

ANONYMOUS

Witness Name: GRO-B

Statement No.: WITN2697001

Exhibits: 0

Dated: 11 September 2019

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF MR GRO-B INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

Section 1: Introduction

1. My name is GRO-B. My address and date of birth details are known to the Inquiry.
2. I am married to GRO-B and we have two children together, we all live together at home. There is no other family around. I work part-time.

Section 2: How Affected

3. My daughter GRO-B: D is the youngest child in the family. D and I used to be very close. Our relationship is really fraught at the moment because I don't do things that she thinks I should be doing for her.
4. I used to go to hospital appointments with her but this no longer happens. I think this was because we got into a situation where she threatened to not eat and as a result I threatened to not take her to her hospital appointment. As a

result this has affected our relationship. [D] will only allow me to take her to her medical appointment now if she has no other option available. [D] verbally abuses me from time to time which I find difficult to deal with; I have learned to take no notice of it now. At the moment I think my relationship with her is difficult. [D] became infected through receiving contaminated blood or blood products when she was given treatment for her leukaemia as a child. She is a very unwell person and wholly dependent on other to function.

5. My daughter does not have a bleeding disorder.
6. There was no information provided prior to the treatment of the risk of infection. IN fact up until today's date my family and I have always believed [D] received only blood transfusions and was infected by one of those; however, it seems that she may also have received various products and became infected as a result of that.
7. [D] was infected with hepatitis C only.

Section 3: Other infections

8. I believe my daughter has been infected with hepatitis C only

Section 5: Impact

9. Having to deal with [D] and her illness has meant that we have no social life. My wife and I have decided to support her through each and every episode or event and these seem to have come constantly. I have felt that I have to be strong to help my family through all of this. I don't allow myself the luxury to think about this too much because if I did then I would take my car and drive it straight into the nearest river. I have suffered two bouts of depression; the second was an acute bout of depression for which I have had to receive

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counselling and anti-depressants. This has put me on a plateau and I seem more able to be able to deal with the recurring problems.

10. I think that this has totally destroyed my family, private and social life. I have missed out on [D] growing up as a normal little girl to an adult. I haven't had the opportunity for her to experience meeting a boyfriend, falling in love, getting married. I have missed out; we have missed out on this. My daughter has never grown up, she has never interacted at school, she has been denied the opportunity to have a social life and develop skills. I am distraught because of this. I really feel very deeply for her about this. I feel extremely angry about this. But this is life, or at least these are the cards that we have been dealt. We have no choice but to get on with it. If one of us is not stronger than the others, our family will sink. I don't voice my opinions back to [D] because it would not help. I think that this hepatitis C has destroyed [D]'s life and my family's life.
11. [D] has forbidden me from talking about her hepatitis C infection with anyone. I have not shared this information with anyone. I have no friends so I have no-one to turn to about it anyway. I really despair about this.
12. I think that the hepatitis C has impacted my relationship with my daughter and thus it has impacted on her life. Often I have to give up doing things with my other daughter as most of my time is spent caring for and supporting [D]. [D] doesn't want to socialise with us anymore, for example, she does not want to go out for family meals any more. Then she feels left out. This makes me feel awful. I cannot think of a word that summarises this adequately enough other than to say it is desperately sad.
13. I have had to adjust my life; we have had to adjust our lives to suit the demands of [D]'s life. I have not been able to do the work that I have really wanted to

do. I used to be a landscape gardener and I ran my own business but I couldn't carry on as it was too much to juggle this alongside caring and supporting my daughter. Every time the phone rang I panicked. I could not cope with it and had to give up. I have had to have jobs that I have not wanted such as sweeping streets and car parks and cleaning toilets because I have needed to work around hospital appointments for example. The impact on me has been profound and causes me deep sorrow. It has been a necessary prioritisation in the circumstances.

14. The only counselling that we had been when [D] insisted that we attended the counselling sessions that she was having. For me the sessions were wholly inappropriate and caused me great stress and anguish because they turned the counselling around and tried to focus on our childhood which had nothing to do with what we were grappling.
15. It served to shine a light on how the system or what was being offered could not deliver anything close to what was needed. They got it so wrong it was unbelievable. These sessions were not counselling sessions that were offered to me as a consequence of what happened. This has never occurred and is something that I think we as a family or individually desperately need. We need someone who has an understanding of the problems and the far reaching consequences of the problem and who is adequately trained to deal with it on a consistent and long term basis. At this point I am not sure what can possibly help.

Section 8: Other Issues

16. I would like the Inquiry to find out why this has happened and why hepatitis C people have been treated differently to those to have contracted HIV and why those who have become infected for reasons other than having a bleeding disorder have been treated so differently.

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17. I want someone to ensure that this never happens again. I want those responsible to be held to account to be brought to justice. I want to know what we should expect and what symptoms are attributable to the hepatitis C. For most of our journey with this we have been kept in the dark, even now we are learning by accident that [D]s fatigue and her depression and her teeth removal might have to do with the hepatitis C or the treatment or both.
18. I want to know whether clearing the viral count actually means that [D] is cured or not. She is currently discharged from the care of her liver specialists. This concerns us greatly and I think that this has come about because of the cost of seeing her on a regular basis. I am concerned that the condition may return or that the liver may deteriorate and it will not be picked up. Certainly at this moment in time, despite having been told in 2017 she has cleared the virus, she is still suffering symptoms. I want the Inquiry to help us.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed:

GRO-B

Full Name:

GRO-B

Date:

11/09/2019