

ANONYMOUS

Witness Name **GRO-B**

Statement No: WITN1203001

Exhibits: 0

Dated: February 2019

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF **GRO-B**

I, **GRO-B** (nee **GRO-B**), will say as follows:-

Section 1. Introduction

1. I live at **GRO-B** **GRO-B**, Manchester **GRO-B**. I was born on **GRO-B** 1965. My mother, **GRO-B: M**, was born on **GRO-B** **GRO-B** 1947 and died on **GRO-B** 2018. My father died from a massive heart attack, while he was still in his twenties, and my brother and I were brought up by our mother. My brother **GRO-B** was born on **GRO-B** 1967. I have 2 children with my partner **GRO-B** and 2 other children, **GRO-B** and I were together for 10 years and then split up before getting back together 5 years ago. The children are respectively **GRO-B** 33, **GRO-B** 28, **GRO-B** 25 and **GRO-B** 20. I have two grandchildren, **GRO-B** 11 and **GRO-B** 6, who are **GRO-B**'s children.
2. I make this statement in connection with the circumstances surrounding the death of my mother. The statement has been prepared without the benefit of access to my mother'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 Affected

3. In August 2016, my mother was diagnosed with Hepatitis C. In October 2016, she was diagnosed with cirrhosis of the liver and liver cancer as a result of the Hepatitis C. She had Transarterial chemoembolization (TACE) treatment for the cancer, however it spread to her spine and she died on **GRO-B** 2018.
4. My mother was given contaminated blood when she underwent a hysterectomy at **GRO-B** Manchester, in 1981. She required a blood transfusion because she was bleeding profusely.
5. My mother was not given any advice about the blood that was given to her, nor the risk that she could be exposed to infection.
6. My mother found out that she had Hepatitis C in 2016. She underwent routine tests with her GP, Dr **GRO-B**, as part of a Well Woman programme. One of the tests revealed that her liver function was abnormal. The tests were carried out just before she went on a holiday to Mexico with my son **GRO-B**. When she returned from Mexico, her legs were swollen. She went to see Dr **GRO-B** thinking that the flight may have caused the swelling, but the GP informed her that she had Hepatitis C, and that she would have to be referred to a liver specialist. She was referred to Dr Prasad, a Consultant Hepatologist and Gastroenterologist at the Wythenshawe Hospital, where she underwent further tests, including an ultrasound scan and an MRI scan. On 11 October 2016, she was diagnosed with cirrhosis of the liver and liver cancer. Dr Prasad advised her that her alanine aminotransferase (ALT) had been abnormal since 2007.
7. Since my mother had been infected with Hepatitis C for over 30 years, it seemed unlikely that she would pass it, but I had myself tested at my own GP surgery and my results came back clear.

Section 3. Other Infections

8. My mother did not receive any infection other than Hepatitis C.

Section 4. Consent

9. Consent was not discussed with my mother. My mother was not given any information about the blood she was given and as far as I am aware, my mother was not treated for the purposes of research.

Section 5. Impact of the Infection

10. When my mother was diagnosed with Hepatitis C, the mental impact on her was devastating. She was absolutely shell shocked and could not take it in. She was crushed by the news. She was a very clean and particular person the infection made her feel dirty. When she subsequently found out that she had liver cirrhosis and liver cancer, her world fell apart, ours too. Dr Prasad referred her to Dr Martin Prince, a specialist at the Manchester Royal Infirmary, who informed her that he could not cure her because the cancer was inoperable. I was with her at the time. When we left the hospital, she collapsed in my arms. After this, she went into denial, and would not refer to cancer or to Hepatitis C. She never talked about dying. I believe that it was worst for her at night, when she was on her own, and it really hit her.
11. My mother did not encounter any difficulties or obstacles in obtaining treatment. However, she wanted to have a liver transplant, because she thought this would remove the disease from her body, but she was informed by Dr Prince that she could not have a transplant because of her age (69), and because her lungs had been affected by smoking. Instead, she was given 3 courses of chemotherapy in November 2016, February 2017 and July 2017 respectively.
12. The treatment made my mother poorly and she stayed in bed for couple of weeks after each session. She felt tired and sick and experienced feverish symptoms. She did not have any further chemotherapy after July 2017,

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because the side effects were so bad and the cancer was not shrinking anyway. She was passed to MacMillan for care.

13. Apart from losing weight, my mother was able to function normally. In December 2017, she started complaining of back pain. This got worse and worse and she became numb on one side. She was prescribed morphine for pain relief. She spent Christmas 2017 in bed. The GP advised that she should return to hospital. She went in by ambulance to the Manchester Royal Infirmary Hospital and a scan revealed that she had cancer of the spine and that the tumour had fractured the spine and was pressing on her spinal cord, which was causing the numbness. She had one session of radiotherapy, to shrink the tumour away from the spinal cord, and then remained in hospital. She died on GRO-B 2018.

14. The impact of Hepatitis C on my mother's dental treatment was that she was reluctant to go after the diagnosis, because she was so embarrassed.

15. The impact of the diagnosis on my mother's life was that she made the most of a bad situation. Her social life revolved around us and what we were doing. We have a holiday home in Tenerife and took her three times. The last of these trips was in November 2017. We also went to Rome, as she wanted to see the Pope. She was not a Roman Catholic but she thought the experience might be healing. She drank a little alcohol before the diagnosis on social occasions but none afterwards, and she stopped going to parties because she lost weight and became self-conscious about her appearance.

16. The impact of her diagnosis on me was that my mother became increasingly dependant on me. I was her "right arm". She was my best friend and I was her rock. I work for Santander, and was fortunate in having an employer who allowed me to work in a flexible way. My brother lived with my mother, and had his own problems. He had a heart attack when he was relatively young. My mother was therefore his carer. He did not know that she was incurably ill until shortly before she died. After her death, I secured a tenancy for my brother in my mother's house so that he could go on living there. He cannot

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work, and I am now his carer. He has a son, **GRO-B** who lives away in Yorkshire but he works full time and has his own life.

17. There was definitely a stigma attached to the diagnosis of Hepatitis C from my mother's point of view. She found it dirty and embarrassing.

18. The impact of the diagnosis on our wider family was that my mother's sister and our cousins were not aware of it until a week before she died. She didn't want to talk about it to other people as she herself found it very hard to accept. They were very upset by her death.

19. My mother was a Catering Assistant at **GRO-B** College. She retired in her early 1960s. The diagnosis did not therefore affect her work. She had a state pension and pension credits and MacMillan arranged cold weather payments and an attendance allowance for her.

Section 6. Treatment/care/support

20. My mother was not offered counselling but the MacMillan nurses told her about the Maggie's Centre. My mother did not want to go to this.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

21. Dr Prasad told my mother about the Skipton Fund and she received a Stage 1 payment of £20,000 on 24 January 2017. She received a Stage 2 payment of £50,000 on 7 April 2017 because she had cirrhosis of the liver and liver cancer. She also received £3,700 each quarter for a short time from the Skipton Fund.

22. After my mother's death, I received the final quarterly payment due on 20 February 2018 and they gave us £4,500 toward her funeral expenses.

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Section 8. Other Issues

23. It was extremely distressing for my mother to discover that she had been suffering from Hepatitis C for so many years and that it had not been diagnosed or treated. If it had been treated much earlier, she might have avoided cirrhosis of the liver and liver cancer. She missed out on a happy retirement and living to an old age. She was robbed of years of life and we were robbed of spending that time with her too.

Anonymity

24. I wish to remain anonymous.

25. 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

GRO-B

Dated 1/3/19