

Witness Name: GRO-B

Statement No.: WITN6608001

Exhibits: None

Dated: 4 October 2021

**INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY****FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF GRO-B**

I, GRO-B will say as follows:

**Section 1: Introduction**

1. I make this statement to assist the Infected Blood Inquiry in relation to its investigation arising out of the tragic circumstances of the death of my late father, GRO-B: F
2. My father relied heavily on the treatment Factor VIII for regular bleeds and traumas that his body easily had on regular basis.

**Section 2: How Affected**

3. My father F was born on GRO-B 1944 and was born with Haemophilia A severe which is less than 1% Factor VIII.
4. I am the 3rd daughter and 4th child of F I myself am a carrier of Haemophilia.
5. He succumbed to the effects of both Hepatitis C and Haemophilia on GRO-B 1988.

**Section 3: Other Infections**

N/A

#### **Section 4: Consent**

6. To the best of my knowledge, no advice was given nor were the risks of the treatment explained to my parents.

#### **Section 5: Impact**

7. I have a very hard time remembering or trying to recite my life as a young child growing up as my life was very limited and uneventful when it really should of been experiencing, exciting and a learning curve.
8. My Dad was always ill, off his feet or in hospital. In the early years I never understood why my Dad was always in bed or in a chair. It just became the norm in the end and I thought all Dads in other families were like that.
9. We had numerous hospital trips to the Haemophilia Centre or John Radcliffe both in Oxford. It kind of became our family day out. I remember us going to collect the petrol money that my Dad got for going to the Centre and being treated to a cake or a bag of chips to share from the chip shop on the way home. Unless of course my Dad needed it for gas and then it was jam sandwiches for the drive home. The Centre become our second home and everyone there knew us well. There were times when we were dragged out of our beds to be put into the car and driven to the Centre or woken up to be told that Dad needed to go to hospital or the Centre and that my Mum n Dad would be back as soon as they could.
10. I remember staying with my Mum in a B & B near the J R hospital whilst she was staying with Dad on one of his hospital stays. My Auntie said she needed me and I had to go. This was despite the fact that I would miss school. My Dad was on a ward with elderly gentlemen, and I remember on one occasion one of the patients peeing themselves in the door way and then he slipped and fell in his own urine. I went rushing over to him to help him up and then everyone's

around me started to shout at me to not to touch him. I was a little freaked out as I did not think what I was doing was wrong. That memory has stuck in my mind for over 30 years. I also stayed in the hospital with my Mum on separate occasions in the rooms they had for the Doctors. My Dad used to let me eat the puddings he did not want or as he was so sick could not eat.

11. I attended 3 schools in GRO-B my home town. I was a low class uneducated child but I enjoyed going to school in my younger care free days and the free school meals and milk.

12. I was always embarrassed to be spoken to in front of the class by the teacher as I hated attention on myself. I was brought up with hand me down clothes from my older 2 sisters and as we had limited funds for the electricity meter we had to share bath water. Thus my appearance was not always clean kept. I did not have the tools for communication, and I lacked in social knowledge. I never pushed myself in school as I didn't really need to. My parents were not an active part in my school life as they were often not home or busy with my Dads poor health. I absolutely loved sports but never wanted to join any clubs as my parents could not afford the equipment. My peers would often laugh at my runners or lack of and so if there was any chance my Mum needed me to stay home and miss out on school to go to hospital appointments with my Dad I volunteered for sure.

13. I left school at the age of 15 with only basic GCSE's and no ambition to gain further education. I wanted a quick fix. I needed to earn a good honest wage. I knew that my Mum and Dad had no money to fund me through college and I came from a background where you supported yourself day to day. I had no drive or ambition for an educated future at all so I went to work full time in an Ice Cream factory.

14. All my childhood I loved my Dad. I tried hard to make him laugh and I loved him dearly. I like to think that I was a Daddy's girl, but as time went on he became more and more absent in my life. I started down the wrong path of dating and I guess looking back on it I was kind of looking for male support or

a father figure that I was missing. I would go to night clubs at the age of 16 as I knew there were no repercussions as my parents were not around.

15. At a young age of 17 I became pregnant. This happened around the time of my Dads death in GRO-B 1988. I was horrified. After everything my family had gone through there was no way I wanted to have a child that could have Haemophilia. All that suffering and not being able to work to look after that child just as my Mum had done for my Dad, I could not go through with it so I opted for an abortion. I went to a counselling session and said there was no doubt in my mind that I wanted to go through with the pregnancy. After a bad abortion from excessive bleeding and receiving a blood transfusion I was allowed home to recover. Within 1 month after I was back in hospital as I was heavily bleeding again. This was another traumatic experience after losing my Dad.

16. On other occasions my Mum was in hospital with my Dad, myself and my older 3 siblings were left at home. When I got older, I was forced to shop and cook for my other siblings as they were at college or starting new jobs. I was under enormous pressure for someone so young and I ended up having a kind of mini breakdown and called my Mum crying and saying that I could not take it anymore. She called my Auntie and I went to stay with her and her family. I did not want to be forced to grow up. I wanted to be a kid with my Mum and Dad to be there to take care of me. A normal family life is what I desired but did not get.

17. My parents did not have friends of their own. They never invited anyone into our home. We were never a social household. We only had Aunts, Uncles and Cousins that we spent time with. I have limited communication skills to this day and do not know how to hold a conversation. I feel my Dad was embarrassed and too proud for people to see him as he was. Even my relatives did not always get to see him as he would be in bed or in his room.

18. I never understood why my Dad was ill. I was never told what he had or if I was told I was never made to understand what it was or the seriousness of his infections. Computers were not a thing in our life at that time. I did not realize what dangers I could be in. Off course, being a teenage girl I did like to take

control over some of my appearance that I could, that were cost free and one of them being hair free legs and off course the only person that had a razor was my Dad. I was told not to use my Dad's things, but i was never told why. Off course being a teenager, I thought I could get away with it and used it regularly.

19. I never have asked my Mum if both my Dad and herself really understood the effects of or the long term effect of my Dad having Hepatitis C or AIDS. My Mum and Dad were both young and they seemed to be very respectful of the Haemophilia Centre and follow along with their advice.

20. One evening my Mum needed to leave the house and my Dad was worried because he was having regular bleeds and random doses day or night. My Mum told him that it would be fine and I knew what I was doing. She was not gone for more than 2hrs when my dad needed me to make up his dose and I froze. I messed it up and couldn't do it. In the end he had to drag himself out of bed and down the stairs to do it himself. I felt terrible. I had totally let my Dad down. I felt a complete failure. After that I never wanted to be left alone with him again and avoided the house as much as I could. It was a lot of pressure to put onto a 16-year-old and one I will never forget.

#### **Section 6: Treatment/Care/Support**

21. No support, nurse visits or counselling were made available to us before or after the death of my dad.

#### **Section 7: Financial Assistance**

22. As far as I am aware, following the death of my father my Mum lost all of her benefits. She received a once off payment of £47,500 from the McFarlane Trust.

#### **Section 8: Other Issues**

23. Losing my Dad still affects me, and I am hopeful that I can find some closure now.

**Statement of Truth**

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

Signed 

GRO-B

GRO-B

Dated October 4/2021