

# ANONYMOUS

Witness Name: GRO-B

Statement No: WITN2999001

Exhibits: WITN2999002 to WITN2999004

Dated: June 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 address is GRO-B  
GRO-B My date of birth is GRO-B I live  
with my wife and I am a GRO-B for a GRO-B
2. I have a GRO-B year old step daughter and a GRO-B year old son.
3. I was infected with the Hepatitis C Virus (HCV) as a result of receiving a  
blood transfusion following a car crash on GRO-B
4. This witness statement has been prepared without the benefit of access to  
my full medical records. If and in so far as I have been provided with  
limited records the relevant entries are referred to in the Exhibits attached  
to this statement.

### Section 2. How infected

5. When I was GRO-B GRO-B I had a road traffic accident in GRO-B  
GRO-B I was the passenger with GRO-B being the driver. We had  
decided to drive home after a few drinks at the pub which resulted in us

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hitting a tree and causing a horrendous accident. The crash happened in [GRO-B] where I was living at the time and it occurred right around the corner from the [GRO-B] Hospital [GRO-B]

6. I was unconscious after the crash and all I am able to recall is waking up two days later in a hospital bed at the [GRO-B]. I was in hospital for about 2 ½ weeks. My femur was broken in 3 places and I had to have a pin inserted from my hip down to my knee. I had a horrendous cut above my right eye and another one to my left shin where the headlight had crashed into it. I lost a lot of blood and believe this was the reason for my blood transfusion. As I was unconscious, I do not remember actually having the blood transfusion. I was not told during my hospital stay that I had had a blood transfusion.
7. I have attached to this statement, marked WITN2999002, a copy of a National HCV Lookback form completed by the hospital in 1995 which shows the details of the blood transfusion I received on 19 June 1986.
8. I was first told of my blood transfusion around [GRO-B] or [GRO-B]. My son was a baby at the time. I received a letter from the [GRO-B] Hospital in [GRO-B] out of the blue, stating that I may have been infected with HCV and inviting me to have a blood test. I went to the hospital and I had the blood test. Some time later, I received another letter confirming that I had been infected with HCV as a result of receiving a blood transfusion following the car crash in [GRO-B]. The letter also said that they were sorry for not having given me any treatment for the HCV infection.
9. I was working night shifts at the time when I received this letter and I had just dropped my kids off at school when I opened it. I was extremely shocked and horrified. I had no idea before the hospital contacted me that I may have HCV and no idea that I had even had a blood transfusion.
10. I was given no information to help me to understand or manage my infection. I was not given any leaflets at all. I had to do all my own research by going to library.

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11. From doing my own research, I realised this kind of horrible circumstance had happened to a considerable number of people all over the country.
12. My first positive test for HCV was in [GRO-B] or [GRO-B]. I was not offered any follow up or treatment in respect of the HCV infection.
13. In 2010, I suffered a [GRO-B] in a [GRO-B] and was treated at [GRO-B] Hospital in [GRO-B]. The hospital told me during that visit that my HCV count is low.
14. I have attached, marked WITN2999003, 5 letters from [GRO-B] Hospital dated [GRO-B] which state that I tested positive in [GRO-B] for Hepatitis C but that my viral load was very low and I therefore did not need further follow up. I had attended the hospital in relation to night sweats and alopecia and do not recall being made aware that my HCV infection was being investigated.
15. I have seen two letters from [GRO-B] Hospital dated [GRO-B] and [GRO-B] which state that I cleared my HCV infection. The letters are attached, marked WITN2999004. I was not told by the hospital that I had cleared the infection; just that it was a low count and nothing to be concerned with. My GP did say to me that I cleared the infection and until now I could never understand why. I have always believed that I still have the HCV infection.

### **Section 3. Other Infections**

16. I do not believe that I have been tested for any other infections.

### **Section 4. Consent**

17. I was treated for the injuries I sustained in the car crash without my consent as I was unconscious. I was not told about any of the risks associated with blood transfusions or blood products.

18. About 4 days after the accident, my parents came over from [GRO-B] to be with me. They were not told anything either.

**Section 5. Impact of the Infection**

19. When I found out about my HCV infection, I was very shaken and I was worried about infecting my wife and kids. I was extremely worried also because I could lose my job if my health took a turn for the worse.

20. I carried on working as normally as I could but the worry regarding my HCV infection was always there in the back of my mind. I lived with the constant worry that my health might deteriorate or that I might pass away.

21. My wife was very upset when I told her. We had been married 4 years and I had no idea about my HCV infection at that time we got married. She was crying when I told her and did not know what to do. I tried my best to calm her down but she was very worried.

22. I found out a lot of information in the last 10 years about HCV which has reduced my level of worry of infecting my family, but I still have to be very careful if I was to cut myself.

23. My relationship with my wife had been perfect before I found out about my infection. After I found out and told her, our relationship was a rocky road for about 6 months. My infection really put a strain on our relationship, but we managed to get through it and are now celebrating [GRO-B] years of marriage this year.

24. When my infection initially came to light, it was very mentally draining and scary because back in those days, HCV was not as well known as it is now. It was a similar case with HIV. It was only in the 90s that people were made more aware of it. It was very traumatic throughout those years because I was trying to bring up 2 children.



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25. I have told my GRO-B and GRO-B about my infection as they have now grown up. Other than my wife and children I have not told anyone else. This is because of the stigma surrounding the disease – I had a young family when I was initially told about the infection and I did not want my children or wife to be subjected to the kind of abuse you might have received growing up if it was common knowledge that your father was infected with HCV. To this day, I have not disclosed my HCV status to my employer, nor do I disclose it on applications. I believe that if I tell my place of work then it might jeopardise my job. If I do cut myself at work I will have to tell the first aider.

26. I suffer with GRO-B. Whenever I am ill, my blood pressure gets high. I have been told that my neutrophilia count is very high and that my red and white cells are fighting each other because they think there is something wrong with my body. I believe this is all due to the HCV infection.

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

27. I have never experienced any difficulty in accessing medical or dental treatment because of my infection.

28. I was GRO-B and treated at hospital. I do not recall having any kind of special treatment because of my HCV. The medical professionals merely stitched me up. I was not even asked about the infection by the doctors who treated me but they must have been aware already as it is on my medical records.

29. I have never been offered any kind of counselling or psychological support.

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## **Section 7. Financial Assistance**

30. I have never been offered or received any kind of financial support.

## **Section 8. Other Issues**

31. I just want to get to the bottom of this scandal. I want to find out how this has been allowed to go on for so many years. Someone has to take responsibility – be that the NHS or the government at the time because they were the ones that knew about the infection. I want closure.

## **Anonymity**

32. I wish to apply for anonymity. I understand that my statement will be published and disclosed as a part of the Inquiry.

33. I would be willing to give oral evidence.

## **Statement of Truth**

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

Signed.....

GRO-B

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Dated.....6-6-19.....