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Witness Name: GRO-B

Statement No: WITN2583001

Dated: 31st March 2019

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF GRO-B

I provide this statement in response to a request under Rule 9 of the Inquiry Rules 2006 dated 12th December 2018. I adopt the paragraph numbering in the Rule 9 request for ease of reference.

I, GRO-B will say as follows:-

1. Introduction

1. My name is GRO-B My date of birth is GRO-B My address is GRO-B
2. I wish to write a statement about my mother, GRO-B: M and her illness after heart surgery at GRO-B I suspect

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that she may have contracted Hepatitis C or AIDS through contaminated blood products. Unfortunately, no medical records have been made available to substantiate this.

2. How Infected

1. In [GRO-B] my mother was admitted to [GRO-B] in [GRO-B] for planned heart surgery. I think her surgeon was [GRO-B]. She was due to have either a valve repair or a valve replacement. Prior to the operation, I think my mother was informed that she may need a blood transfusion but I do not know this for certain. Within a few weeks of having the operation, my mother became jaundiced. Her appetite was very poor. Following contact with our General Practitioner (GP) [GRO-B] she was admitted to [GRO-B]. The initial diagnosis was a gallbladder problem or a blocked bile duct. There was very little information made available to us about her condition.
2. She was transferred to [GRO-B] [GRO-B]
3. She remained here for several weeks and her jaundice was more pronounced and her health seemed to be deteriorating. She regularly complained that her skin was very itchy. We were never advised of a prognosis or any cause of her illness.
4. The week commencing [GRO-B] my mother was due to be discharged from hospital. My sister [GRO-B] arrived at the hospital to take her home but my mother informed her that she was not being discharged as she had collapsed in the bathroom.
5. On Friday [GRO-B] our family was called to the hospital as my mother's condition had deteriorated further. It was only at this point that we realised how critical my mother's condition actually was. She was moved to a

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side ward. At one point my mother needed some blood. My mother wasn't making much sense but she did comment 'I hope it is not bad blood' which makes me believe that my mother may have known that she had been infected but had wanted to protect us from worrying. My sister GRO-B remembers being told that her immune system was shutting down. The family requested a meeting with a doctor. We had a brief meeting with a doctor. He informed us that my mother would require a liver transplant. There was no further information.

6. After a few days my mother was moved back onto the main ward. Her bed was the first bed as you entered the ward. Towards the end of this week, my mother was hallucinating. On GRO-B her birthday, my brother, my husband and myself went to visit her in the evening. Her breathing was extremely laboured. I asked one of the nurses if there was anything that could be done to help my mother. They took my mother into a side ward and drained some fluid from her lungs. This appeared to help and this was the last time I saw my mother alive.

3. Other Infections

1. I do not know of any other infections.

4. Consent

1. We would presume that my mother would have signed the usual consent forms required for her surgery. Whether or not she would have been made aware of the risks associated with contaminated blood and whether she would still have consented would be a matter of speculation.

5. Impact

1. It was obvious to my family and I that my mother suffered following the routine surgery and was never able to recuperate properly. My brother-in-law was

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issued with a medical certificate to allow him to register my mother's death but the hospital then asked for this to be returned. My mother's death certificate was not issued until six months after her death.

2. I have learned in the last few days through the Coroner's office, that my mother's death had been referred to the Coroner. A post mortem was not, however, carried out and my mother's cause of death was noted as Bronchopneumonia and liver failure.
3. At the time of my mother's death, I was GRO-B years old and just married the week before my mother had her operation. At the time of my mother's death both my GRO-B and my-self were pregnant.
4. Following my GRO-B untimely death two years previously, my mother's death was a bolt from the blue. I was still grieving for my father. I think that all I can remember is feeling completely numb.
5. What my family thought to be a completely standard and routine operation had resulted in an entirely different outcome for which we were not prepared.
6. This has robbed my family of potentially many happy years together as a family. I have not had the chance to have the normal mother and daughter experiences. I was the youngest member of the family and witnessed her interaction with her grandchildren and it is a big regret that my children were never able to have this experience.
7. My mother was the cornerstone of the family and the family home was a place where we all met and enjoyed family life. I feel that my family have not been as close without my mother.
8. My mother was deprived of her life at a young age and has missed out on many family occasions which she would have cherished. Apart from her heart condition, she was healthy and had never taken an alcoholic drink in her life.

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9. I feel that I let my mother down in the last weeks of her life which were spent in hospital and whilst it would have been impractical to care for my mother at home, I feel very sad that I could not have done more to help my mother. I feel that I should have asked more questions at the time but I was very young and I think that I was just putting my trust in the medical profession.
10. I feel that I should have requested my mother's medical records sooner and maybe our family would know for sure if her death was caused by contaminated blood.
11. Our family has always suspected that my mother's death was suspicious and after watching a BBC documentary relating to the infected blood scandal, I am convinced that my mother was infected with either Hepatitis C or AIDS at the time of her operation.
12. Learning that my mother's medical records may have been destroyed is very difficult to understand and to deal with emotionally. I still find it incredible that there are no records available
13. As stated previously, I have been in contact with the Coroner's office and I would hope very much that they will be able to give me some further information.

6. Treatment/Care/Support

1. There was no information or support available to me or my family following my mother's death. Our family have never had closure.

7. Financial Assistance

1. No financial assistance has been received.

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8. Other Issues

1. Due to the nature of the symptoms of my mother's illness, and subsequent death, I would like to ask the inquiry if it could be argued that her death resulted from contaminated blood.

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Statement of Truth

I believe that the facts state din this witness statement are true.

Signed GRO-B

Dated 31.03.2019