

Witness Name: Wayne Drinkwater

Statement No.: WITN7214001

Exhibits: **WITN7214002 - 003**

Dated: 20 October 2022

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF WAYNE DRINKWATER

I provide this statement in response to a request under Rule 9 of the Inquiry Rules 2006 dated 05 October 2022.

I, Wayne Drinkwater, will say as follows: -

Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is Wayne Drinkwater. My date of birth is GRO-C 1970 and my address is GRO-C Cheshire GRO-C
2. I am married to my wife of thirty years, Debbie. We have a grown-up daughter aged 28. I work as a cashier for a high-street bank on a part-time basis. I am no longer able to work full-time owing to health problems and complications resulting from my infection with hepatitis C ("HCV").
3. I intend to speak about my infection with HCV. In particular, the nature of my illness, how the illness affected me, the treatment received, the liver transplant I received and the impact this all had on me, my wife, my daughter and our lives together.
4. The anonymity process has been explained to me and I wish for my name to remain on my statement. I do understand that if criticism within

my statement is to be put to the individual or organisation that I am critical of, then my name will be made known to them.

5. I am providing this statement alongside my wife, Debbie, who has been there for me throughout the entirety of my illness.

Section 2. How Infected

6. I was born with haemophilia B, sometimes known as 'Christmas disease', meaning I am deficient in factor IX. This was written on my GP records on GRO-C 1970, four days before I was born.
7. I am the middle of three brothers, GRO-C I understand that my older brother, Darren Blake, has also provided a witness statement to the Inquiry (W6206). My younger brother, Anthony, is technically my half-brother, although I just consider him as my brother.
8. My Mum and Dad separated when I was around 3 years old. My Dad went to live with his Mum and Darren went with him. I was brought up by my Mum and my step-father, from whom I took the name 'Drinkwater'. They had a child together, Anthony my youngest brother. I have changed my surname by deed pole, from 'Blake' to 'Drinkwater'.
9. I only ever received factor IX product on one occasion. This was prior to having my teeth removed when I was 8 or 9 years old. I was a mild haemophiliac but even so I was administered factor IX prophylactically before my teeth were removed at Manchester Royal Infirmary ("MRI").
10. My haemophilia was described to me as being 'Leyden'. This, I was told, meant that when I got to puberty and adolescence, the severity of my haemophilia would decline in comparison to my younger years. I think one of the haemophilia nurses at MRI explained this to me and they also mentioned something about this term emanating from Germany, though I cannot remember much else.

11. In consequence of my mild haemophilia, I never needed medical attention for cuts, bruises or painful joints. When I was at secondary school aged 11 or 12, letters were sent out for BCG injections. My Mum then had to go to the school and explain to them that I had haemophilia. After this, the school refused to give me my BCG. They even refused to give me the 'sugar cube' for polio. I was never vaccinated as a result.
12. I was metaphorically wrapped up in cotton wool after the school learnt of my haemophilia, in spite of the fact it was very mild. I wasn't allowed to play sports unless I was wearing a 'medical helmet' that my mum had to source and I was generally secluded from the rest of my peers. I used to sit in a room on my own whilst everyone else was out in the playground, not knowing why or what was wrong with me. I felt like an outcast.
13. My health was fine during school and when I left, aged 16, I started work in a sewing factory for a short time. When I was 18, I got a job working night shifts in a motorway services.
14. I met Debbie in 1989 and we married in 1992. Around 6 months after we married, in either December 1992 or January 1993, I received a letter from the haemophilia centre at MRI saying that I might be infected with HIV and asking me to attend an appointment to be tested. I cannot recall the exact wording, but the letter seemed to me to be generic and not specific to my personal circumstances or medical history.
15. Nonetheless, it was shocking and frightening to receive this. I attended the MRI and was in a room surrounded by other obviously worried people. Everyone was called through one-by-one into a private room to have the blood test. It was like a conveyor belt. I was then told that they would write to me to tell me the results. There was no empathy or 'warmth' in the manner this was done.
16. I waited 3 or 4 weeks for these results in the post. This period was hell. I finally received the letter and was informed that I was HIV negative.

17. After this scare, I continued to work night shifts in the motorway services. I began to notice that I was feeling fatigued. I was getting tired during my shift and I started to use my break to have a nap. When I got home, I could literally sleep all day until I had to start work again that evening. On my two days off, I just wanted to sleep. At the time I just attributed this to my working pattern.
18. I was then offered voluntary redundancy, but I knew the manager and I managed to get a job working day shifts in the same motorway services. This worked fine for me but I was still very tired. I continued to use lunch breaks to have a nap and I would snack during work instead. I simply carried on; I never suspected this was a result of a health condition, I just thought I was a person who was easily-fatigued.
19. This lasted from 1993 until September 1996, when I again received a letter from the haemophilia centre at MRI saying that I could possibly have contracted HCV. This was in the same tone as the previous HIV letter in 1993; it seemed generic in the way in which it was worded. It certainly wasn't specific to me except my name at the top of the letter.
20. I again went to the haemophilia centre at MRI for blood tests. I sat in a queue, much in the same way as I had for the HIV tests, waiting for my name to be called, then had the bloods taken and I left. This time I had to come back to MRI for the results.
21. When I returned a few weeks later, I first met Dr [GRO-D] the consultant in charge of the haemophilia centre at MRI. Dr [GRO-D] told me in a private appointment that I had HCV. He said it in a very matter-of-fact manner, with no compassion. He struck me as a cold person who displayed no emotion. He said it was from the factor IX product I had received on that one occasion, prior to the dental procedure when I was 8 or 9 years old.
22. Dr [GRO-D] said that I was [GRO-C] and referred to me in this way ever after. Dr [GRO-D] said that I could live a normal life for a time

but by my late 30s or into my 40s I would have serious liver medical conditions.

23. Treatment was not discussed at this appointment. I was just told to get on with my life in the knowledge that I would become seriously ill in the near future. Dr GRO-D gave me no explanation of HCV and its effects on the liver, nor did he explain the risks of transmitting the infection to others, for example if I had a cut at home. Instead, I used my own common sense in realising that my wife should be careful not to use my razor or toothbrush.

24. The diagnosis shocked and upset me. I felt physically sick at the time. Dr GRO-D also said that my wife and daughter could have contracted the virus from me. GRO-C

GRO-C

This was very unsettling for Debbie and me also.

25. GRO-C

GRO-C I was incredibly anxious. I thought I could have unknowingly transmitted the virus to my wife and daughter. I wasn't able to tell anyone, I continued to work full-time and I was stressed and frightened to the extreme. GRO-C

GRO-C I also believe that Darren, my older brother, may have tested positive for HCV around this time.

26. My diagnosis felt like a timebomb waiting to explode. I had a vague understanding of what it meant, but I was not properly advised as to how the infection was attacking the liver. I continued to go to the haemophilia centre at MRI once a year for scans and blood tests but that was about it. The only symptoms of HCV that I had were the ongoing fatigue and tiredness that I was experiencing. However, I did not feel any worse than before I was diagnosed.

27. I was first offered treatment at my annual check-up at MRI in 1999. They said that a new treatment had been developed. I started a 6 month course of treatment comprising of interferon which I self-injected and ribavirin in the form of tablets taken daily. My mind is a blank about how frequently I had the interferon.
28. This medication almost killed me. I suffered with really cold shivers like I had never experienced. I had total fatigue to the extent that I could have slept all day and all night. I didn't eat and I couldn't eat. I initially started the treatment whilst working full-time but within a month of starting the treatment I had to go off sick.
29. After a month off work, my employer sent an occupational health referral doctor out to see me. I told the doctor that I was receiving treatment for HCV. Afterwards, my team manager spoke to me privately. She said she had overheard other managers saying that they were going to dismiss me from my job whilst I was off sick.
30. I didn't know at the time whether this was because I had HCV or due to the amount of time I had taken off, but I couldn't afford to be out of work. I think on reflection that it was a health and safety issue, due to my infection and they were worried about me contaminating other employees.
31. I went back to work after hearing this in spite of being seriously ill and physically incapable of performing my duties properly. When I went back, it soon became clear that everyone knew I had HCV. I felt stigmatised and noticed colleagues had started to look at me, and behave, differently.
32. After a month or so of starting the course of treatment, my mental health began to deteriorate. I was having suicidal thoughts. I had never been depressed, let alone suicidal, before starting this treatment.

33. I developed a bad temper, which I directed towards my wife and daughter. I would explode at the slightest of things that bothered me. I treated my family awfully. I began to have thoughts about hitting and hurting Debbie and I shouted and scared my then 6 year old daughter. It was entirely out of character, inexplicable and wholly unjustified.
34. Two weeks before the end of the 6 month course of treatment, I couldn't take anymore. The suicidal thoughts had completely enveloped me. I wanted to die. I remember driving home from work one evening and the roads were quiet. I just wanted to turn the wheel, veer off the road and kill myself. I wanted to end the evil inside me. Why I didn't do it, I will never know to this day.
35. Mercifully, I never hit my wife or daughter even though I had these horrendous thoughts telling me that I wanted to. I didn't tell anyone about what I had felt because I felt ashamed. Somehow, I made it through and I don't know how or why. The treatment had made me a horrible person.
36. After completing the course of treatment, I had a test one month later which showed I was HCV negative. This felt brilliant after all I had been through. I had a second test, two months after completing the treatment, which again was negative. I then had a third, and final test, three months after completing the treatment, which was HCV positive.
37. This positive result made me feel physically sick. I cried for days afterwards. The sadness and pain that I went through was all for nothing, and those feelings I experienced still haunt me to this day. I felt so alone and depressed. At the same time, I was trying to smile and get through a day's work, but by the end of the day I wanted to kill myself.
38. I don't know why I felt this way, but it is indicative of how low I got. I was not the same person as before the treatment. I just carried on with my life, continuing to suffer with the same fatigue as before.
39. The suicidal thoughts subsided sometime after finishing the treatment, and so too did the severe depressive episodes. I still experienced

depression but not to the same extent. I started to feel a bit more like my old self.

40. After the first, unsuccessful course of treatment in 1999/2000, I was told by the MRI that no other treatment was available to me. I continued to have annual check-ups at the haemophilia centre.

41. At one of these check-ups, in 2005, Dr. GRO-D offered me a new, 12 month course of treatment. This consisted of pegylated interferon, ribavirin and another drug that I cannot recall. I remember signing a consent form confirming that my wife and I would not attempt to have children during this course of treatment owing to the potential risks to the child.

42. Debbie was really positive about this treatment. They seemed to be describing it in a much better light to the previous treatment.

43. I was frightened to death when I heard this treatment would last 12 months. Having barely survived the previous 6 month course, I thought I wouldn't be able to last this course. This led me to tell Paula, the department Sister and my wife for the first time, that I had experienced severe depression and suicidal thoughts during the previous treatment.

44. Paula then said that this had been an issue amongst many other patients who had been on that course of treatment. The nurse said to me that they would put me on antidepressants during this course of treatment. I was very against the idea of doing this, there being a stigma to taking anti-depressants. I was in denial and couldn't accept the truth.

45. It then became apparent that the haemophilia centre at MRI had already made their mind up about antidepressants before I told them about my depression. They said I wouldn't get through this treatment without them, which ultimately convinced me to accept them. Nevertheless, I understood that the course of treatment was being coupled with antidepressants for all patients, not just me.

46. I then began the second, 12 week course of treatment. I self-injected the pegylated interferon and took the other two medications as tablets daily, alongside the antidepressants. Again, I cannot recall the frequency of the pegylated interferon doses.
47. By this time, I was working as a bank clerk. I informed my line manager that I was starting the treatment, and then had to explain my medical history. I had never done this before but I wanted to be honest and upfront with my employer. I was signed off for 2 weeks with a sick note from the haemophilia centre.
48. The side-effects started all over again, except this time they were more intense than before. I slept constantly. My daily routine was breakfast, then sleep, followed by dinner and then sleep. After a while of this I went to see my GP, who gave me a 3 month sick note.
49. After 3 months off work, I decided I wanted to go back to work. I don't know why I did this because I was in no fit state to be working. My employer was very supportive and they arranged a phased return with reduced hours.
50. I didn't experience the depression and suicidal thoughts that I had previously, probably due to the effectiveness of the antidepressants. I was still nasty and angry all the time, mainly towards my wife and daughter. My daughter was 11 or 12 years old by this time and she used to go out all the time and so avoided a lot of it.
51. After 4 months of the treatment, tiredness began to set in and take over. I was sleeping during my lunch break in a private room and would sometimes wake up 10 minutes before the bank closed. My colleagues were supportive of me and often used to just leave me sleeping.
52. One day at work, I went for a glass of water and fainted due to exhaustion. The manager lifted me from the floor and spoke to me in private. We both agreed that I needed to go home and rest.

53. I was beginning to take up colleagues' time and interfering with their work duties. I had been trying to use work as a distraction from the treatment, but it didn't work out. I went back on sick leave for a further 3 weeks.
54. After 9 months of the treatment, I decided to go back to work again. They were reluctant to agree to this but they had no choice. I started off on reduced hours, in the hope of building up to working full-time.
55. I continued to feel tired all the time and I was sleeping in my lunch breaks. I was also beginning to make mistakes in my work and forgetting things. This was the start of my memory problems, which became significantly worse throughout my illness. I later realised that this was as a result of 'Brain Fog', a symptom of HCV.
56. My manager said that I needed to have more time off. He gave me his keys and said to go in his filing cabinet and remove my holiday sheet. I found my file and came across a letter.
57. It was from my line manager saying she has spoken to all the members of staff regarding my health. I was alarmed by the letter. In the meeting, colleagues had asked questions such as whether they could use cups at work, did they need to bring their own cups and take them home at the end of the day, was the kitchen cutlery safe and whether the men's toilets were a possible area of contamination.
58. The ignorance of all these questions shocked me. It made me feel self-conscious and even more alone. I then began to realise that colleagues were keeping their distance from me. It felt like a similar stigma to AIDS.
59. I was a combination of angry, shocked, tearful and upset by this. I felt betrayed. I believed the conversation about my HCV with my line manager to be confidential, and I certainly should have been consulted prior to them having such a meeting. After this I took two weeks holiday. I felt ashamed.

60. I eventually went back to my GP and I was signed off work until I completed the course of treatment. Throughout the treatment, I went to the hospital once every month or every two months for testing. These tests showed my viral load to be decreasing.
61. After completing the course, I was tested one month later and found to be HCV negative. I returned the same negative result two months later, but three months after completing the course I returned a HCV positive result. This was devastating. Having my hopes built up to then be knocked back down again was horrendous. I made up my mind that I could never go through that again.
62. After the treatment ended, I weaned myself off taking the antidepressants. They had definitely helped during the treatment and had prevented a repeat of the suicidal thoughts but I didn't want to stay on them. I have not taken them since.
63. I continued to have my annual check-up with Dr [GRO-D] at the MRI. I had liver scans and blood tests and every year he said they would continue to monitor them. At some point, Dr [GRO-D] said that I had scarring of the liver, but I cannot remember exactly when.
64. I also began to experience sporadic 'locking' of my hands, fingers and feet. This was similar to cramp but my hands would freeze for a minute or so before returning to normal. It would often occur when I was driving. I had no idea what this was but it was really frightening. These episodes would appear out of nowhere and last up to 15 minutes. The GP said it was cramp but I knew it was much more serious than that.
65. My tiredness and fatigue continued and my memory was getting noticeably worse. I also started to have water retention in my ankles and hands. It was like a memory foam mattress that I could push my thumb into and the indentation caused in my skin would slowly disappear. It was like a gel.

66. I went to see my GP, Dr [GRO-D] (at [GRO-D] [GRO-D]). I asked whether it was related to HCV, to which she replied 'don't be stupid'. I was prescribed water tablets, which had no effect whatsoever.

67. I spoke to a number of GPs over a long time period and none of them seemed to know the slightest thing about HCV and the associated side-effects. I received no answers to my questions, which made me feel even more alone.

68. I went to see Dr [GRO-D] in early 2012 for a liver scan. After the scan was complete, Dr [GRO-D] asked me to come back in three months' time to discuss the results.

69. I duly returned three months later but Dr [GRO-D] didn't have the results of the scan. He said he needed to take another scan. Another scan was taken and I had to return another three months later. When I returned for the second consultation, Dr [GRO-D] again said that he couldn't find the results. So the scan had to be repeated for a third time. This happened one more time so in total I had four liver scans over the course of 2012, but did not receive the outcome of these.

70. On each occasion, Dr [GRO-D] had said that he didn't have the scan. He went on to his computer and said it wasn't there, so he just ordered another scan. My belief is that he didn't know how to use the computer, which meant he didn't know how to access and view the scan results. The entire year had been wasted and I had no consultation on the scan results and thus the condition of my liver.

71. I next saw Dr [GRO-D] for an appointment in early 2013. I brought my daughter, who was 17 at the time, with me to this appointment. Dr [GRO-D] didn't mention the liver scans but he mentioned blood test results. He then said, out of the blue with no prior warning and in front of my daughter, that I had cirrhosis of the liver. This was the first time I had been informed of this.

72. I was really upset and would much rather I was told this on my own. I was given no prewarning and it was said, in Dr [GRO-D]'s matter-of-fact and compassionless manner, in front of my 17 year old daughter. It was completely unacceptable.
73. Dr [GRO-D] didn't explain anything about cirrhosis to me. He referred me to the liver specialist at MRI, Dr Prince, and said he would be in touch. I stood up and walked out with my daughter in total shock. He didn't display any warmth, empathy or compassion, nor any understanding of the significance of me being told this.
74. I saw Dr Prince in January 2013. I explained everything about Dr [GRO-D] and the missing scan results to Dr Prince, who was shocked at what I had told him. He checked my arm for 'spider' veins and asked if I was suffering with 'fog brain'. He then explained how the toxins resulting from my damaged liver would cause brain fog, which explained everything that had been happening to me for years.
75. After checking me over, Dr Prince rang the scanning department with me present. Dr Prince asked the department to look at all the results and tell me what they were. This meant, therefore, that the scan results were available, contrary to Dr [GRO-D]'s assertions.
76. Dr Prince listened to the scan results being described to him and put the phone down. He said that patients come to see him year after year, but with me he was only going to see me once. He said he couldn't believe Dr [GRO-D] had missed this.
77. Dr Prince then said that I had a life expectancy of 6 months as things were and that I needed a liver transplant as soon as possible. Thus, it can be said that, due to Dr [GRO-D]'s incompetence, he had missed crucial signs of cirrhosis that could have led me to seeing Dr Prince earlier. Instead, I was now at a critical stage and desperately in need of a replacement liver.

78. There was nothing Dr Prince or the hepatology department could do to treat me. All they could do was urgently refer me for a liver transplant. Dr Prince said he would arrange this and he decided to send me to Queen Elizabeth Hospital ("QEH"), Birmingham, which he said was one of two options where my liver transplant could be performed.

79. Dr Prince said he was sorry he had to tell me this. He seemed to know everything about my illness in that one appointment, in stark contrast to my appointments with Dr [GRO-D]. Dr Prince was very helpful and it was like night and day in comparison to Dr [GRO-D].

80. Dr Prince shook his head when he saw my results. He was very obviously frustrated and annoyed by Dr [GRO-D]'s incompetence and failure to pick up the warning signs sooner. It was like he was in disbelief at Dr [GRO-D]'s failures. His exact words were, regarding Dr [GRO-D], 'he doesn't know what buttons to press'.

81. I attended an assessment centre at QEH in Birmingham for two to three days in order to determine my suitability as a candidate for a liver transplant.

82. A week or two after this, I was at home and suffering with persistent rectal bleeding. There would be blood in the toilet and I had blood in my underpants. I phoned the haemophilia centre at MRI who prescribed me tablets to stem the bleeding. These seemed to work to a degree but not totally. I was also feeling dizzy and had terrible memory loss. This resulted in me having a fall outside the house. I can't remember what happened but I smacked my head on the concrete outside.

83. A day or two later, I had a major rectal bleed after going to the toilet. It was like a litre bottle of coca cola, black in colour had been poured into the toilet. It was horrendous and terrifying.

84. I phoned the GPs and spoke with Dr [GRO-D] whose response was along the lines of 'I don't know what to do, what can we do about it' and asked me to come in immediately, she booked two slots to give enough time to

discuss matters with me. I went in straight away and she was very good but obviously did not know what to do about my immediate problem. She called the haemophilia centre at MRI who said I needed to go A&E immediately. It was later explained to me that the blood and the dark colour of it was a result of a build-up of internal bleeding.

85. I went to A&E at the MRI and was admitted to a ward right away. I was jaundiced and looked very ill. My skin was yellow as were the whites of my eyes. It seemed that the rectal bleed had changed me. I remember looking in the mirror and thinking that I was dying.

86. Whilst in hospital, I was taken to the haemophilia centre every morning, meaning that I kept missing breakfast. When I came back and discovered I had missed breakfast each morning, I would burst out crying. On another occasion, I started crying because the toast didn't have jam on it. It was ridiculous and just showed how irrational I had become.

87. One morning Dr Prince came to see me. He said he would take care of me as best he could. He then went outside and filed some documents.

88. Not long after this I was moved to another ward. I remember speaking to a gentleman in the bed next to me. The next day he died with blood pouring out of him onto his bed and the floor. He died there and then. This was very traumatising to witness.

89. Around this time, a nurse came and spoke to me. She let slip that it was likely I would receive a liver transplant soon. I didn't think anything of it at the time because of the condition I was in, but in hindsight I now understand what she meant. I think that Dr Prince had expedited my liver transplant request after visiting me on the ward. This was around mid-October 2013. I had been told I was on the liver transplant list but had no idea where I was on the list, or how long I had to wait.

90. I was discharged from MRI in mid-October and given instructions to have a bag packed in case I was called in for the transplant. They said they

would phone me when one became available. Every night Debbie and I would go to bed and we would wonder if it was going to be that night or the following day.

91. By this time, I was on the sofa all day every day. I was so ill and jaundiced. I was incredibly weak and had no energy at all. I was a dying man.

92. I received a phone call at 2am on 30 October 2013 from Anne, the liver coordinator at QEH. She said to get up, have a cup of tea and get to QEH because they had a suitable liver ready for me. I later learnt that this was from a 37 year old man who had died in a motorcycle accident.

93. My brother Anthony took me to QEH where the nurses did lots of tests. One of them whispered to me that if I received a factor product, it was probable that I would be receiving the liver transplant. I was delighted when they gave me the factor. I knew someone from the hospital who had been called in four times but had not received the transplant, so I couldn't believe my luck.

94. I kissed Debbie and my daughter goodbye and was taken down to theatre. This was 8 months after being told by Dr Prince that I had six months to live.

95. I received the liver transplant that day. This was a five hour operation performed by a surgeon called Dr Bramhall. When I first woke up after the operation, the lights were all bright and it looked like a church. I thought I had died and had reached 'the otherside'. They then removed the tube from my mouth and told me to calm down. It was then that I realised I was still alive.

96. I was put in intensive care after the operation. Two days after the operation, all the alarms went off because my kidneys had failed. The doctors rushed to 'jump-start' me like a car, and my kidneys then started working again. I think this was like a blockage and I thought I might have

ended up on a dialysis machine but thankfully it was all fine. After this I could urinate properly.

97. I was moved to a ward after four days in intensive care. I remember feeling numb. I never used morphine all the time I was in hospital; I only ever took four paracetamols for pain relief after the operation.

98. I was so relieved to be alive. I had been on a terrible journey and things were finally looking up. Debbie could tell immediately after the operation that I looked better. My colour returned

99. I remember asking the nurses at QEH if they could speak to Paula, the senior nurse in the haemophilia centre at MRI. Paula spoke to Debbie and she was over the moon at hearing that I had received the liver transplant. She was equally shocked at how quickly it had been performed, especially after the rectal bleed scare just two weeks previously.

100. When I was allowed home, I had to use a wheelchair to get around if I went out the house. I went back and forth to QEH in Birmingham for six weeks to have tests.

101. By December 2013, I was beginning to feel better. I remember lying in bed with Debbie on Christmas Eve feeling blessed to be alive. Before turning in, I looked at my phone and saw a Sky News article about Dr Bramhall, the surgeon who had performed my liver transplant. The article said that Dr Bramhall had been found to have 'signed' the livers of transplant recipients, by branding his initials. This was discovered after a recipient had started bleeding after the transplant operation and had to be opened up again, which led them to see Dr Bramhall's initials inscribed on the liver.

102. After all I had been through, this just added insult to injury. I am convinced that he did this to my replacement liver because of how he treated me. He was very proud to have performed an operation on me because I was a haemophiliac and had contracted HCV through infected

blood products. I was like another feather to his cap. I remember he was an odd man who waved to me when my name was called in the waiting room. I found it disgusting and degrading to think he had done this to me. My transplant was right in the period when he was found to have done this to other patients in 2013.

103. I had an appointment at QEH not long after this news and was very upset. The matter was raised and Dr Mutimer said the inscribing disappeared ('dissolved') after two weeks and that I wouldn't see Dr Bramhall again. I am not convinced by this; I don't believe that this 'branding' just dissolves. However, the option to open me up and find out is a none starter. I find all of this very upsetting and somewhat disturbing.

104. After the liver transplant, I continue to be reviewed at QEH. My care, in particular with regard to my liver, was all undertaken by QEH from then on. I had liver scans that had started to show HCV was impacting on my replacement liver.

105. In July 2015, QEH said there were treatments available but advised me to wait for a new treatment that would be arriving very soon. They said it was proving to be effective in clearing HCV genotype 1, my genotype, which until then had been the most difficult to treat. At this time, scans showed my liver to be inflamed.

106. A few months later, I was offered this new treatment. I can't remember the name of the medication, but it came in tablet form that I took daily. I knew I had to have the treatment to save my new liver. I felt like I had survived everything but now it was all coming back again. I was worried and thought I might die. I thought I had survived all of this for nothing.

107. I began the three month course of medication. I was given a contact within the hepatology department at QEH who I could contact if I had any problems. It was a very different experience to previous treatments under Dr GRO-D at the MRI.

108. I completed the three month course of medication and experienced no side-effects whatsoever. I was tested one month after completing the course and tested negative for HCV. I then had a second and final test, two months after completing the course. I was scared to death that the HCV may have returned. After all that had gone before, I was dreading the results.
109. The second, final test in May 2016 was negative. I was told that my HCV was undetectable but that the virus would always lie suppressed within me. I was in disbelief at being told I had effectively cleared the infection.
110. After clearing HCV, I had liver scans at QEH. The doctors were happy with the condition of my liver and I have not needed to have any scans since.
111. I continue to have check-ups every 6 months at QEH. During the Covid-19 lockdowns, I had no face-to-face appointments. They arranged instead for my GP to take blood tests, the results of which were sent to QEH who would then discuss this with me on the phone.
112. I am now getting on with my life. I can't think about the past anymore. I have to move on and enjoy the rest of my life.

Section 3. Other Infections

113. I do not believe that I received any other infections as a result of receiving one, single contaminated blood product.
114. After having tested negative for HIV in late 1992 or early 1993, Dr GRO-D once mistakenly asked me 'how I was coping with HIV'. I think this was around 2012, during the period when he repeatedly failed to find my liver scan results.

115. When I heard this, I jumped back and said, in shock, 'I've got HIV?' He said "let me check" and he took over a minute to flick through my enormous, poorly-kept, disorderly and battered file. Dr [GRO-D] then said 'oh no no, no you don't' and said it must have been a misprint.

116. Dr [GRO-D] then went to put the document in question back in the file, but I said 'aren't you going to correct that first?'. This was shocking and completely unsatisfactory. It is yet another example of Dr [GRO-D]'s incompetence.

117. I received a letter from the MRI haemophilia centre some time ago, I believe after I was diagnosed with HCV but long before my cirrhosis diagnosis and subsequent liver transplant, saying that I wasn't at risk of vCJD. I recall that the letter referred to the batch of factor product that I received, so I assume this was checked before informing me of this.

Section 4. Consent

118. Sometime ago I destroyed what medical notes I had retained, believing that they would not be of use to me any longer. I have however reviewed my online GP medical notes in preparation for providing this statement. In doing so, I came across a note dated January 1993 that reads '[V] Viral hepatitis carrier' (exhibit **WITN7214002**). This is the first time I have seen this and to me suggests that I was tested for HCV at the same time that I was tested for HIV, which as previously stated I believe to have been in either December 1992 or January 1993.

119. The only conclusion I am able to draw from this is that I was tested for HCV without my consent, at the same time as I was tested for HIV. It also leads me to conclude that I tested positive for HCV in January 1993 but was not informed of this by Dr [GRO-D] until late 1996. My diagnosis followed a generic, all-encompassing letter presumably sent out to all haemophilia patients under his care in September 1996 saying that I

'could' have been infected with HCV. I was duly tested for HCV and tested positive on 30 October 1996, as evidenced in a note within my GP medical records that reads 'Hepatitis C Reactive' (exhibit **WITN7214003**). Thus, Dr GRO-D must have known of my HCV status prior to sending me a letter saying I 'could' be infected, as evidenced by the two aforementioned exhibits. Having seen first-hand Dr GRO-D's incompetence amidst a catalogue of errors when overseeing my care, it would not surprise me if this was not picked up by him. Regardless, it is at best an example of incompetence and at worst evidence of a deliberate failure to inform me of a serious medical diagnosis that perhaps could have been treated sooner.

120. I do not believe that I have been treated without my consent.

121. I wonder if the one dose of factor IX that I did receive, which was evidently contaminated, may have been unnecessary.

122. In between my liver transplant and the third course of HCV treatment I was asked at QEH if I was prepared to give a blood sample for research purposes to into HCV treatment. I consented to this and gave a very large sample of my blood for this purpose once only.

Section 5. Impact

123. The pain and suffering that I have endured, both mentally and physically, has undoubtedly had a significant impact on my life. This is very difficult to quantify. My wife has suffered immeasurably throughout all my suffering, having had to witness my drastic health decline all the while wondering if, and when, I might die.

124. As a result of my health issues, the treatment and most likely because of the undertaking we gave about conceiving a child during treatment, Debbie and I decided not to have any more children. This was a conscious decision against our aspirations of having a larger

family. We regret not being able to have more children and depriving our daughter of at least one sibling. Our daughter has alluded to this. This has had a major impact on us as a family.

125. Debbie once asked Dr [GRO-D] not long after my diagnosis, when I would become seriously ill. She had to face and prepare for the real prospect of me becoming ill and dying. All we knew was that, by the time I hit 40, my health was going to decline rapidly, if that had not already begun. She had to consider preparing for a future and a life without me. Dr [GRO-D] said that it would be when I was in my 40s, and in fairness he was absolutely right. There is no doubt he is a clever man who knows his stuff, but he is not a nice person.

126. Dr [GRO-D]'s repeated failure to assess my liver scans in 2012 means I have to question whether, had my cirrhosis been diagnosed sooner, I might not have needed a liver transplant. I can't possibly say.

127. During the liver transplant operation, I also had my gall bladder removed, apparently because I didn't need it. After receiving the liver transplant, I developed type 1 diabetes and am insulin dependent. I also suffer with neuropathy, resulting in nerve damage in my hands and feet. My hands are very weak; I have no strength or grip in them. I can't say for certain whether this is a result of my HCV, but I think it is likely.

128. I suffer with hypertension and blood pressure issues. I have also developed asthma. Even though I don't have the random and debilitating 'locking' to my hands and feet anymore, I am forever fearful that it could reoccur at any time. I rarely drive as a result of this, and certainly never drive for very long or on motorways.

129. Now, after all this pain and suffering, I live only with the support of medication. I take 21 tablets a day, which is 147 tablets a week. When I first started taking all these tablets, it was a daily reminder of everything that I have been through, but now I am just used to it. These tablets are keeping me alive, and I will be on these tablets for the rest of my life.

130. I panic that I may be in a situation where I am unable to take my medication. I was in hospital with sickness and diarrhoea and I didn't have my tablets. I was anxious what may happen. The nurses were calm about it and made the right calls to get me what meds I needed but my anxiety was off the scale.
131. I live my life like an old age pensioner now. I feel weak, unfit and easily fatigued. I have B12 deficiency and I cut and bruise myself daily doing the simplest of things, which takes weeks or months to fully repair itself. I attribute this to diabetes because I am no longer a haemophiliac after my liver transplant.
132. I recently tried to start swimming in the hope of building my body strength. This is one of the few physical activities I thought could be achievable for me. I was forced to stop this because the water affected my hands and feet, owing to the nerve damage. My body feels totally worn out and I am unable to do anything about it.
133. My illness meant me and my family missed the opportunity to go on holiday together. I am making up for this now, and we are always looking to book holidays and travel together visiting new places. I had difficulties at first getting insurance, and I was turned down by numerous companies. I had to declare everything, from my haemophilia to my HCV diagnosis, cirrhosis and liver transplant. I was then told, by my bank after some consideration, that I have free insurance that covered everything because all that I used to have had been rectified; i.e., the HCV had been cleared, I am no longer a haemophiliac, and my new liver condition is fine. I was shocked to hear this.
134. Debbie and I appreciate everything much more now, we just feel so fortunate.

135. We have lost a lot of friends along the way, as most have been unable to fully comprehend what we have been through. But we have also made friends along the way.

136. If I ever mention my liver transplant to people, they immediately assume that I was an alcoholic. This is the same stigma I have experienced with GPs, who have questioned my alcohol consumption whenever I mention my liver.

137. We decided not to tell people anymore as a result of this. It is just easier not to. Just me, my wife, my daughter and my brothers know the whole truth of what happened. GRO-C

Section 6. Treatment/Care/Support

138. I was refused dental treatment on one occasion when a cap in my front teeth fell out. This was at Chester Road dental surgery, in Northwich. The dentist refused to treat me because of my HCV infection, so I phoned the haemophilia centre at MRI and they arranged an appointment there.

139. I have never received an offer of counselling or psychological support in consequence of or pursuant to my HCV infection, my depression and suicidal thoughts during the first two treatments for HCV, my cirrhosis of the liver and my liver transplant.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

140. I think I learnt about the Skipton Fund through the MRI haemophilia centre, though I can't say exactly when.

141. I remember being in the haemophilia centre at MRI prior to the establishment of the Skipton Fund when I saw a leaflet advertising the creation of a support scheme for those infected in Scotland. I asked one

of the nurses about this and she said it had nothing to do with me. She also said that it should be spent on research and the NHS, not on supporting those people infected by infected blood products.

142. On another occasion, Paula, the senior nurse at the MRI haemophilia centre, said that I and others shouldn't receive financial support because it would be better spent on research projects. It appeared to me that Dr GRO-D presided over a culture that was very much against paying financial support and compensation payments to those infected and affected by infected blood products. It was like a cult; everyone at the MRI haemophilia centre had the same view as Dr GRO-D. I should say that Paula in every other respect was terrific with me.

143. GRO-C
GRO-C

144. I applied to the Skipton Fund and received a stage 1 payment of £20,000.

145. After I was diagnosed with cirrhosis of the liver, Dr Prince applied for a stage 2 payment on my behalf. I received a stage 2 payment of £50,000. I also now receive monthly payments from the English Infected Blood Support Scheme ("EIBSS") of just under £2,500 each month. This has been increased over the past few years.

146. I was recently informed by EIBSS that I am eligible for the 'interim' compensation payment of £100,000 which is due to be settled soon.

Section 8. Other Issues

147. After everything I have been through, I feel incredibly lucky to have had a wife and a daughter who have supported me through everything. My wife has stuck with me throughout all of this. I feel

responsible for affecting them with all my pain and suffering, as well as the way I behaved during the first two treatments in particular.

148. My mind would be put at ease if someone would say that it is set in stone that monthly payments to claimants will continue for life.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed

GRO-C

Dated

20/10/2022