

# ANONYMOUS

Witness Name: GRO-B

Statement No: WITN2784001

Exhibits: 0

Dated: March 2019

## INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

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FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF GRO-B

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I, GRO-B will say as follows:-

### Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is GRO-B and I was born on GRO-B I live at GRO-B I am married with one daughter. My mother, GRO-B has also provided a witness statement for the Public Inquiry.
2. I make this statement as an affected person in relation to my late father, GRO-B: F who was born on GRO-B and who passed away, aged GRO-B on GRO-B as a result of receiving contaminated Factor VIII.
3. **This witness statement has been prepared without the benefit of access to my father's medical records. I have been advised that these records have now been destroyed.**

### Section 2. How Affected

4. My father had Haemophilia A and received Factor VIII throughout his life on an "as and when required basis".

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5. My father was initially treated at the GRO-B in Liverpool before his care was transferred to the Royal Liverpool University Hospital. His consultant there was Dr Hey.
6. My father was not provided with any information regarding the risks of receiving Factor VIII.
7. My father contracted HIV as a result of receiving contaminated Factor VIII. I am unsure as to when my father contracted HIV but he was told about his infection in 1984.
8. My father attended a routine appointment in 1984 at the Royal Liverpool University Hospital with a consultant whose name I cannot recall. This consultant was flicking through my father's medical records and came to a page which was marked with the words "HIV". The consultant just said the words "HIV" in a very matter of fact way and then continued to flick through the notes. My father stopped him and said "*HIV, what is that? I did not know anything about that*". The consultant basically said words to the effect of "*yes you have this*". The consultant gave him absolutely no information or advice which would have allowed him to manage or understand this virus. My father was given no information regarding the risks of transmission.

### **Section 3. Other Infections**

9. As far as I am aware my father was not exposed to any other infections such as vCJD.

### **Section 4. Consent**

10. My father was definitely tested for various viruses without his knowledge and therefore without his consent.

**Section 5. Impact**

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GRO-B

12. It was my father's wish not to tell anyone (except his sister and GRO-B

GRO-B

GRO-B ) about his infection and therefore that is a wish that both my mother and I have continued to, and will continue to, honour.

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GRO-B

14. I remember my father as a big, strong and kind man who then, towards the end of his life, became extremely frail consisting mainly of skin and bones.

15. My father did not take part in lots of activities with me when I was growing up and he always blamed this on the fact that he had a bad knee. In hindsight I think this may have been a guise for the fact that he was suffering with HIV.

16. I only found this out later, but the day on which my father was told of his HIV infection, in 1984, I had come home from school and tried to give my father a kiss. He pulled away from me and would not kiss me. He said something like "don't son, don't". I said to my father "I don't have HIV dad" and he shouted at me to get out of the room, so I did. My mother only later told me that that was the day on which he had found out.

17. My father was on AZT for his HIV and he did become very withdrawn. He also stopped going out socially.

18. The only people my father confided in were his sister and **GRO-B**

**GRO-B**

**GRO-B**

He did not really speak to my mother about his HIV which is a shame as she could have supported him mentally. It was tough on her because she had no one to talk to about what was happening. She had to deal with it all alone. Due to us keeping my father's infection under the radar we did not really suffer any direct stigma as a family.

19. My father had to give up work in the end and I believe that this was in or around 1985. He was a **GRO-B**. As a family we struggled with the loss of one income; at this stage my mother was still working, also at **GRO-B**. However, shortly after this my father became very poorly and for example he struggled to walk forwards and instead would walk backwards. My mother became very worried about him so she gave up work to care for him.

20. Money therefore became extremely tight and we moved from a terraced house to semi-detached house which was going to make things tight already. It was even worse now that my father had to give up work due to his illnesses. Due to this we could hardly afford days out so spent a lot of time in our house.

21. I vividly recall the weekend on which my father passed away. I was aged only 15. I was sent to Wales, via coach, to see friends on Friday **GRO-B**. **GRO-B** I returned on Sunday **GRO-B** and was met at the coach stop by two of my uncles (my father's brothers) who advised me that the priest had been called and had read my father his last rites in the Royal Liverpool University Hospital. I was very shocked as I had no idea he was that poorly. I appreciated that he was not well but not to the point that dying was a possibility.

22. I was taken straight to the hospital by my uncles and I spent all of Monday and Tuesday with my father before he passed away on the Tuesday evening, which was **GRO-B**.

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23. I was knocked for six following my father's passing and it had a really bad effect on my education. I ended up getting on 5 GCSE's instead of the many more which I had been predicted.

24. It was not until I was aged 17 that I finally discovered that my father had died of HIV and of how he had become infected. I had seen a number of solicitor's letters which had started coming to our house. I ignored them at first but then as their arrival became more regular I opened one and saw that it had "*Your claim*" written on a letter inside the envelope. I kept reading and that is how I discovered that my father had HIV. I kept what I had discovered to myself for a short while. One day a while later I was sat in the lounge with my mother and I said "*I know what dad died of*". My mother was able to confirm to me that I was correct. My mother was not too upset about breaking the promise to my father of not telling anyone as she had not actually told me; she only confirmed what I already knew.

### **Section 6. Treatment/care/support**

25. My father was never offered any counselling or psychological support.

### **Section 7. Financial Assistance**

26. My father did not receive any support from the Macfarlane Trust (MFT) whilst he was alive.

27. My mother received support from the MFT which commenced about 7 years ago. This was initially £300 per month and then after 3 years it rose to about £500 per month. However, last year it was reduced to about £417 per month.

28. I did not receive any support from the MFT.

29. However, my mother and I were part of the 1991 litigation in which my mother and I received £44,000 and £16,000 respectively. As far as I can recall my mother did not sign a waiver although I believe that she was asked to. I was only aged 17 at this time.

**Section 8. Other Issues**

30. I want accountability and I want the truth to come out. I am angry that my father was taken from us, far too early, through the fault of the Government.

**Anonymity**

31. I do want to apply for anonymity and I do not wish 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 .....

27/3/19