

# ANONYMOUS

Witness Name: GRO-B

Statement No: WITN0168001

Exhibits: 0

Dated: April 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 I was born on GRO-B and I live at GRO-B  
GRO-B
2. I am GRO-B and I am living with my GRO-B
3. I make this statement on behalf of my late husband, GRO-B: H H  
was born on GRO-B and died on GRO-B aged GRO-B as a  
result of Hepatitis C (Hep C). He worked for an GRO-B
4. I have GRO-B with H and I was married to him for GRO-B years.
5. This witness statement has been prepared without the benefit of access to my late husband's full medical records. If and in so far as I have been provided with limited records the relevant entries are set out in the medical chronology at the end of this statement.

**Section 2. How Affected**

6. In [GRO-B] [H] required a blood transfusion because he had a [GRO-B] [GRO-B]. He had the blood transfusion at [GRO-B]. He had another blood transfusion a few years later for [GRO-B] but I believe it was the first blood transfusion that infected him with Hep C.
7. In [GRO-B] the [GRO-B] contacted him to tell him that there was a possibility that he contracted an infection because of the blood transfusions that he had. He received another letter on the [GRO-B] from the [GRO-B] stating that he is needed to go to his local blood centre for a blood test, which he did. On the [GRO-B] he went to the blood centre and was told that he had Hep C. He was also told that he would have a short life expectancy. I believe he was also told to be careful with his alcohol intake.
8. I do not believe [H] was given any information or advice beforehand about the risk of being exposed to the infection through the blood transfusion.
9. I believe that [H] was not provided with any information about the infection and the [GRO-B] did not keep in contact with him until he went back to the [GRO-B] in [GRO-B].
10. On the [GRO-B] [H] went for a liver biopsy, he was given no explanation as to why he was having the biopsy until he attended the hospital. He was told by the doctor that it was to check the effect of the Hep C on his liver. After that appointment he was informed that he would be contacted in the near future for further tests. [H] did not receive any information about the biopsy test and so, he thought everything was fine and therefore went back to work as normal.
11. I do not believe that adequate information was provided to [H] to help him understand and manage the infection.
12. I believe that information should have been provided to [H] earlier. However, I do not think the doctors knew much about Hep C themselves. I

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recall [H] attending the hospital every 6 months and he was tested and also had x-rays.

13. When the doctors called [H] to the hospital to discuss the test result, as previously stated, they said that his life expectancy would be shortened. He was only [GRO-B] when he was told. I do not think [H] realised the seriousness of the infection at that point.

14. I believe [H] was told about the risks of others being infected as a result of the infection, but I cannot remember when he was told.

### Section 3. Other Infections

15. I am not aware of any other infections that [H] contracted as a result of the blood transfusions. I was not told of any other infections that he had contracted.

### Section 4. Consent

16. I do not know if [H] was treated or tested without his knowledge and consent.

17. I believe that [H] was treated and tested without being given adequate or full information. However, I do not know if he was treated or tested for the purposes of research.

### Section 5. Impact of the Infection

18. [H] was the type of person who just wanted to get on with life. He was a very positive person and just wanted to carry on as normal. He did not give into things easily and just wanted to live normally. He loved his work and was the main provider of our household. He would take each day as it came. He was a man who would lead people, he was a leader.

19. As previously stated [H] was [GRO-B] when he died. Approximately [GRO-B] years before he died, he started to get the Hep C symptoms. He started to feel tired and as a result he was unable to continue with his job. His physical

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appearance changed and he went yellow. I believe he had a tinge of jaundice. He gradually deteriorated. The infection shortened his life and I believe it was the last GRO-B years when H realised the seriousness of the infection and it really started to affect him mentally and physically.

20. H developed water on the lungs as a result of the Hep C. He started bleeding internally and was very poorly for quite a while. He lost a lot of weight as a result.

21. We had to wait overnight in the hospital while he had a massive bleed and was given lots of blood transfusions. He died a week later in hospital. It was traumatic.

22. I recall on the GRO-B a day before H died, that a doctor asked me if H was an alcoholic. I was shocked and angry when he told me because I believe they clearly knew he was infected with Hep C as a result of the blood transfusion and it was no fault of H.

23. In or about GRO-B H was advised that there were treatments available. However, he was told that it would cost the NHS approximately £2,000 and that they were unable to fund it at the time. I recall H receiving a letter from the hospital which stated that the doctors were not telling people about their infected status until the treatment was made available. This upset me as I believe that treatment should have been made available at whatever cost because it was the hospital that infected H in the first place. He did not receive any treatment as a result. He was told that he would have priority for a liver transplant.

24. H was very careful around the children so they would not use his personal hygiene things such as a razor. The infection affected our relationship; our sex life was non-existent. He had to change his way of living at home changed.

25. H and I kept the infected status to ourselves. Hep C was an unknown infection back then and a lot of people were more concerned and worried about HIV/AIDS at the time than the Hep C.



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26. The GRO-B were not aware of H infections until he became very poorly. GRO-B was more affected as he used to work with H

27. H was a GRO-B. As previously stated in the last GRO-B years, he was unable to go to work because of the infection. This impacted him massively as he loved his job. He was gutted that he could not work because his health was deteriorating and he was physically unable to. After he died, it had a financial effect on us as he was the main breadwinner in the house. When H was sick, GRO-B came from GRO-B to be with me and GRO-B father and as a result GRO-B lost GRO-B job.

### Section 6. Treatment/care/support

28. As previously stated H was not given any treatment because he was told that it would cost the NHS a lot of money. As a result, he did not receive any treatment but was monitored.

29. I do not believe that counselling or psychological support was ever made available to H. I was not offered any treatments in this regard.

### Section 7. Financial Assistance

30. I received GRO-B payments in the sum of GRO-B and GRO-B from the Skipton Fund. I do not know the exact date, but it was a few years after H died. I had only found out about the Skipton Fund when the doctor told me. I had no problems with the application form; it was pretty straight forward applying for the financial assistance.

31. I also received a lump sum payment of GRO-B from the EIBSS.

32. I currently receive a monthly payment of GRO-B which I started to receive a couple of years ago. I had to reapply this year and do not know if I will continue to receive it.

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## Section 8. Other Issues

33. [H] was going to pursue a court case against the blood transfusion or NHS, only to be told that no one knew about Hep C and so the case was dropped.

34. It was the haemophiliacs who were affected the most by this scandal. It was a big loss for me when [H] died. I was devastated. I was married to

[H] for [GRO-B] and I had been with him for [GRO-B]

35. The government owes us all an apology for the way they dealt with everything, especially when [H] was told that he was infected and left to deal with it himself. I want justice for everything that has happened.

36. We were told that the government paid people from America to give blood and they took it from anyone who would give it without testing it for any infections. I do not know why it had to come from there and why the blood was not tested.

## Anonymity, disclosure and redaction

37. I wish to remain anonymous.

38. I do not want 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

25/4/19