

ANONYMOUS

Witness Name: GRO-B

Statement No: WITN0347001

Exhibits: Nil

Dated: 20<sup>th</sup> September 2019

**INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY**

**WRITTEN STATEMENT OF** GRO-B

I provide this statement in response to a request under Rule 9 of the Inquiry Rules 2006 dated 21 March 2019.

I, GRO-B will say as follows: -

**Section 1. Introduction**

1. My name is GRO-B My date of birth is GRO-B 1978  
and my address is GRO-B East Sussex  
GRO-B I live with my partner and our two children who are 6 and 3. I

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work for British Gas as a [GRO-B] in [GRO-B]  
[GRO-B]

2. I intend to speak about my late father [GRO-B: F] ([GRO-B]/1955 - [GRO-B]/1995). He was 40 years old when he died. He had been infected with HIV for 10 years as a result of being given contaminated blood products to treat haemophilia. I will speak about this later.
3. I was only 16 going on 17 at the time of his death, therefore my account is through the eyes of a very young boy. It is poignant to note that my father has been dead for 24 years, longer than I actually had him alive as a father.
4. I intend to discuss the nature of his illness, how the illness appeared to affect him, the treatment he received and the impact it had on him and our lives together.
5. I confirm that I have chosen not to be legally represented and that I am happy for the Inquiry team to assist me with my statement.
6. For family reasons both my mother [GRO-B] & I wish to remain anonymous. My statement should be read in conjunction with my mothers.

## **Section 2. How Infected**

7. My father was from Iran, he suffered with haemophilia and as a child I remember travelling up to the Royal Free Hospital whenever he had a bleed. Later on he would self-administer Factor 8 injections at home.
8. My mother and I requested for my father's medical records as soon as we heard about the work of the Inquiry. Up until this point we were under the impression that the self-administered Factor 8 had infected him with HIV.

9. It was only when the Deputy Lead Investigator to the Inquiry went through my fathers medical records that my mother and I found out that my father had actually been infected during a procedure to treat an anal fissure in 1985.
10. Without the Infected Blood Inquiry we still would not have known how my father contracted HIV. For all these years I had wrongly assumed it had been through his self-administering of Factor VIII. No one from the medical profession ever explained to us how he became infected. I think that's wrong.
11. I remember my father would leave his razor lying about indoors, so he was probably not given sufficient information about transmission of the virus after the diagnosis.

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

12. I always thought my father had only been infected with HIV as a result of receiving contaminated blood products. However, on inspection of my father's medical notes, he had also been infected with Hepatitis C (HCV).

### **Section 4. Consent**

13. I presume my father would have provided consent for the blood products used to treat his haemophilia and for the blood received during operations.
14. I do not know whether my father provided consent to be tested for HIV.
15. My partner could not conceive naturally so we had IVF treatment for each of our children. For this procedure I consented for my blood to be tested

for various viruses (including HIV). The results were negative and we were allowed to continue the IVF process.

**Section 5. Impact**

16. It transpires that I was only 6 when my father found out he had been infected with HIV, so I do not remember him from when he was well and healthy. I do not know if he was short tempered and aggressive before, or whether the virus caused this? My parents made the decision not to tell me until I was much older.
17. I do recall that my father was very short-tempered and had an aggressive side to his personality. I have been told that I used to get hit quite frequently by my father, but now that he is not here I have chosen to block out these memories and focus on the good times we had.
18. I remember one day when I went out to play, I stayed out late and my father called the police. When I arrived home he beat me rather than be pleased that I was home safe and sound. I was about 9 years old.
19. I also remember him being abusive and how he would shout at my mother and sister at home. It often seemed that he was happier around other people when he was out and in other peoples company.
20. I remember my father as being ill, stressed and not very affectionate. He was never very cuddly to us as children and I do not remember him ever picking me up from school, or doing any activities I wanted to do. It was my mum that would take me to watch and participate in sports, as he was not interested. As a father myself, I am very interactive with my children and enjoy doing the school run.
21. Looking back I can now see that he did not play fight or interact with me because of the haemophilia and in case he ended up with a bleed. He



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must have also been very cautious about blood contact once he knew he was infected with HIV.

22. I went to Iran with my father in 1990 when I was 11. I enjoyed experiencing the culture and visiting different places, but I did not speak Farsi.
23. On some days I would wake up and my father had already gone out and the language barrier meant that I could not communicate with my grandparents. I recall there being a lot of emotion associated with the trip and obviously at the time he would have known he was ill.
24. I remember the scar from his knee operation and the stick he used because of his limp. He struggled to drive because he had little mobility in the knee joint. Where his legs were skinny his knee was very out of proportion.
25. My father was a mechanic and he was very interested in cars, I have vivid memories of going to watch banger racing at GRO-B
26. I feel there are so many skills I wish I could have learnt from my father, including repairing cars and learning his native language Farsi. As a child and teenager I felt that I had plenty of time to do that and it was not important at that point.
27. I only found out that my father was very ill about a year before his death. He sat me down in the living room with my half brother GRO-B and half sister GRO-B to explain that he had an illness and was very unwell.
28. My father went on to say that we would probably notice him losing weight, that he would be in hospital frequently and that he may not recover. I had noticed his weight loss but did not think he was unwell. I recall being in shock after the news. I did not know how to deal with or process the thought of my father being seriously ill or potentially dying.

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29. Despite his illness, my father continued to work on cars and worked hard whatever the weather. He could have chosen to stop but he still wanted to provide for the family.
30. My father was hospitalised during my GCSE examinations in May 1995. I would go into school for each exam, but head up to the Royal Free with my mum as soon as I finished. We had to travel from GRO-B and it took hours.
31. My grades were definitely affected and I achieved no higher than a D in any of my subjects. I did not want to revise at the time because of what was happening in my home life. I would simply do the exam, go through the motions and then head off to hospital.
32. My father was in the Royal Free Hospital, Hampstead, for a month before he died and I would visit all the time. I remember going though the back entrance and past the haemophilia centre to his ward. I could probably draw a plan of the hospital because I remember it so well.
33. There would be days when my father would perk up and I thought he was getting better. He never ate much but one day he asked for a KFC and he ate it all. I thought he was improving, as he was not eating before.
34. One day my mum received a phone call from the hospital early in the morning to say that my father was very ill and that we needed to visit. He died that afternoon.
35. I remember being in a hospital corridor when a nurse told me that he had passed away. I do not think that I went back into his room. It was horrible losing my father, I felt numb and it was hard to come to terms with. Although he told us he was unwell I always thought the hospital would make him better. I was very angry.

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36. I went mad at the doctors after being told my father had died. I shouted at them and was very rude. I remember kicking off at one nurse in particular because he was there with me when I found out. I was devastated, looking back now, most likely in shock and not believing what had happened.
37. Dad was only a slight man but he lost a lot of weight because of the virus and according to hospital records he was only 42.5kg when he died.
38. My father was taken to a local funeral directors and I went in with my mum and half brother to say my last goodbye. The day my father died we did not expect him to pass away, so I never said goodbye when he was alive.
39. GRO-B and my father never really got on, but he came to support mum and I. We put written notes in his pockets and left the choke chain of his German Shepard in his coffin because he was very fond of his dog.
40. I recall GRO-B cracking a joke to make light of the situation. As he was selling on all of my father's cars, he asked him how much he wanted them to sell for. I am glad I went to see him, but the funeral directors made him look different and I did not want to touch him. This is the last memory I have of my father.
41. The funeral took place in GRO-B and I was in tears the whole time. The wake took place at the house of my mum's first husband and his wife.
42. After my father died I found some opium at the top of the kitchen cupboards. My older brother GRO-B told me what it was and it transpired that he had brought it back from Iran to help ease his pain.
43. I went off the rails after my father passed away because I did not care about life. I became rude, snappy, reckless and even lost friends because I was disrespectful. I mixed with the wrong crowd and got into the rave scene.

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44. Throughout this period I was taking acid, speed, ecstasy and was drinking heavily. I even started drinking during the week. This behaviour continued into my 20s.
45. I always worked but my behaviour went downhill. I may have ended up acting like this anyway, but it was certainly a way of getting away from everything that had happened to my father and the family.
46. Settling down with my partner and having children put me on the straight and narrow. I am very different to how I was in my teenage years and early 20s and I now realise how bad I acted. Although being in that scene meant that I ended up becoming a DJ, which I still do to this day.
47. I now have a very good relationship with my mother and life is good.
48. I am now much more fitness conscious and only drink occasionally. I regularly go to the gym and participate in Jiu-jitsu.
49. I am pleased that his grave is local and his body was not taken back to Iran. We chose to have a car engraved on his headstone. I find it particularly hard that my children will never get to meet their grandfather, but I do take my daughter to visit his grave. I tell her that he is now up in the Moon & Stars. I always visit on special occasions and have taken a beer up there in the past to pour over his grave.
50. I'll be honest with my children about what happened to their grandfather when they are old enough to understand, because there is not much stigma attached to the virus now.
51. When my father died I told everyone that he became ill in Iran and that he refused to come home for treatment and died of dysentery. I did not want to explain that he died of HIV because of the stigma back then. This now does not bother me at all – my father was careful and did not contract HIV



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by sharing a needle or something along those lines. He was infected because of the contaminated blood.

52. As a child I wanted to be a pilot or a fireman, but after finishing school I went to GRO-B College for an electrician's course. Back then I was at college to have fun and I did not listen or learn any skills. I was still very much in an angry resentful mood.
53. I only did a year at GRO-B College before moving to London for a music technology diploma.
54. I started working for British Gas in 1999 and eventually left to work for some other gas suppliers. I came back to British Gas around 10 years ago.
55. Going over my father's medical records yesterday brought everything home again and I was particularly shocked to find out that apparently he was not informed that he had HIV straight away, when the hospital knew 6 months previously. It was also touching to see that he had actually realised he was not being nice at home and sort psychiatric help. Whether he received this I do not know.
56. It has been a long time since my father died so I do not often get upset however I found going through some of his medical notes with the investigator was hard and very emotional.
57. I found it hard to know that he was delaying his knee surgery to prevent being infected with HIV, when, unbeknown to him he had already contracted the virus from an earlier procedure.
58. His intention to postpone the surgery meant that he had no idea he was infected and the thought of him later being diagnosed with HIV is hard to come to terms with. I do not know how he would have dealt with this news.

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

59. To my knowledge, my father was never offered any counselling or psychological support in relation to his infection with HIV.
60. I have never been offered any counselling or psychological support after my father's death, but looking back it would have been a good idea.
61. The medical professionals were always kind and friendly but I am not sure whether they knew how to deal with the virus.
62. As a family we were kept in the dark and the communication from the hospital was not good. No one even explained why my father was moved from the ward into a separate room.

**Section 7. Financial Assistance**

63. My mother GRO-B has detailed the financial assistance my father received as a result of being infected with HIV in her statement GRO-B

**Section 8. Other Issues**

64. From independent research I have found that the American Prisons knew the prison donors were infected, yet still let them donate blood. The contaminated blood scandal is a complete cover up.
65. Canada and Japan have both set billions aside to compensate those infected and affected by contaminated blood, but in the UK no one is yet to put their hands up and accept responsibility.

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66. I would like justice to be delivered by the Inquiry and a proper explanation for why we have waited so long for the contaminated blood scandal to be resolved.
67. People like my mum have never been properly compensated for the contaminated blood scandal and have struggled financially as a result. She was forced to sell her house because of debts and the mortgage payments.
68. My parents were members of the Haemophilia Society, but my mother has not heard from them since she moved out of the family house.

### Statement of Truth

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

Signed

GRO-B

Dated

20/9/19