

ANONYMOUS

Witness Name: GRO-B

Statement No: WITN2922001

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 and I was born on GRO-B 1977. I live with my partner at GRO-B GRO-B We have one son called GRO-B who is 11 years old.
2. My father, GRO-B: F was co-infected with Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), Hepatitis B Virus (HBV) and Hepatitis C Virus (HCV) from contaminated blood product. He was born on GRO-B 1945 and he died from pneumocystic pneumonia (PCP) on GRO-B GRO-B 1991.
3. This witness statement has been prepared without the benefit of access to my father's medical records.

Section 2. How Affected

4. My father was diagnosed with severe Haemophilia A shortly after his birth. His younger brother (my Uncle **GRO-B**) was also diagnosed with haemophilia at birth. My sister, **GRO-B** **GRO-B** is younger than me but we both knew from a young age what haemophilia was and I knew that he could not take aspirin because of his condition. **GRO-B** has also made a statement for the Inquiry.
5. My father was treated at the Royal Hallamshire Hospital (RHH), Sheffield. He was under the care of Professor Preston. He was treated with Factor VIII concentrate. In February 1985, he found out that he had been infected with HIV. I understand that he had actually been infected with HIV two years before he was told of the diagnosis. He was then diagnosed with HCV and HBV.
6. The risks associated with FVIII treatment had never been communicated to him by any medical professionals.
7. I remember when my father started home treatment with Factor VIII. My sister and I were actually asked if we would like to learn how to administer it if my dad became incapacitated. I said that I didn't want to be shown but my sister did and she was about 10 years old when she was shown how to inject it.
8. My sister remembers more than me; I only seem to remember pockets of information. I remember my father going on a television programme. I did not know at the time but I now know that it was about his HIV infection.

Section 3. Other Infections

9. I do not believe my father had been infected with anything other than HIV, HBV or HCV.

Section 4. Consent.

10. I am unable to say whether my father consented to being tested for HCV, HBV and HIV.

Section 5. Impact

11. My mum and dad split up when I was young.

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NOT REL I think I was about 8 years old when I was told they were splitting up; they said that they had fallen out of love. I do not bear a grudge but I have no doubt that my fathers' infections would not have helped their marriage. I remember my mum telling me dad was HIV positive when we were living in our new house. She was very upset when she took us to one side. She said that it was bad and that she did not know how long dad had left to live. At the time I wasn't really aware of the link between haemophilia and HIV. I just thought that Dad would die but that is how things were. I do remember crying to myself but I tried to put on a brave face when I was with Dad. We would stay with him every other weekend but the rest of the time we lived with our mother.

12. I remember going with Dad to meetings at the Haemophilia Society. I cannot remember what was being discussed but when he was there.

13. I think I got the 'watered down' version of dad's condition. I tended to disassociate myself with the seriousness of my father's HIV status because that was how I was able to cope. Going through my teenage years, I had in my head that dad dying at a fairly young age was a normal occurrence. I believed that was how life worked.

14. After my parents split up, my father became involved with a woman named GRO-B who at the time was involved with the Haemophilia Society. She had broken up her engagement with a guy called GRO-B. They both became very close and married in GRO-B. This is probably just my opinion but I believe that my father and GRO-B may have had an affair whilst my parents were married.

15. I told only one person directly, my best friend GRO-B about my Dad's infection. I could talk to GRO-B about anything and still do. I was never bullied at primary school. At secondary school however people would sometimes call my father 'gay'. I've never had an issue with homosexuality, but this felt very much like I was doomed whichever way I was meant to talk about the situation. However, looking back I think it gave me confidence to deal with it later on. I recall one occasion that I got angry with a class mate – she intended no offence, which I now see. All I know was that it was something to do with feeling like I had to defend my father, but I forget exactly what was said. She was stunned at my aggression. I don't remember us speaking again. I recognised I'd lost my cool and from then on, I would try to

ANONYMOUS

remain very calm and avoid the issue. I didn't mind talking to [GRO-B]. I distinctly remember though being in biology class and being a bit of an expert on blood transfusions.

16. My dad was an avid magician and was very good at close up magic and illusions despite his severe haemophilia. He lost the full use of his legs; he had a constant limp. However, he would always try different things and because of this I never really appreciated the full extent about people saying they couldn't do something; this was never an option.

17. My Dad had been to the Seychelles with [GRO-B] on holiday. When he came back he caught a bug and he never recovered. Four days before Dad died he was up and about and I remember walking out of the hospital that day thinking he would come out. I went to school to try and take my mind off things.

18. He died on [GRO-B] 1991.

19. I remember when my dad died that I felt that people had questions they wanted to ask but were unable to ask about his death. I kept thinking to myself whether I had to explain it to people but I didn't.

20. I did not go to his funeral; I did not want to. This was because the last time I had seen him he had been in bed and I could not bear to see him lowered into the ground. I told my mum that I didn't want to go to the funeral and she never challenged my decision and never held it against me.

21. We told everyone that Dad had died from pneumonia. [GRO-B]
[GRO-B] The family were very upset. She had never spoken about it before but my dad's brother, [GRO-B] has never spoken to my grandmother since. It is my father's older brother [GRO-B] who now helps my grandmother.

22. When my dad passed [GRO-B] immediately rekindled a relationship with an old boyfriend [GRO-B]. They later married and moved in together. My dad had talked about a Will that he had written himself. He also apparently left a number of his personal belongings to my sister and me in the event of his death. However, when he died, the Will was nowhere to be seen. On this basis, the entirety of my dad's estate fell to her. When my mum asked her what happened to the items that my dad had left to my sister and I, [GRO-B] said that she sold them all. The only items I received from my Dad's estate was a chess board and his shaving kit.

ANONYMOUS

23. I remember dad would have good days and bad days. We lived with Mum but we would stay with Dad every other weekend. We would always see him on the Sunday as he would work Saturdays. Sometimes over the weekend he would be hospitalised because he got a very bad bleed. This would be extremely difficult for GRO-B and I because we could never know 100% if we were going to see him on the weekend or not. I always put on a brave face when I was with Dad; I cried only to myself.
24. When Dad died I wondered whether I had been infected. I took myself to a sexually transmitted disease clinic and I asked to be checked out. I felt this was something I had to do for peace of mind and just to get some information about HIV.
25. My father's death has impacted me immensely. Now that I am approaching 45 years of age, the age my father died I always think that I am going to beat dad's 'score' in life. I play a kind of game with myself to beat my father's age when I die. I never wanted to compare myself with him but I find it hard now when I am approaching this age.
26. I believe that my father did leave a Will. He was fastidious about detail. Even if he didn't want to leave us anything I find it hard that his Will was not found.

Section 6. Treatment/Care/Support

27. I do not believe that there was any counselling offered as a result of my dad's infection or death. I have had counselling, but for a separate issue; I was beaten up at school.
28. I do believe that counselling would have been very helpful.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

29. GRO-B and my father went to the Seychelles before he died. To me, it seems to be a bit of an odd coincidence that they were financially able to go on holiday to the Seychelles which would have been an expensive holiday and that his children have seen nothing financially from his Will that he openly talked about.

ANONYMOUS

30. I do not recall the exact amount of money my father was given from any organisation, but I do believe it was a substantial amount as he would often live his life to the fullest in a financial sense.

31. I have not received any financial assistance. Neither my mum nor my sister have benefitted financially.

Section 8. Other Issues

32. I want my little boy to grow up in a world where justice is served properly and to those who deserve it. A lot of questions need to be answered and those that are responsible need to be brought to light.

Anonymity, disclosure and redaction

I wish to apply for anonymity. I understand that this statement will be published and disclosed as a part of the Inquiry. I do not wish to give oral evidence.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed GRO-B
GRO-B

Dated..... 30 / APRIL / 2019