

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 1982. I live at GRO-B GRO-B with my two children aged 2 and 4.
2. I am an affected person in relation to my late father GRO-B: F who died on GRO-B GRO-B 2001. He died from Hepatitis C (HCV) as a result of receiving a contaminated blood transfusion.
3. This witness statement has been prepared without the benefit of access to my father's 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

4. My father worked for a company called GRO-B which manufactures mobile homes.
5. I am not sure of the specific date as at the time I was quite young but between 1989 and 1991 my father had an accident at work. He was a roofer and on the day of the accident

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boiling hot bitumen spilt on to him, burnt through his gloves. He received terrible burns to his hands.

6. He was rushed to **GRO-B** Hospital but was taken immediately to **GRO-B** Hospital and underwent skin grafts. Skin was grafted from his back to his hands and as a consequence of this he was given a blood transfusion. I will refer to this later in the statement but we have been told by the Consultant during the latter stages of his life that it was this blood transfusion that caused him to contract HCV.

Section 3. Other Infections

7. As far as I am aware my father had no other infections.

Section 4. Consent.

8. My father consented to the blood transfusion as a result of the accident. He did not visit the doctor and as far as I am aware no other tests were performed until he became unwell in April 2001; two months before he died.

Section 5. Impact

9. My mother and father separated when I was about 2 years old. Whilst this saddened me I am glad in a way that they did as my father could have passed this infection on to my mother and I could have lost her as well.
10. We saw him regularly although I did not live with him. I have a brother called **GRO-B** who I think has also given a statement. I also have one older sister and whilst my father was not her father, he treated her as his own. I have one older brother from my father but we have different mothers.
11. My father lived alone. He was a hard working man and I do feel bad but we often went to Dad for money as my mother struggled financially looking after all of us. I remember that he would give us £50 which at the time to a child was a lot of money.
12. My dad was a proper man's man; he just got on with life and work without complaint.

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13. I remember my dad having a blood transfusion following his accident at work. I remember visiting him in hospital and seeing him receiving blood. My mother does not agree with blood transfusions; she is strongly against them. I remember that she couldn't sit with him because of it; it was sickening to her. He consented to his transfusion and whether he received blood during the skin graft I do not know but he certainly received it afterwards. He had skin removed from his back and grafted onto his hands.
14. My dad never complained and I understand rarely visited his GP. It was only in April 2001 that he began to feel unwell. Whether he had had symptoms prior to this I do not know. If he had been living with us we may have noticed that he was unwell.
15. From around April 2001 he became very lethargic and tired. I remember him telling us that one day he was so tired when he was driving that he pulled over into a layby and fell asleep and only woke up the next day.
16. After this he was admitted to hospital in GRO-B and they ran numerous tests to see what was wrong with him.
17. My dad was born in Uganda and at first they thought that he had Niall's disease but they really could not work out what was wrong with him.
18. I remember that his stomach used to swell up and they had to drain fluid from him.
19. He came out of hospital once between admission in April 2001 and the date of his death in GRO-B 2001. He went to stay with my aunt who had said that she would care for him. He fell into a coma there and had to be readmitted to hospital. I remember that he slept for days and it was when he heard my voice that he was roused.
20. Two to three weeks before he died his Consultant GRO-B took us into a side room and told us that my father had contracted Hepatitis C. He told us specifically that they had traced it back to the blood transfusion my father had had after the accident. I remember feeling really angry.
21. They said that it was too late for any treatment and to do anything as he had cirrhosis of the liver.

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22. He was put in a side room and his fluid intake was restricted due to the build up of fluid in his body. He had a drain from his stomach and he suffered severe and painful cramps. I remember telling him to drink because of the pain he was in but he wasn't allowed to and was restricted to 300 ml fluid per day. His weight had dropped down to 54 kgs and he was very yellow.
23. I do not know how he reacted to the knowledge that it was a blood transfusion that had infected him. I think he will have been haunted by it. He didn't discuss this with me.
24. He went from being a guinea pig in hospital when they were trying to find out what was wrong with him to just being cared for and being made comfortable. I cannot recall that he was treated in any way different to other patients in the hospital at the time.
25. I remember that there were family discussions about what kind of funeral my father could have because of his infection. Fortunately, he was able to make his own choice and he chose a Muslim burial and wished to be buried next to his mother.
26. My father died at 7.30pm on the evening of GRO-B 2001 and he was buried the next morning as per his wishes. There was no autopsy. He was taken to a Mosque and cleaned and they wanted us all to see him. I remember that I did not really want to see him but I was pressured into seeing him by relatives.
27. My 16 year old brother had to bury him as is the Muslim tradition. Women were not allowed to attend but he was my father and I went to his burial; I think this caused uproar.
28. Between the time he received the blood transfusion and 2001 we were not aware of any health problems with dad.
29. The impact of my father's death on my brother has been huge and he is obsessed with having regular blood tests to test his blood for Hepatitis. He has become paranoid of needles and health care. He always wants reassurance that he is not infected.
30. It took me a long time to go back to GRO-B hospital where he had died. I remember he was in Ward 3 and I cannot go back into that ward. I had to go to that hospital when I was having my children and I could only do this by thinking that I would be leaving with a life which helped me. I have had two caesarean sections but I would sooner die than have a

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blood transfusion. I believe there are alternative treatments but these are more expensive and that is why the National Health will not fund them.

31. Dad died in **GRO-B** 2001 and in the September of that year I was due to go to Greenwich University to study marketing but I started having panic attacks. These were as a consequence of his death. I was given bereavement counselling but I was unable to attend Greenwich University as I could not travel away from home. I would have graduated from there as a member of the Institute of Marketing.

32. In the end I stayed at home and went to **GRO-B** University. I studied marketing there but this course was not as good as the one that I would have done at Greenwich and did not give me the same qualification.

33. After my father died I worried that my mother would die as well. It was so painful for me to lose him. I feel that even though he chose the blood transfusion as treatment they should have screened the blood and made it safe to give to him. His death could have been prevented.

34. I have two children now and I know that my father would have loved being with them.

35. I remember the weather on the day dad died; it was so hot. We took ice cold strawberries into him as he could not drink and these were refreshing. Even now when I eat strawberries it reminds me of him and something that should be so nice brings back difficult memories to me.

36. I no longer have a father to turn to and he was unable to give me away on my wedding day. I find his death difficult to accept as it was not as though he had been killed by a car accident or by cancer. He put his trust in the health service and it killed him. I feel very angry.

37. I have seen the effect that my father's death has had on my brother; he was very close to my dad. I had to ring my brother to tell him that dad had died as he did not want to see him in hospital.

Section 6. Treatment/Care/Support

38. As his infection was not diagnosed until late in his life then I do not believe he had any problems with regard to treatment and as far as I am aware he did not request any counselling. He very rarely went to the doctor.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

39. As far as I am aware he received no financial assistance. We have not received any financial assistance following his death. He was an independent and hard working man.

Anonymity, disclosure and redaction

40. I do wish to apply for anonymity and understand that this statement will be published and disclosed as part of the Inquiry.

41. 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

GRO-B

Dated..... 12/5/19

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MEDICAL SUMMARY

(This summary is not intended to be exhaustive but sets out key points in the records relevant to the Statement)