

Witness Name **GRO-B**

Statement No: WITN1149001

Exhibits: WITN1149002-4

Dated: February 2019

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**
GRO-B **GRO-B** and I work **GRO-B**
GRO-B

2. I have been infected with Hepatitis C as a result of receiving contaminated blood products.

3. I also prepare this statement as an affected person in relation to my late mother **GRO-B: M**
M who contracted Hepatitis C from contaminated blood products.

4. This statement has been prepared without the benefit of access to either my mother's or my full medical records.

Section 2. How Infected

In relation to myself:

5. I have mild Haemophilia B and I received Factor IX since approximately 1961.

6. I was treated at the GRO-B from 1961 to 1986. My main consultants were Dr Rizza and Dr Matthews.
7. I then moved to GRO-B where I was under the care of the Queen's Medical Centre.
8. I was not given any information or advice regarding the risks of receiving blood products.
9. I was infected with Hepatitis C as a result of receiving contaminated Factor IX and I believe that I was infected at the GRO-B
10. I was not told about my infection until 27.01.1995 during a routine appointment with Dr GRO-B I was told in a very matter of fact way that I had contracted "*a hepatitis type virus*" which could affect my liver; for which there was no cure. I was given some brief advice regarding the risk of transmission to others and I was also advised to give up drinking alcohol.

In relation to my mother

M

11. I was tested for Haemophilia at birth in 1969 and as a result of this test it was discovered that my mother was a carrier of Haemophilia B. My mother's baseline Factor IX level was 32%.
12. My mother received Factor IX, on only 4 or 5 occasions, for tooth extractions and hip operations from 1969.
13. My mother received treatment at the GRO-B and her main consultants were also Dr Rizza and Dr Matthews.
14. My mother was infected with Hepatitis C as a result of receiving contaminated Factor IX.
15. **Exhibit WITN1149002** is a letter dated 01.08.2000 from Dr Jane Collier to DR Rashid Kazmi which states "*I reviewed this 67 year old lady who has probably been infected with Hepatitis C for around 31 years following a dental extraction in 1969*".
16. As far as I am aware, my mother was not given any advice or information regarding the risks of receiving blood products.

17. **Exhibit WITN1149003** is an extract from my mother's medical records confirming that she tested positive for Hepatitis C on 14.11.1991.

18. However, my mother was not told about her Hepatitis C infection until 27.01.1995 and **Exhibit WITN1149004** refers. This extract was signed by Dr Giangrande but it was actually Dr **GRO-B** who advised my mother of her infection. I attended the routine appointment with my mother and we were both told of our infections at this time, albeit in separate appointments.

19. I do not know the specifics of what my mother was told in her appointment but when she came out of the appointment she said *"I've got this thing, which means I need to cut down drinking"*.

Section 3. Other Infections

20. I do not know if my mother or I have been exposed to any other infections as a result of receiving contaminated Factor IX.

Section 4. Consent

21. I suspect that I was tested for Hepatitis C, HIV and possibly other viruses without my knowledge and therefore impliedly without my consent.

22. My mother was tested for Hepatitis C without her knowledge and consent on 14.11.1991 to which **Exhibit WITN1149003** refers. I therefore strongly suspect that my mother was tested on other occasions, and for other viruses, without her knowledge and consent.

Section 5. Impact

23. One of the worst issues I experienced with regard to Hepatitis C was the treatment I endured in order to clear the virus.

24. I underwent two separate courses of treatment; the first being in 2003 which was a 12 month course of Interferon and two other drugs which I do not recall the name. However, this was unsuccessful and I therefore embarked on my second treatment in January 2013. This was a 9 month course and it comprised Telaprevir, Interferon and Ribavirin. Upon completion of this second course, I successfully cleared the virus.

25. The side effects were fairly awful but I managed to cope really well and completed both courses of treatment. However, following the treatment I developed a number of physical problems including muscular pain in my neck and shoulders. This pain is debilitating as it can last for several weeks. I also suffer from extreme fatigue and my concentration wanders. Furthermore, I developed very itchy skin. Unfortunately, these problems still continue today.
26. As a result of the symptoms I suffered following the treatment I had to reduce my working hours in a career I love down to 40% of what I should have been able to do. I firmly believe that if I was just coping with Haemophilia and its effects I would still be working on a full-time basis and would have a significantly better standard of health.
27. Losing 60% of my income has had a dramatic effect on my financial stability. I have had to take my pension from a previous job a lot earlier than I would have liked with the added problem of a reduced pension in due course.
28. Hepatitis C caused further financial problems because a lot of insurance companies wouldn't give provide cover for me or if they did it was very expensive and the money could have been better spent on my children.
29. When I was first told that I had been infected with Hepatitis C I obviously had no idea what effect it would have on my family. I had young children at the time and there was always a worry that something might happen to me or that I could pass it on to my family accidentally.
30. I have never hidden the fact that I was infected with Hepatitis C from my social circle or work colleagues. I think I have been incredibly lucky in this regard because I have not suffered any stigma and I don't think anyone has changed their opinion of me as a result of learning of my infection.
31. I do feel fortunate that I have not developed cancer and it is never far from my mind that this was how I lost my dear mother. She passed away from liver cancer, caused by Hepatitis C, in GRO-B 2014. Apart from the obvious grief of losing your mother early on in life I am greatly troubled by the fact that I may go the same way as her. I suffer from anxiety when I think about this fact.

32. My mother suffered from multiple medical problems during her life. These included osteoarthritis and having to undergo a number of hip replacement operations. She had to go through a procedure to get rid of a cancer in her liver that was detected in 2008. However that returned in 2013 and ultimately led to her death.

33. My mother was a brave woman with a strong character. She never complained or made a fuss over things. She remarried twice after my father passed away when I was young. She was a carer for her second husband; so it was almost as though she did not have the time to worry about herself. My mother could have been keeping quiet so as not to upset or worry me but it appeared that she preferred to speak about happy things, such as her grandchildren. Her attitude was always that the "*glass was half full*" which was something I very much admired about her.

Section 6. Treatment/Care/Support

34. As far as I am aware, neither my mother nor I have suffered any difficulties or obstacles with regard to accessing medical or dental treatment. However, I have never been offered counselling or psychological support.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

35. I applied for and received the Stage 1 payment of £20,000 from the Skipton Fund in September 2004.

36. From December 2016 the Skipton Fund paid me £3,500 per annum and £250 per month.

37. I don't recall having any difficulties with the application procedures.

38. However, with the EIBSS I have found the application procedure for the Special Category Mechanism (SCM) payments convoluted and complex. It took me a visit to both my Haemophilia and Virology consultants to fill out the form to the satisfaction of the EIBSS.

39. Furthermore, the EIBSS wanted to know every single detail about my life and medical history. They also appear to send out a lot of pointless correspondences telling me what I already know.

Section 8. Other Issues/ Conclusion

40. I currently donate money to the GRO-B group on a monthly basis.

41. Very recently I stopped donating money to the GRO-B because I was appalled at the way they are now conducting themselves.

42. I want answers, transparency and the truth from this Inquiry.

Anonymity, disclosure and redaction

43. I wish 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 statement are true.

Signature

GRO-B

Dated 21st February 2019