

Witness Name: GRO-B

Statement No: **WITN5362001**

Exhibits: Nil

Dated: 26 February 2021

**INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY**

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**WRITTEN STATEMENT OF** GRO-B

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I, provide this statement in response to a request under Rule 9 of the Inquiry Rules 2006 dated 12 January 2021.

I, GRO-B will say as follows: -

**Section 1. Introduction**

1. My name is GRO-B My date of birth is GRO-B 1974. My address is GRO-B I am married to GRO-B and we have twin daughters, GRO-B who were born in GRO-B I work as an GRO-B
  
2. This statement is further to the written statement of my father GRO-B GRO-B dated GRO-B (GRO-B)
  
3. I intend to speak about my late mother, GRO-B: M who died of liver failure as a result of her Hepatitis C infection on GRO-B 2012, aged 66 years. In particular I intend to speak about the nature of her illness, how

the illness affected her, the treatment received and the impact it had on her family, my father and our lives together. I am an only child. My older brother died during childbirth.

4. My late father, GRO-B provided a witness statement to the Inquiry dated 29 April 2019. My father has since died of cancer on GRO-B 2020. I now wish to provide my own statement to the Inquiry.
5. The anonymity process has been explained to me and I confirm that I am not seeking anonymity.
6. Dad gave his statement shortly after he was diagnosed with cancer. I was present throughout his interview and we had hoped we could put both our names on it; unfortunately this was not an option. Dad's statement dealt with the factual account of what happened to Mum, my statement is how her death has affected my family and me.
7. I confirm that I am not currently legally represented with regards to my statement and that I am happy for the Inquiry Team to assist with my statement.

## **Section 2. How affected**

8. Mum suffered with severe nosebleeds and she was formally diagnosed in the 1970s with Hereditary Haemorrhagic Telangiectasia (HHT). This condition resulted in her blood vessels being weak and she would get blood spots particularly in her oesophagus and nose and she would sometimes need blood transfusions due to the amount of blood she lost during these nosebleeds.
9. I can remember the day I believe my Mum got infected, I was 9 years old and she had gone to hospital for her gallbladder condition. She was prone to blood spots which could be very difficult to stop if they started

bleeding. So, because of this and her HHT as a precaution they said that they would give her Factor VIII.

10. My Dad thought it would be good to take me to see her in hospital the night before her operation to reassure me. I went to see her and I remember my Mum as bright orange, she wasn't my Mum, she looked like a Satsuma, which was scary for all of us.
11. The impact of this has stayed with me all my life and will do so forever. I hate hospitals and I hate going to them. Pretty much after that I didn't go to see my Mum in hospital. Even as an adult I didn't go to visit her in hospital, because of what I saw that day.
12. The background to this is as follows. In 1983 when Mum was PRO-B years old, she was admitted to the Bradford Royal Infirmary, as she had to have an operation to remove her gallstones. The operation was in the autumn of 1983 and she was given Factor VIII as a precaution in case her HHT caused excessive bleeding during the operation.
13. Everyone is of the opinion that she became infected when she got the initial dose of Factor VIII. The reason why we all thought that she was infected when she received the Factor VIII was because of the huge reaction she had as mentioned above. However, on reflection, there could be a chance that Mum contracted hepatitis C through the blood transfusions she had received prior to the operation for her gallstones, but we will never know for certain.
14. I believe she would have had blood transfusions during both her pregnancies in the early 1970s. All her siblings had blood transfusions in the 1970s-80s for their bleeding disorder and as far as we know none contracted hepatitis C.
15. Mum was also diagnosed with Systemic Lupus Erythematosus (SLE) during her first pregnancy.

16. I don't think Mum had a lot of contact with doctors with regards to the hepatitis. She was told at some point that she had Hepatitis C but she was not under a specialist for Hepatitis C and not under any hepatologist. Maybe she would have been assigned someone if she had not moved from GRO-B? She just carried on and we carried on. She had other conditions and they always seemed to take priority over the Hepatitis C.
17. As previously mentioned Mum had HHT and Lupus, and as the hepatitis C started to affect her, it acted as a trigger to her other conditions, which became more aggressive and worsened. For example, her nosebleeds became more frequent and heavier. Eventually she had to have an operation to seal her nose to stop these.
18. Mum defied medical odds; I will say that about my Mum, because of her determination she wouldn't give up. She fought to the end. Even doctors said she should have died 10 years before, they always said you are living longer than what they would have medically expected. She wasn't going to let it beat her.

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

19. I am not aware that my mother caught any other infections other than hepatitis C from infected blood but I was a child at the time of her infection. Dad stated in paragraph 17 of his statement that Mum was tested for other infections, including HIV at the time she was diagnosed with Hepatitis C and these came back negative.

**Section 4. Consent**

20. I am unable to answer this as I was a young child when my mother received blood transfusions and I was 9 years of age when she received the Factor VIII product which turned her orange. However, my father was adamant that neither he nor my mother were specifically told before her gallstone operation that she would be given Factor VIII. They only mentioned that they wanted to give Mum precautionary treatment and Factor VIII was not mentioned. No risks were explained and no mention of a risk that Mum could contract Hepatitis or any other infection. Paragraph 11 of my father's statement refers.
21. About 6 weeks following Mum's operation she was called to Bradford Royal Infirmary to see her haematologist, Professor Turner who told my parents that she had contracted Non-A Non-B Hepatitis, later known as Hepatitis C, from contaminated Factor VIII. She was told that they thought it would not do her any harm as it wasn't like other hepatitis infections. I refer to paragraph 12 of my father's statement.
22. According to Dad and as stated in paragraph 19 of his statement, after Mum reacted badly to the Factor VIII treatment of which she had not been given any specific details of the treatment beforehand, we were not aware that Mum was going to be tested for any infections and didn't realise she had been tested. They were called in and told she had contracted Non-A Non-B hepatitis. So these tests were done without Mum's consent and resulted in even more of a shock when she was given the Hepatitis C diagnosis.
23. Following her diagnosis Dad mentions in his statement that she didn't not agree to anything treatment-wise, without asking lots of questions.

**Section 5. Impact**

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24. To give some background to before my mother was infected with Hepatitis C, when I was growing up we did lots of activities because she was a GRO-B. We would bake and we lived in GRO-B so we did a lot of walking in the GRO-B. I enjoyed it but, as a 9-year-old, I probably whinged, but we did lots of fun things. For the first couple of years after Mum got infected it didn't change and everything carried on as before.
25. Mum suffered with anaemia, which did make her tired but it didn't make her any different so initially nothing really changed.
26. I can remember when she told me she had been infected with what they called 'non-A non-B' hepatitis then. I would have been under 12 years as we were still in GRO-B. I must have known Mum had something which she got from the operation. However, the doctors told her not to worry about it and that she would be ok. She told me not to worry about it as she would be fine. Life carried on at that point.
27. As her conditions got more aggressive her lupus began affecting her and she became allergic to sun. By the time I was 14, we stopped going to Greece and Spain for our holidays and took to having holidays in the UK. As a 14-year-old going to OAP resorts was boring, we would never go to interesting places. So, by the time I was 16 years old, I stopped going on holiday with my family. It was no longer fun to go on holiday and it changed the whole holiday dynamic.
28. During the 1990s Mum's nosebleeds got worse, they would start suddenly and there would be a massive gush of blood which went everywhere. As a teenager, I wiped up her blood and helped clear it up. I came into contact with her blood whilst cleaning up and we were given no warning of risk. Mum would not have let me anywhere near her blood if she had known. Initially she was not given information that it was effectively like HIV. We didn't wear gloves because we weren't aware that she could pass it on.

29. My Dad was tested but I have never been tested. Hospitals have never offered me a test and Mum and Dad never told me to have one. Health-wise I've been fine, I have other conditions but nothing linked to Hepatitis C as far as I am aware.
30. I suffered from bad periods, which resulted in blood transfusions and a hysterectomy in 2016. Prior to that whilst on holiday in [GRO-B] I had an epileptic seizure and it all came to a head and I am now on permanent medication but I never connected it with Hepatitis. I never thought about it and no one else did until now.
31. With regards to my mother's Hepatitis, we just thought it was a chronic illness that you could never reverse. Mum's conditions forced her to take early retirement in 2001. She had been a [GRO-B] and then a [GRO-B]. Retiring affected her mentally as she loved working with [GRO-B] it was a big part of her life taken away.
32. I fell pregnant and had twin girls in [GRO-B]. Mum was my childcare and she looked after the girls so that I could go back to work. She cared for them from when they were babies up until they were three and a half years old, 3 days a week. Mum was brilliant with the girls.
33. Despite her health conditions she did everything with them. Her [GRO-B] background came into play, she helped them write and did painting with them. Her health conditions made it difficult for her but she was the most determined person you would ever meet. She didn't let anything stop her even if at times she felt like death.
34. However, as time went on she became aware of the risk of her blood coming into contact with other people. Nurses at the hospital would put on 2 sets of gloves and she was aware of the risks associated with the illness.
35. My husband was paranoid about it in relation to her looking after the children that if she cut herself and the blood came into contact with the

girls it could be a problem. It was really hurtful for her as we would have discussions and she was aware of this.

36. I had torn loyalties. I'd grown up with my Mum having this condition, I was used to it but my husband looked at it objectively and felt it was not right sometimes. [GRO-B] and I had heated discussions about it. I felt, rightly or wrongly that it felt like he was making my Mum some kind of pariah and I know she found it hurtful too, as she would never have hurt them. They meant the world to her. She felt she had to step back from them and couldn't have that close contact. It did get to her and she did sit and cry because she knew [GRO-B] was wary and she felt a bit like a leper. My husband takes my point that it made her feel awkward. She also felt she had to be careful and while she could give them kisses and cuddles she always had to be mindful.
37. Mum kept her conditions hidden and didn't tell people she had Hepatitis. Not many people knew, because of the stigma she didn't want people to judge her on that. She didn't want people to assume she got it from some lifestyle choice, as it wasn't a lifestyle choice. But as a consequence she and our family had to deal with it on our own.
38. As a young I child didn't think about stigma associated with my mother. I remember the HIV adverts at school which were scary. Everyone knew about HIV but not Hepatitis C.
39. At that time my Mum wasn't aware of it. It was only because she read something in the paper years later about it and my Dad's statement covers it.
40. I remember when I first discussed it with [GRO-B] in about 1999-2000. I said we don't talk about it, we don't mention it because of the stigma. We never said anything to our friends but after my mother died, [GRO-B] told his mother.

41. My Mum didn't tell her younger brother as he has disabilities and can get himself very upset at times, so she didn't tell him for this reason. Her older brother knew as he has a medical background but it was very much kept under wraps. My Dad's sisters didn't know. It wasn't for them to judge, it was for her to live her life and she had enough problems living her life at times.
42. Her cirrhosis got worse, caused by the Hepatitis C. In late 2009 her liver got worse and she was tired and had to keep her feet raised. Her blood counts at times were not liveable blood counts, they were down at 4. She bloated out and had to sit elevating her legs at night. She had a lot of water retention and she got upset by way she looked. She was naturally a very thin person but her stomach became very large and she looked pregnant. It was sad. Why should she have to go through it, the whole of her life affected, why sit in a chair and be an onlooker on life?
43. Mum came from a very poor background and worked hard all her life but she couldn't retire and enjoy life. With my girls she had to become a bystander and couldn't do fun things like going off for a walk or riding bikes. More often than not we did fun things whilst she stayed at home. She wasn't able to be there and it did affect her. She got told about the fun things rather than seeing for herself.
44. My daughters' memory of their granny isn't that granny did fun things with them, rather they remember her being ill, sitting in the chair sleeping, being fat and ill.
45. In the school holidays my Mum and Dad looked after the girls, as I was at work. During these she had to attend hospital treatments, this isn't fun for 8 year olds. They had to see their granny all wired up to drips and machines.
46. It is always easier to say other conditions caused things, that it wasn't the Hepatitis C, that it was always the HHT and other ailments. But it was because of the Hepatitis C that she died of liver failure, which is recorded

on her death certificate, so ultimately it was Hepatitis C that killed her. Her death certificate states a medical term, to do with Hepatitis C, not the other conditions which were all manageable.

47. There is a fair chance my Mum would still be here today if not for Hepatitis C because Mum's aunt, uncle, her mother and younger brother all had the conditions my Mum had, and all lived into their 70s and 80s. Their conditions were all manageable and my Mum's brother is still alive today.
48. Mum was 66 years of age when she passed away and my Granny was 76 when she passed away, because of improvements in health care she should have lived to the same age, if not longer than her mother. I do believe she would still be here today if she hadn't had Hepatitis C. She was taken too soon and my daughters were deprived of their Granny and me my Mum.
49. When Mum was at the end she started having blackouts which began in January 2012. She had had a difficult Christmas and she acknowledged to us that she was dying. She had a further episode in February of 2012. On GRO-C, she was lucid which is my daughters' birthday, shortly thereafter she went into a coma and she died on 5 April 2012.
50. My Mum got unsteady on her feet because of the drugs she was on. She broke her wrist in 2004, just after the girls were born. They couldn't treat her because it was too risky because of her conditions so she ended up with a deformed hand.
51. Mum wanted to do so much in her retirement. She wanted to see the world GRO-B and I went to Australia and New Zealand and she wanted to go but she never got to go there. She went to GRO-B for the first time since the 1990s but she couldn't get health insurance. She tripped and broke her arm high up near her shoulder but because she couldn't get health insurance she didn't go to hospital in Spain and waited until she

got home. She broke her arm on day 3 of the holiday and was in pain all that time.

52. When the girls were 3 or 4 she dropped then off at play group. She was speaking to one of the mums in Tesco car park and she turned around and snapped her femur because she had osteoporosis.
53. I cannot overstate how much my Mum's death had a massive effect on my Dads' life. My Mum was his world, he did absolutely everything for her. He lived his life for her and he was happy to help when she had nose bleeds, if he got infected he would have accepted it.
54. My Mum was GRO-B and he was from GRO-B they met when they were a about 23 years old and were married at 24. It was a whirlwind romance, they got engaged after 6 weeks of a long-distance relationship as she was in GRO-B and he was in GRO-B
55. When she became ill, Dad had to carry her everywhere. He would do anything to make her life easier. He was her full-time carer and before she got help from Macmillan he did everything.
56. Dad retired a year earlier than anticipated at the age of 61 because he got made redundant. He didn't want to relocate to GRO-B and because he couldn't work from home he told them he would take redundancy. Mum and Dad said they didn't want to move away from us. Mum could retire on her GRO-B's pension scheme and he got his state pension at the age of 65.
57. Mum had so much to offer and the girls have missed out on this. My parents wanted them to achieve the best. Mum would have encouraged them that they could have realised their dreams, as Mum was the driving force.
58. It was my Mum's side of the family who valued education, back in the day people got to achieve what they wanted to achieve in GRO-B She was

very much a positive influence. She would say think about your career, she wanted me and the girls to achieve the best in life. She pulled herself up coming from a poor family. She would have wanted the girls to achieve and work hard at school and she expected the girls to work. She was a matriarchal figure.

59. When my Dad remarried my life took a different course. He would never have left Mum, as he acknowledged, they would have seen their 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary together had she not died. Factor VIII back in 1983, changed my family's life forever and will continue to do so. I spoke to my Mum everyday. I still say, "I wish I could tell my Mum..."
60. Dad's remarriage did affect me. When Mum died in GRO-B 2012 he had just retired at 61. He got together in 2014 with his new wife. We knew he was lonely, he came around 3-4 times a week and came on holiday with us. He was a big part of our lives. He was lonely he went home to an empty house, we tried our best but he needed a life and wanted companionship. Ultimately, he got a new wife.
61. I am an only child and suddenly I was going to have a big large family replacing my Mum and I didn't want her replacing. I felt he had jumped into something.
62. The hard thing for me is that as he was more and more with his second wife, I used to say he has forgotten my Mum. They were together for 42 years of marriage and he didn't want to talk about her when his second wife was in the room. She didn't know my Mum but she knew of her.
63. My Dad used to do gardening at the church as part of the gardening team. At that time my Dad's second wife's first husband was very ill with a brain tumour and this is how they met. Mum knew of here existence because she knew her husband was terminally ill as well but she was not a friend of Mum. It was a shock when they got together because I thought they were platonic friends, both lonely and in a bad place. I didn't want

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him to get married. He said nothing will change, but it did. Mum got increasingly forgotten. Mum's house was sold and they bought a new house together.

64. The ultimate effect of my Mum dying and Dad remarrying was that I missed out on my inheritance, as did my children. My Mum saved everything as she came from a poor background. Dad said it won't change, you will get your inheritance. But it did, when he got cancer he changed his will in favour of his new wife. I know that sounds a bit hard but that's the reality of it.
65. There were a couple of pictures that his second wife won't let me have. One was of the village where my Mum grew up but she won't let me have it despite it being of no significance to her.
66. My Dad was kind and supportive and always wanted to help people. He is like that to everybody. My Mum was the willpower, the driving force. My relationship with my Dad changed and I have an estranged relationship with my stepmother. I will be the one to contact her. She has never asked me once about how I am feeling when Dad died. She didn't even tell me that Dad had died, instead she got a friend to call me to tell me that.
67. Dad by trade was an GRO-B due to that he would never wear a ring because of the potential danger of snagging it, however when he retired and when Mum died he had Mum's wedding ring re-sized. He then wore it up until the day he remarried. I knew Dad was ill and I asked him for Mum's jewellery, he handed over a load of jewellery when he was still alive but the ring wasn't in there. I told his second wife that Mum's wedding ring isn't in there, she said it is, but it isn't.
68. My relationship with Dad changed, I used to ring him every night and check he was alright. Even after he got married I rang him for a chat daily. Initially he was ok but as time passed all conversations were on

speaker phone and eventually during lockdown he told me not to ring every day. I never got to see Dad on his own, his second wife had to be there even when we did the witness statement for my Mum, she sat in the room.

69. My Dad was in hospital from July to September 2020 pretty much all the time. He had cancer of the oesophagus and bowel cancer, a double whammy. They removed his oesophagus and that went well. They did his bowel operation 15 weeks later and initially thought it was ok but it had gone wrong as they didn't stitch him up well and it was seeping out. This ended up with him having a stoma. He wanted it reversed so he went into hospital in July 2020 in anticipation of it being reversed but was told that it was too high risk.
70. Last year in the summer his second wife allowed me to go down once a week to see him when he was in [GRO-B] in [GRO-B] visits being limited because of Covid. I visited him for an hour once a week and because his second wife wasn't there, he was back to the Dad I knew. He changed how he viewed me, he changed how he was, he changed as a person. His second wife is from a big loud family and he became an observer in the last 2 years of his life. My Dad's family are in [GRO-B] and when we were up there talking to his family, he was Dad again.
71. Mum died of Hepatitis C. If she hadn't been given contaminated factor VIII Dad and his second wife would never have got together because Mum and Dad would never had split. They were inseparable.
72. I lost an element of my Dad when he remarried. They got together in late 2013 and the wedding was in [GRO-B] He proposed to her at his surprise 70<sup>th</sup> birthday party and they had just had their 5<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary before he died.
73. Dad was diagnosed with cancer in either October or November 2018. I knew he was aware that something was wrong as he always suffered

from heartburn, which got worse and he struggled to swallow, he said he felt like he had a load of food stuck in the back of his throat.

74. To give his second wife her due, she made him go to the doctor, she was very forceful and arranged the appointment for him. He told me when he was diagnosed. He told me that he had to have 'chemo' and an operation and that he may need radiotherapy. He had to go for a scan as they wanted to see how big the tumour was and at the same time they found a shadow in his bowel. They wanted to do investigative surgery and said they were going to remove it anyway as they thought it was pre-cancer but turned out to be stage 4.
75. In March 2019 he had the oesophageal cancer surgery and in June he had the bowel operation. He was in hospital in June for 12 weeks mainly in intensive care, following the complications with his surgery.
76. It was a shock when he died. He had a hernia and was in a lot of pain so he wanted his hernias repaired as they were affecting his quality of life. He said that if they couldn't reverse the stoma he wanted them to repair the hernias but they told him it was all or nothing. I think they must have done some exploratory work because they opened him up and found he was riddled with cancer so they sewed him back up without taking any further action.
77. When they removed the initial section of his bowel he had got rid of the cancer but it was the oesophageal cancer that had spread rather than the bowel.
78. We knew that the time he had left was very short, they said months and that he might see out 2020 if he was lucky. However, the doctor came back and said he had weeks rather than months. He got home as he didn't want to die in hospital. He was on oxygen when he came home and told me he had to go into the hospice for a week to learn to manage it.

79. My access to Dad was policed by his second wife and I was not encouraged to go and see him. At that time there were Covid restrictions at the hospice and only one person was allowed to visit. His second wife was that one person. He came home from the hospice on the Monday, he was in pain but was fine, he was on morphine on a syringe driver, which I knew was not good.
80. Dad's second wife even arranged for him to go to do some nice things on the Friday before he died. GRO-B my daughter and I saw him but GRO-B didn't GRO-B thought his second wife picked on her and she had an up and down relationship with her Grandad, so sadly, she never got to see him before he died. After he had died GRO-B was upset and regretted not seeing her Grandfather.
81. I rang on the Tuesday and said how's Dad? Dad's second wife said that he had not had a good night and he was in bed tired. I didn't know if he was genuinely in bed or she didn't want me to speak to him. I asked her to get him to ring me but he didn't ring.
82. I was going to ring first thing Wednesday morning. I felt she was policing him I knew him for 47 years she knew him for 7 which is a big difference. We didn't have a relationship with him because it was all about her. I knew he didn't have long left so I thought I am going to go round and see him.
83. That morning, GRO-B told me my phone was ringing; I guessed it was about Dad. I rang back and it was Dad's second wife's best friend, she said I am really sorry to tell you your Dad has died. His second wife could not tell me herself,
84. Dad, knowing he had cancer, knew his time was short, so he pretty much wrote his own funeral even what music he wanted. He asked my Uncle to do the eulogy, which was about Dad growing up in early life and he acknowledged my Mum.

85. In Dad's order of service, there was a picture of him having a picnic and the photo had been cropped to block out my Mum. His second wife couldn't acknowledge my Dad had been married 42 years to my Mum, it is so hurtful.
86. She also emphasised things about my Dad that I don't think my Dad ever played up, for instance she made a big thing of him being a Mason. He was very private about it but she played it up anyway.
87. Mum and Dad are buried in the same graveyard but he is down in the newer section in a double sized plot set aside for him and his new wife. He never considered having a plot reserved next to Mum.
88. We would have cared for my Dad when he was ill and would have converted the garage if his second wife hadn't been around. I would have done the same for my Mum or [GRO-B]'s Mum.
89. My Dad changed his will just before October 2019. In the old will I was to get half the house and assets with his second wife. My Dad's share went to the girls and me and his second wife's share went to her and her children.
90. I think Dad's statement was a full disclosure, however, at the end of the statement I prompted him. I said the bottom line is that you would still have been married to my Mum if she hadn't got Hepatitis C and he agreed. I don't think his second wife was particularly happy with that statement but that was the bottom line, a fact. His statement was very factual, not emotional. Whereas mine has more emotion but his could have been curtailed by the presence of his second wife. My Dad wanted to go down the factual route. He didn't want to go to any hearings and said he would just let them read out his statement.

**Section 6. Treatment/Care/Support**

91. My father does not feel that they were given adequate information to understand or manage my mother's infections. He states in paragraph 14 of his statement that they were sent away and were not given any more information about Hepatitis C. In light of what they had been told by Dr [GRO-B] they were given the impression that it was anything but serious.
92. When Mum was diagnosed with Hepatitis C neither she nor my father received any information about the risk of passing the infection on to others and my father said it was a long time before they were advised about precautions to take. My father states in paragraph 15 of his statement that they were not informed about the risk of passing the infection on by sexual intercourse until 2002 when they were given an information sheet by Mum's liver specialist Dr [GRO-B]
93. Dad states in paragraph 20 of his statement that after diagnosis Mum initially didn't receive any medical care, follow-up appointments or support for her Hepatitis C.
94. Around 1994 Mum read an article in the Telegraph about patients developing liver disease following infection with Hepatitis C through contaminated Factor VIII. Mum was proactive and contacted her GP, Dr [GRO-B] who immediately referred Mum to a liver specialist at The [GRO-B] [GRO-B]
95. Following numerous liver tests Mum was told that she had developed cirrhosis of the liver and that it was very serious. Had she not followed this up we don't know when her liver condition would have been identified.
96. She was placed under the care of Professor [GRO-B] specialist haematologist, at The [GRO-B] Hospital, and Dr [GRO-B] for her liver.

97. Mum couldn't get the treatment they had available at the time for Hepatitis C due to her other medical conditions. She was offered Interferon but because it increased anaemia and it was considered too high a risk to let her blood count fall any lower. She therefore didn't have any treatment for her Hepatitis C or liver damage. She was told there was nothing further that could be done to help her. Paragraph 24 of Dad's statement refers.
98. Antibodies changed her blood, so she had to get blood cross-matched. Although she had a common blood group they were not able to give her blood because of the way she reacted. She had massive reactions and latterly she used to have to have steroids to stop her reacting when cross-matched.
99. As we have mentioned Mum's medical conditions were complex and substantial. This resulted in local hospitals not wanting to deal with her. Even for the broken bones she suffered or something simple, nobody wanted to treat her. The hepatitis made her hospital treatment even more difficult, she was moved from pillar to post. She was under numerous consultants; but it was her liver consultant at The GRO-B who took the lead.
100. With regards to access to dental treatment, this was not an issue for Mum as she had to have her teeth removed when she was pregnant with my brother, so she had false teeth.
101. None of us ever received counselling. We have never been offered any professional counselling from the NHS or from our GPs. I am 99% sure that my father wasn't offered any. He lived in GRO-B and I live in GRO-B so definitely not on my part, but they wouldn't have known the history and we were under different health authorities.
102. I came into contact with Mum's blood whilst cleaning up after her nose bleeds but we were given no warning of risk. Mum would not have let me

anywhere near her blood if she had known. Initially she was not given that information but it was effectively like HIV. I didn't wear gloves because we weren't aware that she could pass it on.

103. I have never been offered a blood test for Hepatitis C by any health care professional and I am now considering requesting one.

104. One time, Mum had to see a different GP and he asked Mum if she was an alcoholic and if she caught Hepatitis C through drinking. Dad mentions this at paragraph 35 of his statement. She was very upset about this comment. Mum's Hepatitis C was not because of drinking. Mum was never a big drinker.

105. Dad looked after Mum, he dedicated his life to looking after her, it was only when she was close to the end help was provided by the healthcare authorities such as the Macmillan nurses.

106. Mum had a file on Hepatitis C and it contained all her medical records along with newspaper clippings. I think that is how she found out the enormity of Hepatitis C. She had to read it in a national newspaper, no one contacted her about it. She had this whole file on it, but when my Dad moved house he didn't know there would be a blood Inquiry and it was got rid of in the move. It had everything in it, I wasn't given the opportunity to store it.

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

107. Mum applied to and received payments from the Skipton fund. This is detailed in my Dad's statement.

#### **Section 8. Other Issues**

108. I remember when the recent Panorama programme aired, I saw something in the programme which made me cross. I rang Dad and told

him to watch it as it was about Mum. She had a blood bleeding disorder, not a haemophilia but got lumped in with them. However, she was in a minority group of hundreds, not thousands with her particular bleeding disorder. Hospitals in the 1980s were still bringing in blood from USA, which made me really angry.

109. So to end, Mum contracted Hepatitis C through either the blood transfusions she was given or the Factor VIII. The Factor VIII is the more likely route. As a result, Mum's health and lifestyle suffered terribly and she died before her time.
110. I am left without my Mum and my children without the support of their influential Grandmother. After 42 years of marriage, Dad was a single man again. He felt lonely and remarried a lady who was very dominant; this new relationship changed the way Dad was with me and the change was not for the better. This I find very sad.
111. I hope the inquiry uncovers what went on with the use of the contaminated blood. It has affected so many lives and I hope the truth as to why this was allowed to happen is established. Importantly, I hope that there is a mechanism put in place to prevent anything like this happening again.
112. One area I feel strongly about is continuity across the NHS. All the separate health authorities need to work as one, specifically regarding sharing information.
113. I also want to highlight the fact that no one in the medical profession ever conducted a look back exercise on how Mum was infected. As a result of the meeting with the Investigators yesterday and writing the statement above, it occurred to us last night that if she had been infected prior to my birth I could be at a higher risk of infection myself and no one has informed me of this.

114. The fact that Mum underwent several transfusions before my birth has not been taken into consideration. This potentially also has implications for my daughters. Again there appears to be a systematic breakdown in informing people of the danger of potential infection. How many other people fall into this category?

115. It is only as a result of talking with you that I have decided to take a test. I cannot understand with the knowledge the NHS have about Hepatitis C why they themselves have not suggested that I take a test. I find this irresponsible and a systematic failure. I have taken it upon myself to request a test.

**Statement of Truth**

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

Signed

GRO-B

Dated 26/02/2021