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Witness Name: **GRO-B**

Statement No.: WITN2271001

Exhibits: WITN2271002-007

Dated: 14th January 2019

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF **GRO-B**

I provide this statement in response to a request under Rule 9 of the Inquiry Rules 2006 dated the 14th January 2019.

I, **GRO-B**, will say as follows: -

Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is **GRO-B**. My date of birth is the **GRO-B** 1935. My address is known to the inquiry. I have been married to my wife, **GRO-B** **GRO-B** for many years. I intend to speak about my infection of hepatitis C. In particular, the nature of my illness, how the illness affected me, treatment received and the impact it had on my life with my family and me. I would like it noted that I wish to remain anonymous for this statement.

Section 2. How Infected

2. I was diagnosed with testicular cancer in June 1986 and admitted to Victoria Infirmary, Glasgow, for an operation to remove the testicle. The cancer had also spread onto my neck and I was referred onto Gartnavel

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Royal Hospital in Glasgow for 6 months of chemotherapy to shrink the tumour. This was successful and the tumour did shrink, however during this treatment, on two occasions, my blood count was deemed to be too low to administer the chemotherapy, therefore I received a blood transfusion. I exhibit a letter from my medical records dated the 15th September 1986 under **WITN2271002**.

3. We didn't know at the time that the blood was contaminated and there was never any discussion of the possibility of it being contaminated. Later on a CAT scan was conducted which confirmed that the tumour had shrunk and it had left a blemish. It was monitored, and was only visible on a CAT scan, it did not show up on an x-ray. Eventually in December 1987, I went to see a surgeon at the Western General Hospital, Glasgow, Mr Murray, who said he wanted to operate on me to identify the mark on my liver. I said to him I don't really want another operation, because at the time I was back at work and I was feeling OK. He said to me, *"A few years ago with the technology that was available, you wouldn't be sitting here with me now, you would be dead"*. I said if that is the case I suppose we better have a look. This was the reason I agreed to the operation on my liver.
4. He did and the blemish turned out to be a birthmark on my liver, during the operation he went to cut my liver to remove it and I bled profusely and required a blood transfusion. Mr Murray phoned **GRO-B** from the theatre and told her the operation had been completed but this had happened, I would require a transfusion. It was a very serious operation; one of my lungs collapsed during it.
5. Having reviewed my medical records, I can see that there are two letters in my records on the 27th May 1988 and the 10th October 1988 from the Western Infirmary to my GP **GRO-B** which I exhibit under **WITN2271003**. In these letters it is clearly identified that I may have been infected with "some form of post-transfusion infective hepatitis". I was monitored however and despite continued questions, I was discharged

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on the 19th May 1989 by S. Bramwell Senior Registrar to A.G. Hutchison which I exhibit under **WITN2271004**, despite concerns raised about my results previously. I have also identified from my medical records that in March 2013, when I was undergoing cancer investigations, that the doctors picked up that I had deranged LFTs but despite further investigations, wrote to me in October 2013 advising that there was nothing in my liver that showed anything to be concerned about, I exhibit these two letters under **WITN2271005**.

6. I recovered from this however, and there was no discussion of bad blood or anything like that. My health has then remained reasonable until two years ago.
7. 2 years ago, I suddenly started having bouts of diarrhoea and I was sent to hospital for a colonoscopy. They couldn't find anything wrong and everything was normal but I was still having the diarrhoea. They took several blood tests and they couldn't understand why my white cell count was so low. My GP, **GRO-B** who is based at **GRO-B** **GRO-B** then delved into my medical history and he found evidence that I may have hepatitis C. He gave me my diagnosis during a consultation at the surgery and reassured me saying that it could be sorted out on a course of pills for 12 weeks. He referred me on to Crosshouse Hospital, to the Infectious Diseases Unit. I exhibit the referral letter under **WITN2271006**.
8. They gave me six pills to take for twelve weeks and they tested my liver and blood repeatedly. It worked and the count was tested and half way through the treatment I was declared to be clear and this has all been successful. Halfway through this treatment, I required another blood transfusion however, for a different reason. I remember thinking, I hope this blood is OK but I still got it because it was necessary.
9. The information that I was given at the point I was diagnosed during a consultation by my GP, **GRO-B** was that I would be given pills and

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this treatment was available but he didn't go into detail with it. He referred me on to Crosshouse Infectious Diseases Unit which was quite speedy, I was seen a couple of weeks later.

10. The information was fitting and I do believe it was adequate, it was really a case of providing me details on what the treatment would be.
11. I believe the information was provided to me when it became available and when it was discovered. I understand that the doctors didn't start testing the blood until the early 1990's and they probably didn't know that the blood that was given to me was contaminated.
12. My GP was excellent and Crosshouse Hospital were extremely helpful. The tests were communicated to me appropriately and I was treated with the utmost care.
13. GRO-B was tested as well and I was given basic advice about the risks of others being exposed, however, I was reassured that it was highly unlikely that she was infected, she ultimately tested negative and was advised that there was a low chance that I could pass the infection on to others.

Section 3. Other Infections

14. No, I have never been exposed to anything else other than the hepatitis C, I have no further information on this.

Section 4. Consent

10. No, I don't believe I have been tested against my knowledge or without my knowledge.
11. No, I don't believe I have been treated or tested without giving consent.

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12. No, I don't believe I have even been treated or tested without being given full information, they knew the information when they knew it. The results had never shown up previously because hepatitis C is not something you typically test for and they didn't know that it was in the blood thirty years ago. Nothing was said when I had the blood transfusion but I understand why this is the case now. The blood is ok now so when I receive blood transfusions now, I am reassured that it's safer.
13. No I don't think I have ever been tested for the purposes of research.

Section 5. Impact

14. There were no emotional issues as a result of being told I was infected. I accepted I had it and I was told I could be cured; it was just something to deal with. There were physical issues with toileting for a time and I was quite tired. I was advised to keep it quiet and not telling anyone by the doctors, so I just tell people now if it comes up, that I have a slight blood disorder. I didn't know much about it at the time.
15. There were no further medical complications; I was just a bit tired, which to be honest I put that down to age.
16. I was put on a course of ribavirin at Crosshouse Hospital, for a period of twelve weeks, they tested my blood after this and found everything to be normal and discharged me. They did do a liver scan and the liver was not completely ok but it was in good nick, enough for me to have this treatment. My liver has not been monitored since then and I do not know of its current condition. I feel ok now; I live an active life now so I don't think it's affected me, I received the treatment to prevent my liver becoming decompensated. I exhibit this letter under **WITN2271007**.
17. Everything was fine, there was no obstacles or difficulties for treatment.

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18. I believe I was given the treatment that was available, and I was given this quite quickly.
19. Mentally, I coped fine with treatment, I just accepted it. Physically there were a few side effects, mainly feeling the cold and tiredness but nothing alarming.
20. There have been no effects on any other treatments, I do tell people I've had hepatitis C but nobody treats me differently, there is no change, everything proceeds as normal.
21. I am tired now; I can't go out at night-time but that is ok. My wife is ok with everything; it is just something we've dealt with. We don't have the victim mentality. I told my daughters and they accepted it, it was curable so it is fine.
22. We've never told anyone about the hepatitis C so there is no stigma that has been attached to my diagnosis. We just tell people it's a slight blood disorder. The hospital did tell us not to tell anyone, I think maybe some people may have worked it out now but there's been no troubles, nothing at all.
24. I retired at the end of December 1998. I worked as a **GRO-B** **GRO-B** and my employer was very supportive when I had to sign off work sick. They lent **GRO-B** the company car. I worked for a **GRO-B** **GRO-B** **GRO-B** **GRO-B**
25. There have been no financial effects. I received full pay when I went off sick at work in 1986. I've never had any problems with travel insurance or with the bank, I've never even told the bank about the infection. I don't go abroad now so travel insurance isn't an issue, there really has been nothing at all.

Section 6. Treatment/Care/Support

26. I was fine, any support that was needed came from [GRO-B] and other family members, otherwise it was not required.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

27. The nurse at the hospital, at Crosshouse Hospital, told us about the Skipton Fund.
28. What happened was, we went to the bank one day and the money was there, we knew there was a possibility of something and we received a lump sum, from the Scottish Infected Blood Support Scheme. We didn't apply for it. The nurse at Crosshouse was a bit vague about the whole thing, it seemed to be that another patient was annoying them about financial assistance and so they had to find out about its existence and discovered that we were entitled to this, she actually asked us if we knew anything about it. I can't recall exactly when we received this.
29. We never applied for it, the money was just put in our bank account, there were no difficulties or preconditions at all in applying.
32. I have no further comments to make about the financial support.

Section 8. Other Issues

33. There are no other issues that I wish to bring to the Inquiry's attention, I am grateful for my GP, [GRO-B] whose investigative work led to my diagnosis and his excellent care has kept me alive to this date.

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Statement of Truth

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

Signed

GRO-B

Dated

27/5/20