

ANONYMOUS

Witness Name:

GRO-B

Statement No: WITN3520001

Exhibits: 0

Dated: August 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** **GRO-B**
GRO-B
GRO-B
2. I make this statement as the **GRO-B** who was infected with Hepatitis C (HCV) as a result of receiving contaminated blood products.
3. This witness statement has been prepared without the benefit of access to my **GRO-B** full medical records.
4. My **GRO-B** has provided a Witness Statement to the Inquiry
GRO-B

Section 2. How infected

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5. My [GRO-B] suffers from Haemophilia A classified as mild. [GRO-B] was diagnosed when [GRO-B] was about 3 or 4 years old.
6. I refer to paragraphs 2-10 of my [GRO-B] statement which detail the Hospitals where [GRO-B] was treated, the blood products [GRO-B] received and when and where [GRO-B] believes [GRO-B] was infected with HCV.
7. I understand from my [GRO-B] that [GRO-B] was given no information or advice beforehand that there was any risk of being exposed to infection from the blood products given to [GRO-B]
8. My [GRO-B] has also informed me that [GRO-B] was given no information or advice on how to manage and reduce the risks of others being infected. I consider full and detailed information should have been given to [GRO-B] as soon as he tested positive.

Section 3. Other Infections

9. I believe my [GRO-B] has been exposed to the risk of being infected with vCJD as [GRO-B] received a letter from the NHS saying a blood donor who may have contributed to the blood products [GRO-B] received later developed vCJD and died.

Section 4. Consent

I believe my [GRO-B] was tested without his knowledge, consent and without being given the results and I refer to paragraph 15 of his statement.

Section 5. Impact of the Infection

10. In or about July 2001 my [GRO-B] took part in a 12 month trial for Pegylated Interferon and Ribavirin under Dr Cramp at Derriford Hospital Plymouth.

During this time my **GRO-B** was a completely different person. **GRO-B** was mentally and physically aggressive. I felt like I was walking on egg shells. **GRO-B** wouldn't recognise **GRO-B** actions; it was like **GRO-B** was unaware of them. **GRO-D** **GRO-D** we got very close to divorcing. We discussed the terrible side effects of the treatment with the Haematology consultant/ Nurse and this is when we first became aware of the suicides associated with the treatment. As soon as my **GRO-B** stopped having the treatment **GRO-B** went back to normal. The virus became undetectable during treatment but returned shortly after the treatment finished. This obviously had a big psychological impact on both of us on top of the struggles suffered during the treatment.

11. My **GRO-B** took part in other trials over the years which are detailed in paragraphs 18-20 of **GRO-B** statement. **GRO-B** eventually cleared the virus in January 2016 after a 3 month course of Ribavirin, Daclatasvir and Sofosbuvir.
12. We have had to live with the fact that my **GRO-B** had HCV for over 20 years, and the constant stress and worry that **GRO-B** may pass away, and that I would be left to manage on my own.
13. When we found out that my **GRO-B** had HCV we were running a Bed and Breakfast and holiday cottages in the grounds of our home this was our sole income and our dream property and grounds. However with the uncertainty on how long my **GRO-B** would live and his growing fatigue we were forced to sell as I couldn't maintain the entire property on my own if my **GRO-B** died. This left us with no income, and we had to move in with my **GRO-B** or 2 years, and place all of our belongings were in storage for that time. This created a huge financial impact on us that we still are dealing with today.
14. We also had to travel extensively for my **GRO-B** treatment and this was a large financial burden on us as well and took up a lot of time. We racked up large mileages and often had to stay overnight and incur hotel expenses as

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we had travelled far from home such as when we visited hospitals in Plymouth, Oxford, Southampton and London. We paid for all of it ourselves and had to arrange our lives to accommodate for the time away.

15. As we were planning for the short term because we weren't sure how long my **GRO-B** would be around he also had to make the decision to draw down half **GRO-B** pension in a lump sum.

16. My **GRO-B** had Parkinson's and it was shown that it would be dangerous to leave him alone and as we often stayed away for a few days during these hospital trips we had to make the decision to move him into a care home. Due to our financial restraints we couldn't give him the standard of care we would have liked.

17. I have also had to have a very strict hygiene regime especially when dealing with spilt blood on clothes or surfaces; it had to be specially disinfected.

18. The HCV also affected our marriage as my **GRO-B** was worried about infecting me. I was unaware of my own HCV status for many years as the GP advised me not to be tested as this would affect obtaining insurance; this was very stressful. Eventually I was tested and thankfully it was negative.

19. This has also affected **GRO-B** as well; **GRO-B** is a deep thinker and worries a lot about **GRO-B**, she calls every time **GRO-B** has a hospital or consultant appointment.

20. My **GRO-B** also has developed other conditions which **GRO-B** believes are due to the disease or the treatment these include; end stage liver cirrhosis, type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, glaucoma and gallstones. **GRO-B** also has a nervous shake in both of his hands making it hard to hold items, for example holding a drink and also writing. We still live in fear that **GRO-B** will develop liver cancer.

21. I have had to keep this a secret for all these years. Only our immediate family knows of [GRO-B] condition for fear of being judged, or stigmatised.

Section 6. Treatment/care/support

22. My [GRO-B] had difficulty in some aspects of gaining treatment until Professor Rosenberg took over [GRO-B] care. I refer to paragraphs 33-37 of my husband's statement which detail these difficulties.

23. I have never had or been offered any sort of support, counseling or psychological help as a spouse of the infected.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

24. I refer to paragraphs 38 and 39 of [GRO-B] statement which set out the financial assistance received and the issues encountered with the Trusts/Funds/EIBSS.

Section 8. Other Issues

25. I refer to paragraphs 40 to 41 of my [GRO-B] statement which I agree with and adopt. I would also add that I think it is disgusting that this Inquiry will take so long.

Anonymity, disclosure and redaction

26. I want to remain anonymous and do not wish to give oral evidence.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed.....

GRO-B

Dated.....

4-8-19