

# ANONYMOUS

Witness Name: GRO-B

Statement No: WITN1419001

Exhibits: None

Dated: July 2019

## INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

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FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF GRO-B

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I, GRO-B will say as follows:-

### Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is GRO-B and I live at GRO-B. My date of birth is GRO-B 1992. I currently live with my partner and 2 young daughters aged 3 and 5 years old. We moved to Glasgow from GRO-B around 2 years ago.
2. I provide this statement in response to a request under Rule 9 of the Inquiry Rules 2006 in respect of my late father GRO-B: F who was born on GRO-B 1958 and passed away on GRO-B 2013.
3. This witness statement has been prepared without the benefit of access to my father's full medical records.

### Section 2. How Affected

4. My father F contracted Hepatitis C through infected blood products. He had many health issues from the Hepatitis C, the main one was liver problems and as the years went on he eventually developed cirrhosis of

## ANONYMOUS

the liver. His health then deteriorated and it was too much for his body to cope with. He eventually passed away at the age of 55.

5. My father had moderate Haemophilia B. I am unsure of the exact product that he was given, but I do know it was a factor treatment. I believe it was Factor IX. He was given these blood products at the Glasgow Royal Infirmary Haemophilia Centre in the 1980s but do not know the name of his Consultant.
6. I am unaware of my father being told of any risks before receiving the blood products.
7. As a result of receiving these blood products, my father was infected with Hepatitis C.
8. I was only young when my father was so ill, so he did not explain everything to me at the time, but as far as I am aware, he was not told for years that he could possibly have a disease from the blood products he received. I personally feel that it is disgusting to leave families unaware of the possible permanent damage caused to their families.

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

9. I am not aware whether my father had any other infections as a result of receiving blood products.

### **Section 4. Consent**

10. I did not discuss this with my dad.

### **Section 5. Impact of the Infection**

11. In front of me, my father seemed like he was a very strong minded person, but what he did not know is that I would always hear him getting upset at night when I should have been asleep.

## ANONYMOUS

12. My father tried his hardest to be like all the other dads and go on days out with me and spend quality time together; however, the majority of these were cut short due to him taking ill.
13. Most of my childhood was spent either at home, or going back and forth from the doctor and hospital appointments with my father. As far back as I can remember hospitals had always been a part of our life. I spent most of my life helping my mum care for my dad.
14. One of my worst memories, which I still remember so clearly, was when I was around 10 years old and still in primary school, when my father began a treatment course for his Hepatitis C in or around 2002. My father was desperate to try and cure his infection as he knew that otherwise his fate would eventually be death, sooner than it should have been. He therefore began a trial treatment called Interferon.
15. My father completed the year long course but throughout this period, he was extremely ill, to a point where I thought I was going to lose him, at the young age of 10 or 11 years old. He was vomiting every single night and he lost a lot of weight. Further, he had to have his teeth removed due to them rotting away from the acidity of constantly throwing up over that year.
16. Nonetheless, throughout all this he managed to complete the treatment course as he really was willing to try anything to rid this disease. Unfortunately, after all of this, he found out that the treatment had not been successful.
17. As the years progressed, my father's liver became more damaged and led to him developing cirrhosis of the liver. This in turn, had an impact on his mental health because on his bad days he would be very yellow with jaundice and people would automatically assume he had an alcohol addiction and so his condition was brought on by himself. I found it very frustrating as people would comment and presume my dad was an alcoholic.

## ANONYMOUS

18. With my father's liver beginning to fail, this then put pressure on his kidneys, causing them to also begin to fail. He was never offered a transplant due to his health being so poor; as the doctors said that his body would not make it through the operation.
19. With all his organs beginning to fail, this put an incredible amount of pressure on my father's heart, which could only manage so much, and he eventually suffered from a heart attack in early 2013, which caused the whole left side of his heart to collapse. Since that incident he also had some mini strokes.
20. My father only survived another 6 months after this heart attack but he had a very poor quality of life and needed everything done for him. He ended up requiring a constant oxygen supply and he had a permanent catheter fitted. His memory also started to evade him, even forgetting who I was, which had a significant effect on me. On GRO-B 2013 my father had another heart attack, and later passed away; this is a day that will never leave my memory.
21. As I am sure you can imagine, having to watch my father live through this illness and going through so much while I was at such a young age was very distressing for me and it affected me mentally and socially even to this day. I was officially diagnosed with depression and anxiety when I was about 18 years old, but I believe that I have had it for much longer; since I was just a young child. I also lost my uncle to Hepatitis C on GRO-B 2012 after his body rejected his liver transplant.
22. If it was not for my 2 daughters and my partner, I do not even know how I would have coped in life. I love my life with my family and I live an amazing life in Scotland, but I just cannot help how my mental health affects everything. I am currently taking antidepressants (Sertraline 100mg) to help me get through day to day life. I have had many times where I have not needed these tablets, but the depression and anxiety is always there and it gets triggered a lot. At times, I have found myself not even being able to leave

## ANONYMOUS

my bed. This all had a major effect on me, even to this day, where I cannot do a simple task such as talk on the phone.

23. After spending most of my childhood going back and forth from hospital appointments and seeing so much happen to my father, I was always very quiet and did not really interact with others much. This led to me becoming an easy target to be picked on at school. The other children did not know what was happening in my personal life, but they were so easy to judge me because I was quiet and I would get easily upset. I was always hearing other children's stories about their days out, but I rarely got to do anything myself due to my dad always being ill, though that was not his fault; he always did his best.

24. I was 5 weeks pregnant with my eldest daughter at the time my dad passed away and so my children never got to meet their grandfather.

25. When my father's health began declining, he was not able to work, which led to us struggling financially.

### **Section 6. Treatment/care/support**

26. I do not know whether my dad was offered any extra support following his infection. He was just left to it until he had problems or fell ill.

27. I am unaware whether my dad was offered any counselling, but I have never been offered counselling, either when I was younger or when my dad passed away.

### **Section 7. Financial Assistance**

28. I am aware that my father received a few payments; however, I cannot remember the exact funding he received, nor whom it was from. I know that he received a couple of big payments and then further monthly payments towards the end of his life.

## ANONYMOUS

29. My father never managed to write a will and so when he died, all of the money he received just paid for his funeral and then went towards debts that both he and my mother had got into due to his inability to work and their resultant financial struggles.

### Section 8. Other Issues

30. I believe what makes all this worse is knowing that this should never have happened. This was all due to negligence and I believe that really this is a form of manslaughter.

### Anonymity

31. I wish to remain anonymous.

32. I do not want to give oral evidence to the Inquiry.

### **Statement of Truth**

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

Signed

GRO-B

Dated

17/07/2019