

ANONYMOUS

Witness Name:

GRO-B

Statement No: WITN4115001

Exhibits: WITN4115002

Dated: March 2020

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF

GRO-B

GRO-B

will say as follows:-

Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is GRO-B and I was born on the GRO-B
I live at GRO-B I have five children and live with my partner and one of my children. Three of my kids live up north and one lives in London. I am currently working as a professional painter and decorator and am studying GRO-B at University.
2. I make this statement in relation to my late brother, GRO-B:B who was born on the GRO-B and passed away on the GRO-B GRO-B after being infected with HIV, Hepatitis C (HCV) and Hepatitis B (HBV) as a result of contaminated blood products.
3. My mother, GRO-B has also provided a Witness Statement, GRO-B to the Inquiry.
4. This witness statement has been prepared without the benefit of access to B full medical records.

Section 2. How Affected

5. I wish to rely on my mother's statement for this section.

Section 3. Other Infections

6. I wish to rely on my mother's statement for this section.

Section 4. Consent

7. I wish to rely on my mother's statement for this section.

Section 5. Impact of the Infection

8. I wish to rely on my mother's statement for parts this section.
9. always struggled with his health and often his left leg would swell up. When he was in good health he did as well as he could but he had a bad life up until his death.
10. Being infected definitely had an impact on and his relationships with his friends and girlfriends. He became very paranoid about sleeping with women and always had lots of condoms in his room. He would talk to me about how nervous he would be to have sex.
11. I remember being scared of telling people of his infections. He was worried that the people he told would tell other people. There was already a stigma surrounding him as he was 'sick' and 'black'. My mother moved to with us, which was a place full of spitefulness and we ended up having to move. One teacher told the whole class of infections which is what forced my mother to move to in the first place.
12. I didn't settle well and had just come out of care. had a good group of friends but couldn't talk to them about his infections in detail so he would mostly talk to me and my cousins. Our older brother did not have much of a relationship with him.

13. I was always **B** younger brother and he would help guide me. He was able to talk about everything with me, although he was still very private. I remember **B** would smoke cannabis in order to ease the pain he was always in. I always tried my best to treat him as normally as possible, never wanting to raise any concerns with him or make anything a big deal. Our family loved him dearly and we all tried to support him as best we could.

14. I have only just pulled out of it all. **GRO-B**
GRO-B I went off the rails when **B** died as he was my only guidance around. My mother had always commuted into London from **GRO-B** so I never really received much attention from her when I was growing up. When **B** passed away I just went downhill. I felt I had lost the only person that cared about me. I had to deal with a lot of racism and bullying whilst I was growing up. I had to fight my way through life and I have felt lost on so many occasions. When **B** died I was hurting and didn't know what to do, I ended up getting involved with drugs and crime, and when bullies attacked me I attacked back.

15. I was sent to jail when I was 17 for fighting. I had my first child, when I was 20 and struggled to find work. My school never helped me and the teachers often bullied me as well. **B** was the only person who would listen to me when I was sent home from school and talk everything through with me.

16. I started an apprenticeship in hairdressing when I was 16 and continued with this for a while but there was no money in it so I gave it up. I was living alone at the age of 16 as I did not have a good relationship with my mother. We had a big fight just before **B** died and I wasn't allowed to come back into the family home, even though my brother was dying. I was angry with my family for stopping the contact I had with him.

17. I started painting and decorating when I was 20 years old, taking any jobs I could. With a lot of hard work I managed to build up good relationships within the industry and bought my first house at 23. I was then made redundant and had no choice but to sell the house. I ended up going back to jail 4 or 5 times

ANONYMOUS

because I had no guidance once [B] died. He was the only person I ever really looked up to.

18. I believe that my mother only told the family about [B] infections so that they weren't passed on. As a kid I didn't fully understand what the infections meant, and all I really knew was that I had to stay away from [B] if he was bleeding, or treating himself. I was told not to go anywhere near his needles.

19. There was a definite stigma surrounding [B] infections. The main problems were that we were kept in the dark, not taught to understand the situation that our family was in and there was no one there to explain it. [B] was the only one to explain what was wrong, while the rest of the family would only lie to me. It didn't help that I am black and my mother was trying to fit all of us into white areas. It opened us up to racist language and treatment; people would call us 'monkey' or 'nigger'. We couldn't turn around and tell them what was happening, the whole world was ignorant and I could have put my family's lives in danger if I told anyone. The stigma meant that a lot of people were treated like shit and being black in a white area meant we had to be extra careful about who we spoke to and what we said. I felt unwelcome in an all white area and the stigma was magnified. I wanted to show respect for [B] so I didn't tell anyone and respected [B] wishes to privacy.

20. There was a massive impact on my family. My little brother ended up on crack cocaine shortly after [B] died and is still using crack cocaine and heroin today. I tried to be there for him as much as possible but there is not much I can do. My older brother was also affected, and the family became more divided once [B] died. I think they were all just burying their heads. It doesn't feel like a family anymore. My older brother moved to [GRO-B]. My family never spoke about what happened to [B] or how it affected them.

21. [B] used to go to school but he had a lot of time off because of Haemophilia and the pain he was in. I didn't finish school, and I do not know whether [B] did either. My mother never told me as when we moved to [GRO-B] it never seemed like [B] returned to schooling.

22. was never able to work or finish school and I was kicked out of every school I attended. I was a troubled kid and had a lot of built up emotion and anger. I remember one time my teacher grabbed me and told me to get into my PE kit and I completely snapped. I hated schools and the only thing I looked forward to was going home and seeing my brother. I am educated now but back then I didn't really see the importance of education, and neither did .

23. I was still at school when died. I got caught in a bad cycle of life with bad decisions which is why I didn't do well at school. I had a lot to deal with at home, and other things besides . I never wanted to bring my burdens into school with me and the school gate became the cut off from my school life and home life.

24. I wanted to study Law and become a barrister but due to my criminal record this is not possible. My first offence was theft with a knife at the age of 15 and as stated above I went off the rails when died. I had all the emotions of going in and out of care, being told I couldn't cuddle my brother and my brother dying. I held a lot of animosity towards my mother but that is between the two of us. My mother was always tied down with work or with hospital visits and it just never really felt like a proper family. I was always the black sheep and when died it just tipped the scales. I lost all care for everything and started fights with older men. I didn't care if I was hurt or killed because that pain could never be worse than the pain of losing my brother.

Section 6. Treatment/care/support

25. I wish to rely on my mother's statement for parts of this section.

26. I do not believe that my brother was ever offered any form of counselling or psychological support. I was not offered anything. I believe it would have helped both of us had we received some help.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

27. I wish to rely on my mother's statement for this section.

Section 8. Other Issues

28. I am not comfortable with the entire process of this Inquiry, and I am unsure if the Inquiry will actually change anything. The Inquiry does not hold anyone accountable and I want to know why the judiciary and police are not present. It is all victims. There is no real information sent out about it, and I only found out about the Inquiry via the media by chance.

29. I exhibit a letter at 'WITN4115002', for the attention of the Inquiry.

Anonymity, disclosure and redaction

30. I wish to remain anonymous.

31. 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

Dated

30/03/20