

ANONYMOUS

Witness Name: GRO-B

Statement No: WITN3585001

Exhibits: 0

Dated: October 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 and I was born on GRO-B I live at GRO-B
GRO-B
2. I make this statement as an affected daughter of my late father, GRO-B: F
F, who was born on GRO-B and passed
away on GRO-B as a result of contracting Hepatitis C from
contaminated blood transfusions.
3. This witness statement has been prepared without the benefit of access
to my late father's medical records.

Section 2. How Affected

4. My late father was infected with Hepatitis C as a result of receiving blood
transfusions following two transurethral resections of the prostate; the first
procedure took place in approximately 1982 and the second in approximately
1984-1986.

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5. He underwent the first procedure at Kings College Hospital in London and the second at Royal Sussex County Hospital ("the Hospital") in Brighton.
6. As far as I am aware my late father was not given any information or advice regarding the risk of infection from receiving blood transfusions. I also spoke to my mother about this before she passed away and she also had no recollection of receiving any such advice.
7. I understand that my late father was first tested for Hepatitis C in August 2002 and that this was when he was told of his infection. My late father was not really one to talk about his illnesses and he would not have understood the significance of being infected with Hepatitis C. He was not a medical man in any sense of the meaning. Finding out about his infection would not have impacted upon him unless a medical professional had sat him down and gone through matters in detail, which leads me to surmise that the diagnosis was probably somewhat glossed over.
8. My late father never really discussed his health issues with me and the first time I found out about his Hepatitis C diagnosis was the day before he passed away, which was GRO-B 2003. I was told by my late father's consultant geriatrician and I immediately wondered why he had not been under the care of a consultant hepatologist, at least from August 2002. I recall this conversation vividly because it was such a hot day and the Hospital was crowded. My late father's family had been called to the Hospital due to his worsening condition. We were strongly encouraged to find him a nursing home so that he could die in a more peaceful environment. We transferred him to a nursing home on the same day which was GRO-B 2003 and sadly he passed away the very next day.

Section 3. Other Infections

9. As far as I am aware my late father was not exposed to any other infections.

Section 4. Consent

10. I do not know if my late father was tested without his knowledge and therefore without his consent.

11. I am unaware as to whether my late father was used for the purposes of research without his knowledge and therefore without his consent.

Section 5. Impact

12. My late father retired at the age of 70 in 1984. He enjoyed excellent health until he reached the age of about 75 at which time he suffered with intermittent flu like symptoms including fevers, sweats and muscle aches. These periods of ill health presented in a fairly regular cycle which was that he was poorly for 2 or 3 days and then he would be "*as right as rain*" again.

13. He often went to his GP in connection with the above symptoms, in addition to receiving home visits; some of which I was present for having been asked to attend by my late mother. This happened for about 8 years but no cause of this intermittent, although progressively worsening, symptoms was found.

14. My late father also suffered from very itchy skin and used to send me to the chemist for cream because the itching drove him mad. He also endured excruciating abdominal pain which stopped him in his tracks. He also suffered from severely swollen ankles and feet. He experienced extreme fatigue which worsened towards the latter stages of his life.

15. The last 18 months of my late father's life were characterised by several prolonged stays in the Hospital with decompensated cirrhosis. He suffered

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from jaundice, encephalopathy and ascites which required frequent drainage, gastrointestinal haemorrhage related to oesophageal varices and weight loss.

16. It was not until August 2002 when my late father was finally diagnosed with Hepatitis C, having by then already developed and presented with chronic liver disease. I believe that the medical professionals only found out about my late father's liver disease by chance when investigating him for another condition. My late father was a smoker and in or around 1998 he underwent a chest x-ray which showed that he had changes in the liver. Investigations, such as blood tests, which ultimately led to the Hepatitis C diagnosis were kick started as a result of this incidental finding.
17. My late father was never given any treatment for his Hepatitis C.
18. I remember that in the last year of his life he had arranged to have some work done in the garden. It was really sad as he was too unwell to even supervise the same, let alone get involved as he had planned. It was so unlike my late father because he was always on top of things. I sat him at the window so that he could watch from there.
19. My father spent his final day in a nursing home and the causes of death, as recorded on his death certificate, were (1) Liver Cirrhosis and (2) Hepatitis C.
20. It was distressing for me at the time, as it would be for anyone who had a parent who was dying. However, it was my late mother who was greatly affected. She had been married to my late father for 60 years and she was the frail one of the pair. My late father was always the robust and strong one who never showed any anxiety regardless of the situations in which he found himself. I believe that the Hepatitis C prematurely ended my late father's life; he could have lived happily for another 5 or so years with my late mother. A couple of years after his death, my late mother agreed to go into a care home where she spent her last years.

Section 6. Treatment/care/support

21. As far as I am aware my late father did not suffer any difficulties in accessing medical or dental services as a result of his Hepatitis C.

22. I am unsure as to whether my late father was offered any counselling in or around August 2002 when he was told that he had been infected with Hepatitis C. However, either in 2002 or 2003, I recall my late father receiving a visit from someone who I believe was connected to the Hospital. I don't know who this female was but I suspect that she was a social worker or similar. Alternatively, it could have been someone connected to the hospice because at this time hospice care was a possible option although it was later discarded by medical professionals. My late father told me that this lady was lovely and that it had been so beneficial to him to chat with her. However, I have no idea what they spoke about.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

23. Neither my late father nor my late mother received any financial support from The Skipton Fund ("SF"). I have never received any financial or practical support from the SF.

Section 8. Other Issues

24. The reason I wanted to give a statement was because I was so shocked about how the whole contaminated blood scandal had come about. I was extremely cross about the cover up by the UK Government and I felt that I needed to add my late father's name to the list of those who had been both infected and affected.

Anonymity

25. I want to apply for anonymity and I do not wish 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..... **GRO-B**