

# ANONYMOUS

Witness Name **GRO-B**

Statement No: WITN1588001

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** **GRO-B** with my husband. We have three children.
2. I am the youngest of 9 siblings; I have four sisters and four brothers but not all are now living.
3. I am writing this statement on behalf of my older brother **GRO-B:B** He was the only haemophiliac within our family. He was born on **GRO-B** **GRO-B** He was infected with Human Immune Deficiency Virus (HIV) and Hepatitis C Virus (HCV) because he was given contaminated blood products.
4. This witness statement has been prepared without the benefit of access to my late brother's medical records.

### Section 2. How Affected

5. **B** was diagnosed with severe haemophilia A from birth.

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6. He received treatment initially at the Royal Liverpool Hospital but when he was about 20 years old he moved to **GRO-B** to receive treatment from the **GRO-B** as he said that he would get the best treatment for his haemophilia there.
7. I understand that a lot of the records from this hospital were lost but Dr **GRO-B** from the hospital knew **B** very well and supported my application to the Skipton Fund. Dr **GRO-B** has since retired. I have not applied for my brothers' records but I believe they may still be at the **GRO-B**.
8. **B** was treated with blood products all his life for his haemophilia but I am not sure when he started receiving Factor VIII concentrate. He did tell me at one time that the Factor VIII he was using came from America.
9. I am not sure if he was given any advice regarding the risks associated with blood products.
10. In or about 1990 our nephew (our sister's son) died. He was 16 years old. He was a haemophiliac who had contracted HIV through contaminated blood products and he died of AIDS. My sister has since died too. **B** did not want to talk about our nephew's death. He wasn't close to his nephew as he lived a distance away. I did not know at the time that **B** was infected and I remember we thought that he was the lucky one. I think he probably knew at the time that he was HIV positive as I recall him saying to us that sometimes you can have HIV but it doesn't always turn to AIDS. I realise now that he knew what the outcome for him may be.

### Section 3. Other Infections

11. I am not aware that he had any other infection except HIV and HCV.

### Section 4. Consent.

12. He never spoke about his blood being tested without his knowledge or consent. I am therefore not aware if it was or if it was used for research purposes.

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### Section 5. Impact

13. I do not remember when he told me he was infected. I do not think he told any of us when he was first told. He lived in GRO-B and I was living in Liverpool with a young family and therefore could not visit him as regularly as I would have liked.
14. I think the impact on him was devastating. He knew other people infected in the same way and how they had died and what from. He was very much on his own; living away from close family.
15. He kept it from us until he became really ill and could not keep it a secret from us. He became more and more reserved and did not like talking about his illness. He did not even talk to our parents who died before he did.
16. I remember that he had thrush regularly in his mouth and had pain in his legs. He had a catalogue of things wrong with him and he began to look older than his years and became emancipated.
17. He lived on his own in GRO-B in a flat in the grounds of the GRO-B. Eventually he did get his own flat which he loved. He loved the independence he felt there but he did not live there very long before he died.
18. He died on GRO-B 1992 when he was GRO-B. The causes of death on his death certificate were staphylococcal septicaemia, septic arthritis and haemophilia.
19. I knew that he had HIV but I did not know that he was co-infected with HCV. I only later found this out through Dr GRO-B.
20. For about a year before he died everything seemed to go wrong with him. It was a slow decline but one could see that the infection was gradually taking over him and he spent more and more time in hospital. Whilst he knew he was dying he was very wary of talking about it because at the time everyone was scared about AIDS. It had a mental affect on him; he became much quieter and withdrawn.
21. He was in hospital for 4 weeks before he died.

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22. I remember going to see him in hospital the day before he died and the nurse said that we should prepare ourselves for how he was. It was horrendous. You could see that he was there but he was vacant. He was GRO-B years old but looked 80. He was very emancipated and infected. I stayed with him at the hospital until he died.

23. He was cremated. I cannot remember there being any issues with arranging his funeral but I do remember that they would not let us have an open coffin. We wanted to bring him back to his flat the night before his funeral. He had loved his flat and we were able to bring him home but only in a closed coffin.

24. I feel sadness and anger because it could have been prevented. I could not tell my friends how B had died. I used to tell people that he had died of a heart attack.

### Section 6. Treatment/Care/Support

25. I do not know if there was any treatment that he was refused. I do not know whether he was offered any counselling; he did not share that with me.

26. I do not remember him being treated any differently due to the nature of his infections. At the end of his life he had his own room; he was not on the ward.

### Section 7. Financial Assistance

27. In or about 2011 I applied to the Skipton Fund. I have always kept up to date with regard to the issues surrounding contaminated blood and I read about the Skipton Fund on the internet. I received £70,000 in total; both stage 1 and 2 payments £20,000 and £50,000. Dr GRO-B assisted me with the application. I did not have any problems in securing the funds.

28. I think B may have received a payment from the MacFarlane trust but I cannot be sure. I do not know whether he received any other financial assistance prior to this death.

#### **Section 8. Other Issues**

29. I feel sadness and anger because I feel his premature death could have been prevented. I would like the people who were in positions of responsibility to be held accountable. I think this whole thing could have been avoided.

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30. I wish to apply for anonymity. I understand that this statement will be published and disclosed as part of the Inquiry. I do not want to give oral evidence.

### Statement of Truth

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

Signed.....

GRO-B

GRO-B

Dated.....

28 / 4 / 19