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Witness Name: **GRO-B**

Statement No: WITN2473001

Dated: 17th April 2019

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF **GRO-B**

I provide this statement in response to a request under Rule 9 of the Inquiry rules 2006 dated 12th December 2018. I adopt the paragraph numbering in the Rule 9 request for ease of reference.

I, **GRO-B** will say as follows:-

1. Introduction

1. My name is **GRO-B** My date of birth is **GRO-B** 1971 and my address is known to the Inquiry.
2. My husband **GRO-B** is the son of the deceased **GRO-B: F** **F** I met **GRO-B** in November 2006 and we have lived at our current address since 2010, with our two children

2. How Affected

1. **F** was a haemophiliac and he suffered with severe type A of the condition. I do not know when he was diagnosed with haemophilia, but

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from what I have been told he suffered from the condition since he was a child.

2. I know that [F] was a patient at the Haemophilia Centre located at the University Hospital Wales (UHW), Heath Park, Cardiff also known as the Heath Hospital. I have heard the name Professor Bloom mentioned on a number of occasions, but that is the only medical professional I have heard of and I do not know who cared for [F] altogether.
3. From what I know through having conversations with the family, [F] was infected with HIV and hepatitis C (HCV) from use of a blood product called Factor VIII in the 1980s. [F]'s wife, [GRO-B] was a nurse and so she treated him at home with these products. [GRO-B] explained how they used plastic sheets when treating [F] in order to stop the blood from spilling.
4. I do not know when [F] was informed of his illness, but I remember how [GRO-B] explained to me that his parents were conscious of spilling blood and how they kept separate towels and so on. [GRO-B] thought it was a little strange that they did this until he found out about his father's HIV in the late 1980s. [GRO-B] was informed that his father also had HCV much later on.
5. I could not say with certainty that [F] was informed upon diagnosis of the risks associated with having HIV and HCV. However, as I mentioned, they were careful not to share toiletries and spill blood and so they clearly knew of the dangers, but that may have been due to information [GRO-B] had become aware of.

3. Other infections

1. In addition to HIV and HCV, [F] also suffered with hepatitis B.

4. Consent

1. I find it difficult to believe that [F] would have consented to using the blood products had he been aware of the risks associated with this form of treatment. [GRO-B] was a nurse and so I doubt she would have agreed to the treatment had she been aware of the risks.
2. [F] was an educated man and had a passion for medicine and science. I am sure that he would have understood the dangers had they been presented to him at the time he was being treated with Factor VIII.
3. [F] would have had his bloods taken on a regular basis as a haemophiliac and so it is unlikely that he would have been aware that they were testing him for diseases such as HIV and HCV.

5. Impact

1. The family have gone through so much as a result of [F] being infected with contaminated blood products. As I mentioned, I met [GRO-B] in 2006 and by then [F]'s condition was deteriorating. He was using crutches to walk and he was incredibly thin. He struggled to get about and we modified our home so that he could get in as our front steps were too difficult for him to climb.
2. If [F] and [GRO-B] wanted to go on holidays it required a significant amount of planning. They would have to ensure that there was a hospital nearby and that [F] had all of the necessary medicines in the event that anything happened. Indeed, caring for [F] was a significant part of [GRO-B]'s life and it must have taken its toll at times.
3. I know that it took its toll on [GRO-B] but in a different way. His mental health has suffered over the years and he has had a number of

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breakdowns that have required him to attend a mental health facility. He still has trouble dealing with stressful situations and it is unlikely that he will ever completely get over having to watch his father suffer for such a long time.

4. Further, the family had to keep [F]'s condition a secret as they were worried that people's prejudices would lead to them being ostracised. It must have been so difficult having to keep his condition a secret from people that were so close to them, but they did so in order to protect themselves.
5. By the time I had met [F] he had already retired. I heard so many stories of how inspirational and imaginative he had been as a primary school teacher. Once [GRO-B] and I had our first child, he threw himself enthusiastically into his role as a grandparent and it gave him a new lease of life. He relished the time he spent with his grandson [GRO-B]. He was always thinking of new places to take him and he encouraged [GRO-B] to do the same. He was such a devoted grandparent, with a very special gift of being able to relate to children's imaginations.
6. [F] passed away in 2012. My son [GRO-B] had just started school nursery, and my daughter [GRO-B] was 17 months old. They have been deprived of a very valuable relationship with someone who would have been a wonderful guide, teacher, inspiration and friend. Some grandparents are more special than others, and [F] was a very special grandparent.

6. Treatment/Care Support

1. [F] was back and forth to the hospital regularly for his haemophilia, HIV and hepatitis. He tried a number of trial medications such as

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Interferon and Ribavirin and these sometimes caused him to have unpleasant side effects such as lumps on his neck and difficulty swallowing food.

2. He also had a carer in the latter years of his life.
3. I am unaware of any problems [F] had in obtaining treatment.

7. Financial Assistance

1. I do not know what financial assistance [F] and [GRO-B] received, however I do know that they have received financial assistance.

8. Other Issues

1. To my knowledge, there are no other issues that I can think of at this time that may assist the Inquiry.

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Statement of Truth

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

Signed.... GRO-B

Dated..... 17/4/19