated: February 2020

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** and I was born on the **GRO-B** I live at **GRO-B**
GRO-B I am divorced and do not work due to my disability.
2. I was infected with Hepatitis C (Hep C) as a result of being treated with contaminated Factor VIII (FVIII) blood products.
3. This witness statement has been prepared without the benefit of access to my full medical records.

Section 2. How infected

4. I suffer from mild Haemophilia A.
5. I believe I was infected with Hep C after receiving a batch of FVIII treatment in or about 1978 prior to a tooth extraction. I received this treatment at the **GRO-B** **GRO-B** This was my first ever treatment with FVIII and I was not treated with it again until 1989 when I had an operation after a **GRO-B**

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6. I was not given any advice or information beforehand about the risks involved when using FVIII.
7. In or about the mid 1990s my brother found out that he was infected with Hep C. He therefore advised me to get tested for it, which I did and tested positive. I was never told by the hospital or GP to have a test for it, I had to seek the test out for myself.
8. The way I found out I was infected was very strange. My local GP didn't want to test me as he said 'it was unlikely that anyone was infected with Hep C'. At the time I had a psychiatric nurse treating me for my depression. The nurse managed to arrange for a Hep C test.
9. The psychiatric nurse told me that I tested positive for Hep C, as my GP had decided he didn't want to tell me. The nurse never gave me any information about the infection at the time, and I had to do my own research using online forums. Had my brother not told me of his positive Hep C result and prompted me to have a test, I would never have found out that I was also infected.
10. Apart from the psychiatric nurse, who was always nice to me, everyone else was quite nasty and it was all handled poorly. I was not given any information about passing the infection on to others. I had to ring my ex-wife when I tested positive and told her that she should also get tested. Luckily, she tested negative for Hep C.
11. I was told a couple of years ago by the GRO-B that I have self-cleared the virus, but I still feel ill most of the time.

Section 3. Other Infections

12. I found out that I was at risk of vCJD from two doctors after I attended the hospital with deep nose bleed. They were having a chat whilst waiting for a sheet of some sort to protect the equipment before using any equipment on me. I over heard the doctor asking why there was a delay, and someone

responded saying 'they couldn't afford to infect the equipment with mad cow disease'.

13. I did not confront the doctors about the vCJD, and I have not received any form of communication that I am at risk of it.

Section 4. Consent

14. I do believe I was tested without my knowledge, everything that was happening felt like it was a secret. I was never told what they were testing me for. I even developed an antibody to fight the FVIII treatment and they didn't even tell me they were testing my blood for it. I only found this out because my brother told my sister he had developed antibodies (inhibitors), and then she told me.

15. In 1989 I had a HIV test, which I agreed to but I was not given a lot of information surrounding it.

16. I believe I was treated and tested without being given adequate information and I also believe that I was treated and tested for the purposes of research.

Section 5. Impact of the Infection

17. Since being infected with Hep C I have suffered from chronic health issues

including a

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18. The infection doesn't just affect the liver, it affects everything. I have suffered from depression ever since I found out I was a Haemophiliac and being infected with Hep C only made my depression worse.

19. I was never given any treatment for the Hep C, and I have never seen any specialists about it. I was told that I have cleared the virus about 3 or 4 years ago, but I don't believe it's gone.

20. I believe that being infected did have an impact on my medical care. As stated above, there was a delay in treatment for my nose bleed.

21. I never told my parents of my infected status because I didn't want to worry them. The only people that knew about the infection were my brother, my sister and a friend. I didn't tell anyone else about it. I tried my best to live a normal life.

22. When I told my friend about the infection, they told me that they couldn't come near me anymore because she wanted to be a GRO-B. It definitely fell down to the stigma that was attached Hep C.

23. I have not worked since 1989 due to the stroke. I believe there is a possibility that the stroke was linked to the Hep C.

24. My infected status definitely had an impact on my brother, when he was still alive. My sister definitely still worries about me.

Section 6. Treatment/care/support

25. I do not believe I faced difficulties obtaining care and support, other than when the GP refused to do a blood test for Hep C.

26. I was not offered any counselling or psychological support. I'm not sure it would have helped had it been offered to me.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

27. In or about the late 1990s, my psychiatric nurse told me about the Skipton Fund, which I therefore applied for. I received a Stage 1 payment in the sum of £20,000. I have since started to receive monthly payments in the sum of £1,500. I did receive a form to complete for the monthly payments, but I didn't complete it. However, I am still receiving the monthly payments. I also receive a winter fuel allowance.

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28. The application process for the Skipton Fund lump sum payment was quite straightforward. I just had to fill out a form and sign it and send it to the hospital. I did not struggle with the application.

29. I am not aware of any preconditions imposed by the Skipton Fund or the EIBSS.

Anonymity, disclosure and redaction

30. I wish to remain anonymous.

31. I do not wish to provide oral evidence to the inquiry.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed... GRO-B

Dated

4/2/2020