

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 1963. I live alone at GRO-B
GRO-B
2. I make this statement with regard to my father GRO-B: F who was infected with contaminated blood products and died on GRO-B 1992. He was infected with Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and Hepatitis C (HCV). My sister, GRO-B has also made a statement.
3. This statement has been prepared without the benefit of access to my father's full medical records

Section 2. How Affected

4. My father was a severe haemophiliac, Type A.
5. I have tried to trace his medical records but have been unable to recover any. GRO-B
GRO-B Consultant Haematologist at GRO-B Hospital has confirmed to me by telephone that his medical records had been destroyed.

ANONYMOUS

6. He was hospital treated at [GRO-B] Hospital and then treated at [GRO-B] Hospital, [GRO-B] which was local to us. His consultant was [GRO-B]. He also attended [GRO-B] [GRO-B]. I remember we used to go with him to Lewisham. Dad had trouble finding his veins so he didn't regularly home administer.
7. He was told by [GRO-B] in 1985 that he had been infected with HIV from a bad batch of Factor VIII in 1982/1983 at [GRO-B] Hospital. I remember that it was around this time that he had been bed bound and generally unwell.
8. He was constantly asked to have blood tests but he did not know what the tests were for. He thought they were for check ups, but we now know this isn't the truth. In 1985 they told him he was infected with HIV and we later found out he was co-infected with HCV. We are not sure if my father ever new he had HCV. He didn't seem to be told anything.
9. He died on [GRO-B] 1992 of Bronchopneumonia, Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS) and Haemophilia.

Section 3. Other Infections.

10. I am not aware of any other infections.

Section 4. Consent

11. My father was treated and tested without any consent or knowledge of what was occurring. He was asked to give regular blood tests but was not told why. He thought that this was a normal procedure for his haemophilia. I believe that he was deceived into giving blood for testing and then information was withheld until such time he was so ill that it could not be covered up.

Section 5. Impact

12. My father went to GRO-B in Kent which was a boarding school for disabled children. He was there for the whole of his schooling life. He met my mum there and they were married when they were young. They divorced in 1964. GRO-B and I lived with our mother but when GRO-B was 18 she moved in with our father.
13. He would often have bleeds but he went through periods where he was better. He seemed to have a lot more treatment when we were younger so I do think as medical science got better the treatment was more effective. When we were kids he was always in hospital but as we got older he appeared to be in hospital less for bleeds. As I do not have my father's medical records I am unable to say what products he was treated with.
14. My father's quality of life was completely destroyed for the 9 years that he suffered after being infected. He received very little support for his condition. Between 1987 and 1992 he required 24 hour care. He suffered terribly and was unable to cope with the Haemophilia and the bleeds that he suffered on top of the symptoms he suffered with his HIV.
15. I do not really remember when I was told of his infection; he was pretty good at keeping things from me. I think I was told around the same time as he told GRO-B. I was in a new relationship in or about 1985. My father really liked my boyfriend and we very quickly in our relationship decided to take up an opportunity to work in Hong Kong. I do think that because of our move my Dad kept a lot of what was going on from me. Although I knew he had the illness I do not think that I fully appreciated it would take his life. If I had known I may have changed my decision to go overseas.
16. Dad gave me away on my wedding day in 1989. It was a beautiful day but after this he became very ill.
17. In 1991 I moved to Canada with my husband. I came home 6 times between then and when he died and each time I would see his condition deteriorate. My father was a very proud man and he really did not want us to see what he was going through. I feel that he was particularly secretive with me as he did not want to interfere with my life. My sister cared for him wholly.

ANONYMOUS

18. Whilst I was in Canada I studied at the University of Columbia to become a Realtor. Unfortunately I had to miss a number of lectures when I travelled back to London to see my father. Every time he got sick I would travel back; in fact the airline got to know me and was extremely good to me being very sympathetic and even upgrading my flight.

19. Between 1985 and 1987 I do remember the stigma attached to AIDS. I remember that every year we would go with my father to his school reunion. I could not believe the way he was treated by them; they did not want to be with or near him because they thought they would be infected. This destroyed his soul as he had always been a person who made everyone laugh but they did not want to know him; they ignored his calls. Whilst there was not much physical change at this time the emotional changes were clear to see.

20. My father never got to see my children. My husband and I adopted children; our first child in 1994, and our second child in 1996.

21. I feel very regretful that we were not given the information as a family about the affect the illness would have on Dad; it would certainly have changed the decisions I made in my life. We did not know the illness would come crashing down on him and I don't think he knew either. We couldn't do a bucket list for him or anything. He never travelled overseas and he could have if we had been provided the information, support and knowledge by the government or health service.

22. I remember that my father was very poorly on his 50th birthday in 1991 and it was the following year that he died. He looked terrible. He went yellow before his death and we were told he had cirrhosis of the liver; liver cancer. He was too ill for treatment at this stage.

23. He suffered severely with weight loss and had no appetite. His organs began to fail. He suffered from mouth sores, chest pains, stomach cramps, urine infections, loss of breath, hair loss, weight loss and skin sores. He became angry and difficult to be around

Section 6. Treatment/Care/Support

24. My sister has made a statement for the Inquiry; she was Dad's full time carer.

ANONYMOUS

25. I remember that my father was unable to get treatment for cataracts due to his condition. He was also unable to have dental treatment and suffered painfully as a result.
26. He was not offered any counselling or psychological support that I am aware of.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

27. Our father was registered with the MacFarlane Trust, (his number was 1135). He received a very small amount of money before he died in 1992. Since his death we registered with the Skipton Fund and received two payments; Stage 1 £20,000 in May 2015 and Stage 2 £50,000 in June 2015 which my sister and I split equally.
28. After the Penrose Inquiry we understood that there was an additional £10,000 that we could claim but we understand that this was only given to an infected person or their spouse. We objected to this but did not get anywhere. I wrote letters to claim but this was not successful.
29. We tried to get what Dad was entitled to as he would have expected us to do that but we were unsuccessful. I do believe that this was discriminatory. Whilst Dad was a single man he still had a family to support and was also infected in the same way.
30. My father was a car mechanic but he had to give up work because of his illness. He then bought and sold cars to support us but when he became ill he relied on benefits. He was renting his house, GRO-B and he was approached by the Council to buy it from them at a reasonable price but he did not have enough money.
31. We have had no other financial help. We received no financial assistance with the funeral.

Section 8. Other Issues

32. I feel passionate about getting justice for our father. I think the government must be held accountable not only in their negligence but for the apparent cover up as well. I also feel

that there has been a lack of support. My father has in no way been compensated adequately for the tragic way in which he lost his life.

33. I know that no amount of money can amount for the loss of our father but I feel that we have lost out financially as our father supported us and our children have lost out too. My father was always worried about what would happen to my sister when he was gone; he lost his life through the negligence and/or criminal actions of the National Health Service.

Anonymity, disclosure and redaction

34. I would like to apply for anonymity but understand that this statement will be disclosed to and published by the Inquiry. I would like to give evidence if I am called by the Inquiry to do so.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed GRO-B
GRO-B

Dated 3rd May 2019