

# ANONYMOUS

Witness Name: GRO-B

Statement No: WITN2476001

Dated: 25<sup>th</sup> March 2019

## INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

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FIRST 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<sup>th</sup> 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 and my address is known to the Inquiry. I am currently studying in GRO-B

2. I intend to speak about my Mother, GRO-B: M, infection which was contracted from a blood transfusion in the GRO-B and how the illness has affected me and my family.

### 2.How Infected

1. My Mother has had multiple medical problems throughout her life, predominantly rheumatoid arthritis, which has required multiple surgeries over

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a prolonged period of time during the [GRO-B] Because of these surgeries, she required a number of blood transfusions at [GRO-B]  
[GRO-B] During giving birth to me, there were also complications, which meant more blood transfusions were necessary.

2. Despite the transfusions having been provided during the [GRO-B], my Mother didn't actually know she had been infected with hepatitis C (HCV) until [GRO-B] when she received a blood test during a hospital visit relating to her existing medical conditions. After the diagnosis, I was immediately taken for a blood test myself to establish whether or not I had also been infected, fortunately I have no infections.
3. I'm not entirely sure whether or not the hospital had provided my Mother with sufficient information or guidance at the time of the diagnosis, I suspect she was as treatment began quite soon after.

## 3.Other infections

1. My Mother has only been diagnosed with hepatitis C (HCV). I don't believe she has suffered any other infections from a transfusion of blood.

## 4.Consent

1. My Mother hasn't spoken to me about the blood transfusions she received, so I'm not entirely sure whether or not she was able to consent to any of them being given or had received inadequate information.

## 5.Impact

1. For my Mum it's had a massive impact. Going for the treatment over the course of a year during [GRO-B] following her diagnosing was a huge physical toil and the implications of having a life that could be shortened has been a strain on my parent's marriage. My Mum definitely hasn't been the same person since being diagnosed, she was obviously used to having

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treatment for her arthritis, but the hepatitis C (HCV) is a much scarier thing and it's been gruelling for her to go through the treatment. The secondary issue she has is a mental condition which is a form of dementia, called Hepatitis C induced Mild Cognitive Disorder (HC MCD), which has been linked to having hepatitis C (HCV) and is bound to have more implications in the future. The issue has definitely impacted the family and she feels scared for the amount of time she has left.

2. My Mum went through a year of injections to fight the hepatitis C (HCV), which were pretty intensive on both my Mum and my Dad. I don't know if she's taking medication still for the condition and because she has other disabilities anyway, she's always taking lots of medication, so I'm not sure whether she's still taking any for the condition.
3. For me, it's a scary prospect. I worry about how much of my Mum's life has been taken away, and how long she is expected to live now. It's definitely been hard since it's happened.
4. The diagnosis has definitely had a huge impact on my parents. Although they're still married, their marriage has definitely been strained since the time of the treatment for hepatitis C (HCV). She's a shadow of who she was; she's constantly anxious and worried about the illness. The year of treatment between GRO-B had a massive impact alone.
5. One huge impact is that my Father had to take early retirement to care for my Mum when she was going through treatment, and because it means that she has a potentially shorter life it has had financial implications for the family. For the year of treatment, they were very isolated together and in a stressful situation. This condition, the HC MCD, worries her much more than any of her illnesses and she's been seeing people for her anxiety and she wakes up every morning panicking about it. They definitely have had a lesser life because of this and because of my Dad taking early retirement.

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6. For myself, this has been worrying and it's sad to see my Mum ill like she is and the amount of our lives that it takes up. Having to travel home for my parents when I'm in **GRO-B** and they're in **GRO-B** is hard for me because it gives me a responsibility to call them regularly and be like a counsellor to them. Obviously, it was very upsetting when we found out how advanced the infection was, facing the possibility of knowing it could kill my Mum has definitely given me an element of worry that I'm living with.
7. I haven't felt any stigma from being associated with hepatitis C (HCV) or the Infected Blood Inquiry, but my Mum is very keen that I don't tell anyone about it. Because I'm not infected it doesn't affect me, but because I don't tell anyone and my Mum doesn't tell anyone we don't talk about it. A lot of my Mum's family don't know and none of my Dad's family know about it. When my Mum was going for treatment it was especially hard to keep it secret from everybody.
8. The condition, HC MCD, my Mum suffers with has made me consider moving back to my parents and this might affect the future of my studying, but directly I can't say it's changed my academic performances right now. I study in **GRO-B** and it does make me feel bad that I'm not there for them.
9. For my Dad, the diagnosis ended his career, but for me, it didn't have an impact on my work, other than the concern and worry of the condition.
10. The fact that my Mum doesn't want to tell relatives has affected things. Her relationship with my Dad is much more strained than it ever was before. It is so hard to deal with someone being ill and has changed his relationship from a husband to a carer. Indirectly, the fact she's much more anxious has affected her relationship with her brothers and sisters. It's made it harder to be around her because she's so worried and isn't great to be around which is definitely linked to her not feeling she's able to tell people.



**6.Treatment/Care Support**

1. My Mum is on medication and counselling from the NHS to treat her anxiety off of the back of this.
2. My Mum's statement will go into the treatment and support she has received as there is a lot I just don't know about.

**7.Financial Assistance**

1. My Mother's situation is complicated because hepatitis C (HCV) is not her only condition. She is on disability allowances and whilst she was on the course of treatment she had to go through a dispute with the Benefits Office that put her on a back to work and stopped her disability benefit which made things very stressful in [GRO-B]. Eventually she did win the dispute.
2. I know that for the last 18 months, my Mum has been getting money from one of the trusts, and I believe she got an initial pay-out at the time of diagnosis, but I don't know the exact figures or where that came from. My parents are quite private with their finances, so they don't talk directly about it to me.

**8.Other Issues**

1. I'm not sure whether my Mum has all the records, but I know that it's been complicated because the hospital she had transfusions at in [GRO-B] doesn't exist anymore, so it's hard to find out exactly what transfusions she had when. She had so many transfusions in the [GRO-B] but we don't have the exact detail.
2. I haven't had any involvement in earlier litigation. I do know that my Mum has provided a lot of documents to the Inquiry, but I don't have anything to provide myself.

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**Statement of Truth**

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

Signed.

**GRO-B**

Dated... 25/3/19 .....