

ANONYMOUS

Witness Name: GRO-B

Statement No.: WITN0881001

Exhibits: Nil

Dated: 24th May 2019.

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF GRO-B

I provide this statement in response to a request under Rule 9 of the Inquiry Rules 2006 dated 4 April 2019.

I, GRO-B will say as follows: -

Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is GRO-B. My date of birth is GRO-B 1962 and my address is GRO-B. I am married with GRO-B and GRO-B with my husband.
2. My mother, GRO-B is also giving a statement to the Inquiry
GRO-B
3. My father, GRO-B was a haemophiliac who lost his life after being infected with Hepatitis C and HIV/AIDS. I will talk about his illness and how it affected me and my mother.

Section 2. How Affected

4. The details surrounding dad's infection are as appear in my mother's statement.
5. I can't remember much around his HIV status, up to the point that he told me that he was infected in December 1986 – January 1987, when he seemed to become ill very rapidly.
6. Prior to this, as the daughter and not living at home, I think my parents probably either wanted to protect me or they themselves had not been told how serious the consequences of being infected were. Anything that was being told either went to dad or to mum. Mum told me bits and pieces but I wasn't really given any information at all.
7. During my life I remember that dad was in and out of hospital all the time. It was just a part of normal life. His knees were stiff through bleeds into his joints, and he had trouble getting in and out of the car. We always had an automatic car because they were easier to drive.
8. When he was born, my granny was told that haemophiliacs weren't expected to live for very long because there wasn't the treatment available back then. Consequently, dad lived life to the full and had loads of hobbies – he didn't rest on his laurels.
9. If he got into fishing, he went and got all the tackle. He made movies and had cine-films. He started a GRO-B and was an accomplished musician. I was lucky enough to have GRO-B and dad loved taking me off to shows and being involved as much as he possibly could.

ANONYMOUS

10. If he had a bleed he would either stay in bed or go to hospital. He was ill on a regular basis, but when he was able, he did as much as he could.
11. Dad took Factor VIII on a weekly basis. I remember once administering an injection for him when I was in my early 20's.
12. I moved out of home when I was about 22, to GRO-B. When dad was in GRO-B a lot, I used to drive up and down to visit him in my GRO-B that had no heating.
13. I had already moved down here when dad fell really ill. I think he might have told me in the December of 1986 that he had HIV (he might have said "AIDS") and that it was terminal.
14. He was frightened. You could see the fear in his eyes. He told me to make sure I looked after my mum. It was the last kind of emotional conversation that we had, because he went downhill from there and didn't say much. The dementia seemed to affect him very severely quite quickly. Towards the end he really didn't say anything at all.
15. His breathing got really bad towards the end. They gave him a big shot of morphine and he slipped away when mum and I went out for a cup of coffee one day.

Section 3. Other Infections

16. As stated in my mother's statement.

Section 4. Consent

17. As stated in my mother's statement.

Section 5. Impact

18. When dad died, I was very angry. I was never happy about the situation and would have gone to lawyers, but mum was not in a place to go there. She was of the mentality that "no amount of money can bring your husband back".
19. Without a doubt I would have campaigned, but mum wouldn't speak about it because of the stigma attached. It wasn't my place to go out and campaign.
20. I was living in GRO-B at the time, so I could go back down there. It was so hard for mum though, because she was GRO-B and it was the "gay disease".
21. I think everyone is sad if their parent dies. I guess I feel cheated, because he was young. It's a real shame that he wasn't around when I was a bit older and a bit more sensible, because when he died I was young and 24 and a bit wild.
22. When you're young you tend to sort of just crack on with your life, don't you. I was also kind of a little bit removed from it because I wasn't living with it, and I didn't feel the shame that mum felt.
23. I was young and I have GRO-B so I was quite alone really. There wasn't another family member to help you through it or talk about what had happened.
24. Because it was a hot topic, it was talked about a lot down here. AIDS would come up in conversations that weren't ever instigated by me. In a way that's quite cathartic, I think. I felt that I could speak about it quite freely down in GRO-B. It would have been far too oppressive for me up there.

ANONYMOUS

25. Whilst he was alive and it was going on, it was a different story. That was when all the adverts were on TV. Times had kind of moved on by the time he died.
26. Only mum's [GRO-B] and their respective husbands knew, such was the stigma.
27. My [GRO-B] and [GRO-B] know about it, and it's obviously very sad that they have never met their grandfather, and that dad didn't have the opportunity to meet them. [GRO-B] herself is a carrier (she has been tested up in [GRO-B]) and I had to go see the doctors when I was pregnant.
28. I don't think there has been any impact on my education or job, but as he is no longer here, it's hard to say. I was 24 so wouldn't rely on my parents for money, but did not receive any help.
29. The fact that mum lost her livelihood at 48 had a massive impact because I was young and starting out. For her to [GRO-B] without anywhere to live was the worst thing. Dad had never been able to get life insurance or a mortgage. Mum lost her livelihood and home, and had to go into council accommodation. I too lost my childhood home.

Section 6. Treatment/Care/Support

30. I have not been offered counselling or psychological support.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

31. I have received nothing from any Trusts or Funds set up to distribute payments to witnesses of this Inquiry.

Section 8. Other Issues

32. I don't believe that many people who contracted AIDS via sexual transmission have suffered dementia – this is not one of the main symptoms of AIDS.
33. It would therefore be interesting to know how many of the haemophiliacs who received blood products also developed dementia, as a potential consequence of vCJD exposure – as present with my father.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed GRO-B

Dated 24th May 2019.