

ANONYMOUS

Witness Name: GRO-B

Statement No: WITN4660001

Exhibits: 0

Dated: September 2020

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 and I live at GRO-B. I am currently working away in Montreal, Canada and I will be here for the foreseeable future due to Covid19 travel restrictions.
2. My mother, GRO-B nee GRO-B (born on GRO-B GRO-B), was infected with the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) through contaminated blood transfused during her pregnancy in 1986 with my younger brother, GRO-B. She died on GRO-B (aged 41).
3. My brother, GRO-B (born on GRO-B), was then also infected with HIV from his birth through our mother's HIV infection. GRO-B has provided his own Witness Statement to the Inquiry GRO-B.

4. This witness statement has been prepared without the benefit of access my mother and brother's medical records.

**Section 2. How Affected**

My mother

5. My mother had antenatal care under Dr Lewis and Dr Study at Watford General Hospital (WGH) in Watford. She had the contaminated blood transfusion there.
6. I do not believe my mother received any information or advice regarding the risk of infection from blood transfusions. From what I gather, my father (a doctor then working away in the Middle East) was against my mother having a blood transfusion. He was wary of them. Our mother was persuaded by the doctor(s) at WGH that the transfusion was needed.
7. I do not know how, when or by whom, my mother was told about her infection with HIV.

**GRO-B**

8. I am uncertain as to when and how **GRO-B** found out that he too was infected with HIV. I think he came across a letter about it that our mother had written to our father before she died. I believe that he found the letter many years later in adulthood. **GRO-B** was certainly one of the last in the family to know. I didn't really know that **GRO-B** was also infected with HIV but our mother had planted that particular seed in the back of my mind as she used to tell us not to go near **GRO-B** if he cut himself. She was clearly worried about the risk of cross infection. After she died, I pushed it all from my mind.
9. **GRO-B** is under the care of Professor Mark Nelson and Professor Mark Bower at the Chelsea and Westminster Hospital (CWH).

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

10. I do not know that my mother and brother were infected with anything other than HIV.

### **Section 4. Consent**

11. I am unable to comment on the issue of consent except to say that my mother was very clearly persuaded to have a blood transfusion without warning of risk.

### **Section 5. Impact**

12. I was 10 years old when I lost my mother. My brother [GRO-B] was 19, my brother [GRO-B] was 17, my sister [GRO-B] was 12 and [GRO-B] was just 5 years old when our mother died.

13. I knew what had happened to my mother (Mum) before she died. She would often break down and cry for pretty much no reason as far as I could tell but I would have been around the age of 9 when I found a handwritten letter that Mum had written to my father next to his typewriter. I can remember her lips being very sore and then erupting and bleeding everywhere.

14. Mum became very ill and was immediately admitted to hospital on our return from a trip to the Middle East. My father did not do the right thing by her and I have resented him for it since. It has destroyed my relationship with him. He made a big thing of being a doctor at the time and that he needed to look after us. He didn't visit Mum in hospital or take us (her children) to visit her even half as much as he should have.

15. I was immediately and profoundly impacted by Mum's death. From the age of 10 I had a horrible home life. I had to look after myself straight away. We all had to fend for ourselves. My father (Dad) worked late. He was 'on call' at night. If we saw him at all it was for an hour at about 10 or 11 pm and he

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would more or less go straight to his room. He would then get up early and leave for work. It was a complete fiasco. I can't even believe how dark and twisted it is even thinking about it now. I had no mother and my family were not nice to me. Instead of coming together, we all pushed each other away.

16. My time at school was also bad. I didn't have the attention for it. I was insecure, paranoid and awkward. I was fidgety and all over the place. I probably should have had an ADHD diagnosis. I ended up getting kicked out of school at the age of 13 or 14 for not going and other things and I left home at around the same time. I wanted to live with friends. They had families that were nice to me and cared about me. I was shot to pieces and the lack of lack of attention, the anger and paranoia I felt then have followed me around since. I am just as awkward and insecure. I was never able to hold down a job for long and have moved on to so many different things.

17. When I was younger the friends I had of a similar age had a similar mind set to me. I wasn't studying but my friends and I lived a carefree student kind of lifestyle. I am older and my friends have settled down into careers and relationships and it is not good for me now. I have had so many jobs and so many moves. I am unable to develop close relationships with people as I tend to want my own space and to close down avenues of communications. Things are getting worse for me and I cannot sit still.

18. My entire family have trust issues and it has divided us. The worst of it is that I have not seen any of my family members for 20 years (nearly half my lifetime). I last spoke to [GRO-B] very briefly by phone as long as 12 years ago. I speak to [GRO-B] the most. [GRO-B] and I have a very poor relationship and only communicate to argue over WhatsApp and [GRO-B] suffers with paranoia and she believes I hate her kids. We are all isolated and estranged from each other.

19. My health has been affected. I am extremely overweight due to "comfort eating" when I'm sad. I have, since I was 11 years old (I was obese as a

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child), been battling with weight and practically a yoyo. I'm 300 pounds right now and mostly this weight if you add the years up, I can lose weight every couple of years for a short while. In fact I usually drop around 50 pounds when I can finally get into the diet each time. However this has been a constant battle for me, up and down in weight since my early teens. I get these huge gout attacks where I'm bedridden for around 3 weeks each time. I get these around 2-3 times a year and usually when I reach around 300 pounds. I would definitely say this is psychically the hardest part of my life.

20. What happened has ruined my life. I constantly ask myself why it happened and there is no answer. There is nothing that can be done.

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

21. Nobody was offered any counselling or support.

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

22. I am unaware of any financial assistance given.

### **Anonymity**

23. I would like to apply for anonymity and 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.....**30-09-2020**.....