

ANONYMOUS

Witness Name: GRO-B

Statement No: WITN1287001

Exhibits: 0

Dated: May 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 of GRO-B  
GRO-B My date of birth is GRO-B I live with my wife who  
is also my best friend. We have been together for GRO-B years and married for GRO-B  
of those years.

2. This statement has been prepared without the benefit of access to my  
full medical records.

**Section 2. How Infected**

3. I suffer with mild Haemophilia which is treated with Factor VIII concentrate.
4. I was never provided with any advice or information regarding the risks of  
receiving Factor VIII concentrate.

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5. I have been infected with Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C as a result of receiving contaminated Factor VIII concentrate.
6. I was treated in St James' Hospital in Leeds under the care of Dr McVerry.
7. When I was aged 34 I attended a routine clinic appointment in St James' Hospital with Dr McVerry who proceeded to tell me, in a very matter of fact manner, that I had been infected with Hepatitis. He did not go into any further details. Dr McVerry certainly did not give me sufficient information or advice to allow me to understand or manage this infection. To the best of my recollection the only other thing he did was to sign some pieces of paper which I believe qualified me to obtain financial support from the Skipton Fund.
8. Dr McVerry then referred me to a Hepatitis clinic, run by Dr Southern, which was also in St James' Hospital. Dr Southern told me that I had been infected with Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C. He gave me a lot of information about both types of Hepatitis including advice regarding the risks of transmission. I am of the view that Dr Southern was a very good doctor and a thoroughly decent chap.

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

9. Dr McVerry advised me that I had been put at risk of vCJD although I cannot recall the date on which this news was given to me.

### **Section 4. Consent**

10. I was tested for HIV, Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C without my knowledge and therefore without my consent.
11. The two specialist nurses at St James' Hospital were **GRO-D** and **GRO-D**. They used to discuss confidential matters with Dr McVerry in a treatment room and I could often hear what they were discussing. On one such occasion they were discussing my case. I overheard them saying "We

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*will need to test him for HIV to make sure that he has not got it".* I knew they were discussing me because they mentioned my name. However, they never told me anything about this. This is evidence that, at the very least on one occasion, I was tested for HIV without my knowledge and therefore without my consent.

12. Overhearing conversations like this and the very existence of the contaminated blood scandal has led me to disengage with hospital professionals unless I am completely broken or dying.

### **Section 5. Impact**

13. I have suffered terribly as a result of my infections with both Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C.

14. My lowest ebb was when I found myself just sitting very quietly in my house. I have struggled and have not sought any psychological support or assistance. I have never put my hand up to say that I am suffering.

15. I live my life as a piece of china wrapped in cotton wool. I have led my life like this to ensure that no one comes close to me. I have not confided news of my infections to many people; only telling those who needed to know.

16. As a result of my poor mental health arising from my infections I often bite my wife's head off and she has to leave me alone. I am like a wounded animal believing that this animal can fix itself. My wife has been fantastic but there is only so much anyone can do.

17. I also had to tell my employer that I had "*a health problem*" when I was aged 35 or 36. I GRO-B and I had a good working relationship with my manager. I asked for a meeting with my manager and director and although I did not give a name to my health problem, I told them that I would need to attend regular hospital appointments and undergo difficult and lengthy treatments with nasty side effects which could necessitate some time off work.

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18. Both my manager and my director were understanding and indeed not long after this meeting I commenced my first attempt of clearing the Hepatitis C with an 18 month course of Interferon and Ribavirin which necessitated me taking some time off work.
19. I used to have my interferon injections on a Friday evening and I would not be able to get out of bed until the following Saturday afternoon due to the horrific side effects. I just wanted the treatment to end and I used to sit quietly not wanting to do anything. I had some of my lowest moments whilst on this treatment.
20. I managed to complete the full 18 month course of treatment but unfortunately the treatment did not clear my virus.
21. About 5 years after the unsuccessful treatment, I was put on another course of Interferon and Ribavirin treatment. I lost 1.75 stone in weight in only 6 weeks. However, the doctors did monitor my body weight closely and as my body weight dropped the dosage of the Hepatitis C treatment was decreased. I was mentally prepared for the horrific side effects this time which made it easier to withstand the full 18 months again. I am very determined and when I am asked to do something I usually manage to see it through.
22. Following completion of this treatment, I was finally declared "*clear*" of the Hepatitis C virus. However, I am of the strong view that the correct terminology should be that the virus is at an undetectable level because the virus remains in your body.
23. Despite the successful treatment in relation to my Hepatitis C I suffer with cirrhosis of the liver. I am very careful and I don't drink alcohol or smoke. I want to give my liver the best possible chance to avoid any further deterioration.

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

24. I don't think that I have ever been put on a ward with other patients for any of the procedures or operations I have had done. I am always placed in an isolated ward and I believe that this is due to my Hepatitis C.

25. I had a bilateral toe procedure under Dr **GRO-D** at St James' Hospital during which the doctors were unable to control my bleeding and discriminated against me by not giving me the best possible blood product treatment. I believe that this was as a result of the fact that I was already infected with Hepatitis C. Furthermore, following this procedure I recall walking to the toilet and accidentally leaving a large trail of blood through the hospital corridors. The hospital staff were panicking like headless chickens and racing around trying to mop up my blood.

**Section 7. Financial Assistance**

26. I received £20,000 and £25,000 from the Skipton Fund although I do not recall exactly when these payments were made. The process was fairly difficult and protracted because everything had to be approved by Dr McVerry and it was difficult to get hold of him. I also recall that the Skipton Fund avoided contact with me at times.

**Section 8. Other Issues**

27. I have not been involved in any previous litigation but I do follow the Facebook Groups.

28. I have suffered for over 30 years and I want someone to put their hand up and say that it was their fault.

29. I want justice and the truth.

30. I understand that Dr McVerry and many other clinicians were following orders which came from above, but I do not understand why none of them spoke up, particularly the very experienced ones.

Anonymity, disclosure and redaction

31. I would like to apply for anonymity.

32. I would be happy to give oral evidence if the Inquiry wanted to hear from me.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed

GRO-C

Dated

29/5/19