

# ANONYMOUS

Witness Name: **GRO-B**

Statement No: WITN1457001

Exhibits: 0

Dated: March 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** of **GRO-B**.  
My date of birth is **GRO-B**.
2. This statement has been prepared without the benefit of access to my full medical records.

### Section 2. How Infected

3. I suffer with Haemophilia B. My condition is classified as moderate.
4. I do not know which blood products I have received precisely.
5. I was treated at the Haemophilia Centre in **GRO-B** and from an early age, I was under the care of Dr Rizza. I was treated at **GRO-B** Hospital for most of my life, until **GRO-B**, and this is where I believe I was infected with Hepatitis C as a result of receiving contaminated blood products.

6. In [GRO-B] I moved to London and I was treated at St Thomas' Hospital.
7. During a period of approximately 3 years at [GRO-B] in the early [GRO-B] I visited Dr Winter at the Haemophilia Centre in Margate.
8. To the best of my knowledge, all of my blood products up to and including this period came from the NHS. I believe, with an incredibly high level of certainty, that my Hepatitis C infection came from these contaminated blood products.
9. I do not recollect whether myself or my guardians were provided any information in relation to risk of being exposed to infection from blood products. I confirm that I have received no advice in relation to risks during my adulthood.
10. Sometime between [GRO-B], I recall going to a public phone booth during a work lunch break and having a phone call with [GRO-B] clinic. I was working in Reading at the time but cannot be more specific on dates. I believe the call was with Dr Rizza, where I was told I had antibodies suggesting I had been exposed to Hepatitis C.
11. I was invited to come to the clinic to discuss further but found very little information was provided.
12. I do not recall being provided with adequate information in relation to how to manage my infection. In fact, I recall that very little information was provided.
13. I was not aware of Hepatitis C infecting the Haemophilia community until that phone call. Had I known earlier the risk was so high and prevalent in the community I would have limited my usage of blood products. My bleeds were rarely serious as I was only a moderate haemophiliac. I believe that over 99% of treatment was for my left ankle from a weak joint, especially.
14. If I had known earlier I could have eliminated my usage for these non-critical bleeds and perhaps not got infected. However, I was not given the right information early enough.

15. At the time, very little information was provided and I do believe that more information should have been provided.

**Section 3. Other Infections.**

16. I am not aware of any other infections I may have been exposed to.

**Section 4. Consent.**

17. I am not aware if I was tested without my consent.

18. I do not believe that I was used for the purposes of research.

**Section 5. Impact**

19. My life has been mentally draining since my infection with Hepatitis C.

20. Physically, I have suffered with liver cirrhosis as a result of Hepatitis C damaging my liver.

21. In or around [GRO-B], I underwent a 12 to 14 month treatment of Ribavirin and Interferon. However, I was only able to get this treatment by volunteering for the test programme at St Thomas' Hospital. I suffered with exhaustion, nausea and flu-like symptoms whilst undergoing the treatment.

22. I generally feel ashamed of my infection; I have been made to feel as though I have done something wrong.

23. I have even kept my Haemophilia as a secret from people due to the fear of being associated with infected blood, HIV and Hepatitis. This association is difficult to manage. For example, I do not wish to wear a Haemophiliac Medical Bracelet contrary to recommendations by my doctors.

## ANONYMOUS

24. In relation to the impact on me and my family, I never informed my siblings or my parents about my infection as I feel that they would have not been able to cope with this knowledge.
25. Additionally, I missed work on a few occasions which led to some financial difficulties.
26. When I was off work during for a period of time of my treatment (due to the side effects) and I disclosed the reason for my absence, my employer exclaimed "*Can I catch it?*" which made me realise that he would not be empathic.

### **Section 6. Treatment/Care/Support**

27. As I have not lived in UK for some time, I am unable to use free NHS services. I have to pay for private treatment and consultations. As my infection is a precondition, no insurance company will cover these costs.
28. Any costs associated with further complications from liver cirrhosis will have to be borne by myself. Even if I travel to UK for treatment at my own expense, the NHS will not cover me.
29. This seems unfair as the cause of my infection was from NHS; I should still qualify for treatment especially as the cost can increase significantly if I develop liver cancer liver cancer and/or require a liver transplant.
30. No psychological support was ever offered to me.

### **Section 7. Financial Assistance**

31. I have received the Stage 1 payment from The Skipton Fund. Upon further tests carried out by St Thomas' Hospital I also received the Stage 2 payment. I am unsure as to the exact figures and dates.
32. I receive monthly payments from the Skipton Fund.

## ANONYMOUS

33. I found out about the Skipton Fund through staff at St Thomas' Hospital and the Haemophilia Society.

34. I applied for Stage 1 without much difficulty. As St Thomas' Hospital regularly monitored me and carried out medical tests. They advised me of my liver condition and they submitted a report for Stage 2.

### Section 8. Other Issues

35. I have no other issues to comment on.

### Anonymity, disclosure and redaction

36. I wish to apply to retain my anonymity.

37. I would not be prepared to give oral evidence to the Inquiry because I live overseas.

### Statement of Truth

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

Signed.....  
GRO-B

Dated.....  
30/4/19