

ANONYMOUS

Witness Name: GRO-B

Statement No: WITN1458001

Exhibits:0

Dated: April 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 DOB GRO-B, and I live at GRO-B
GRO-B
2. My son GRO-B: S DOB GRO-B died on GRO-B after being infected with Hepatitis C by contaminated blood products.
3. My husband GRO-B, has also provided a statement to the Inquiry. This can be found at GRO-B
4. This witness statement has been prepared without the benefit of access to my late son's full medical records. If and in so far as I have been provided with limited records the relevant entries are set out in the medical chronology at the end of this statement.

Section 2. How infected

5. [S] was first diagnosed with mild haemophilia B as a 7 year old when he had his tonsils removed. He was treated at the [GRO-B] in [GRO-B]
6. When [S] was around 14/15 years old he was called to the [GRO-B] after the risk of contaminated blood products started to come out in the press. We were reassured that [S] would be fine because the Factor product that he was receiving came from Birmingham and not America. They said there was no need to import Factor IX as there was already plenty in the country.
7. I do not recall him becoming especially poorly at this time, although in hindsight little things come to mind like [S] getting a lump in his chest, having flu-like symptoms and feeling really lethargic at times.
8. The next we heard about Hepatitis C or HIV was when [S] was around 22 and he received a letter telling him he may have been exposed to these viruses through contaminated blood products. This was completely contrary to what we had previously been told; it was a complete pack of lies.

Section 3. Other Infections

9. [S] was told that he may have been exposed to vCJD.

Section 4. Consent

10. My recollection is that [S] was shocked and very upset when he was diagnosed with Hepatitis C. I therefore do not believe that he knew he had been tested for this virus.

Section 5. Impact of the Infection

11. We were all affected terribly by [S]'s illness; it upset us all immensely. Before his infection, [S] was a very sporty, active boy. He represented his county at football and swimming, and was very healthy [S] and his father used to enjoy going to [GRO-B] home games as he was a huge football fan.

12. We were a family of [GRO-B] originally [S] was our eldest child and only son. He had [GRO-B] We were just a normal family trying to get on with life. [GRO-B] later married and had [GRO-B] meaning that [S] had [GRO-B]

13. [S] struggled to cope with the news of his infection and he gradually began to drink more. His girlfriend gave up on him because of his drinking and his job situation. He began to get himself into scraps and he couldn't hold down a job. He became angry and his relationship with us all eventually started to suffer. He started giving up on everything he was interested in and he became very depressed, angry and frustrated that nothing was being done about his situation. His love life became non-existent and he quite often commented that no girl would ever come near him again because Hepatitis C was classed as a "dirty disease".

14. All of the family had sympathy with his situation, but we had no idea how to deal with it; we just had to muddle through as best we could. He sometimes said hurtful things to us but we knew he didn't mean any of it. It was all just part of his frustration, and you always take your frustrations out on your nearest and dearest.

15. [S] was given Interferon treatment in an attempt to clear the virus but it was unsuccessful. The treatment made him feel absolutely terrible and he ultimately could not continue with it. This was the only treatment made available to him.

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16. He lived at home with us until he was 41 years old. We tried to support him as best we could but unfortunately his health failed him in the end. [S] moved out for the last 18 months of his life and he would visit us every day. I would prepare meals for him but days later the meals would be untouched.

17. As time went by, nothing much seemed to be done for all these people who had been infected by this scandal. [S] started to give up and this is when he began missing appointments. Whenever he did attend, nothing was ever offered to him so he either believed that there was nothing available to him or that no one was worried.

Section 6. Treatment/care/support

18. Nothing was offered to [S] or any of the family in the way of counselling.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

19. The Skipton Fund helped out financially, and I think we were put in touch with them through the Haemophilia Society.

20. I believe [S] initially received two lump sums which helped him out a lot because he was struggling to find work and he didn't have a lot of money. He still could not afford to live independently and it was only the last 18 months of his life that he obtained his own flat as he started to receive his monthly allowance from the Skipton Fund.

Section 8. Other Issues

21. Our family will never be the same again. This has totally devastated us as a family and we cannot believe he has been taken from us prematurely like this. Words cannot describe the hurt, loss, despair and total devastation we all feel

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in this family, losing our only son, brother and uncle S words remain very poignant to us; 'it has been like being given a death sentence'.

Anonymity

22. I wish to remain anonymous.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed...

GRO-B.....

Dated

3rd May 2019