

ANONYMOUS

Witness Name

GRO-B

Statement No: WITN4799001

Exhibits: WITN4799002

Dated: 1/9/21

GRO-B

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 27 November 2020.

GRO-B

will say as follows: -

Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is GRO-B My date of birth is GRO-B 1965. I am single and live in GRO-B Surrey and my full address is known to the Inquiry. I am currently unemployed and I am looking for work. I was previously working as an assembler of transformers for MIR machines up until August of 2019 when I was made redundant. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic I was made redundant from working as an electrical technician earlier in 2020. I intend to speak about my infection with Hepatitis C (HCV). In particular, the nature of my illness, how the illness affected me, the treatment received and the impact it had on me.
2. I confirm that I am not legally represented and that I am happy for the Inquiry team to assist with my statement.

Section 2. How Infected

3. When I was 14 years old I was playing with my friends at a disused railway station and we were doing what kids shouldn't do. We were playing on the station platform where they had a railway mechanism where they hooked things on to a bar that swung around and resembled gallows, like in the game Hangman. You held onto a rope while someone pushed the bar and you ended up horizontally 10ft in the air swinging around. There was a wall in the way which stopped you. I couldn't get the timing right, I tried 2 or 3 times but I couldn't get around. Then when I did manage to swing round, I must have either fallen down or swung round and hit the wall, I am not sure which. One of my friends ran to the pub to get help.
4. The accident happened at the GRO-B train station in GRO-B Manchester on 3 or 4 September 1979. I was unconscious following the accident and was taken to Ashton-Under-Lyne Hospital where I stayed in hospital until 10 September 1979 with a fractured skull.
5. I am no longer in touch with these friends GRO-B who were with me that day as I left Manchester when I was 18 years of age.
6. If my injury was minor, I would not have been hospitalised for 7 days with a fractured skull, it was not minor like a broken arm. There are so many smoking guns here, HCV where the hell did this come from?
7. Once I recovered and went back to school I don't think I mentioned it to anyone again. I am a Northerner, you just get on with it.
8. I was in Ashton-Under-Lyne Hospital when I woke up the nurse told me to turn over, whereupon she gave me a large injection into my backside within an hour of me waking. I have no need to be a 'Chancer'. It is understandable that my recollection may be patchy as it was 40 years ago and this may come across as patchy for that reason. Later in the 1980s I asked my doctor to get in touch with the Hospital because I was curious

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to know what happened. They sent me an admissions card and something that was similar to a small credit card. I chucked it away as I didn't know what it meant and thought perhaps it was an esoteric thing.

9. I came home from hospital and just carried on with my life. I think I stayed at home for 2-3 days as the school term had just started. When I came downstairs the following day after returning from hospital, my mother presented me with the tee shirt I had worn on the day of the accident. My mother wasn't a flannelly person, she was like my dad, when they said something they meant it. She presented it to me and told me that it had been covered in blood and it had taken her a long time to get the blood out. It was a white First Division, UEFA cup trophy tee shirt of Liverpool FC.
10. After the accident I never felt any ill-effects because I was a fit guy, I was a semi-athlete following a pro-health lifestyle and I believe my lifestyle would have kept at bay any virulence of the virus (would someone with a pro-health lifestyle do dodgy drugs or dodgy sex acts?). I was also vegan, eating healthily. I remember once when I was trying to chat up this lovely woman, she knocked the pepper pot off the table and my reactions were so fast that I caught it before it hit the ground.
11. I used to do 100 squat thrusts once a week, every week, for over 10 years, increasing to 175. I was very fit. However, with hindsight, I noticed a long time ago when I was about 16 or 17 years old, that my eyes were 2 different colours. I have green eyes, but I had a discernible 2-3mm brown margin around both of the pupils of my eyes. At the time I thought nothing of it, as I have a younger brother with odd coloured eyes, one blue and one green.
12. I was really clued up about health. You come across iridology, health is discernible in your eyes. Iridology relates to the view that the condition of each human organ is discernible in the eyes and that impaired organ function can be detected in the eyes and there is a related factor with regards to my eyes. I signed up to a drug trial when I was about 24 years

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old. At the time I was a fit guy and I thought I would go for a medical. I did my usual 120 burpees before attending the medical. Following the medical I was asked if I had suffered a heart attack to which I said no. I was told the results indicated either a heart attack or very vigorous exercise because the normal rate was about 100-300 but mine was elevated to about 3.5 thousand.

13. In 1989 I volunteered to do another drug trial and had a blood sample taken and was told to phone several days later. I had done my usual workout 2 or 3 days before and a humungous abnormality showed in the liver test taken. I was told they needed to test me again so they arranged a further test for 10 days later. This time I did not exercise and my results were normal.
14. I went for another drug trial about a year later in 1990 but I didn't do any exercise that time. I went for the medical and I had an elevated liver enzyme again. ADT, ADD or AST enzyme, I am unable to recall exactly which. I telephoned for the results 10 days later and they told me that it was elevated. I asked for a repeat blood test 10 days later. The following day I did my serious workout to see what would happen and when I went for the follow up blood test ten days later it was normal and I passed.
15. So, for the next drug trial I did the same rigorous exercise several days before the medical and I passed.

Section 3. Other Infections

16. I do not believe that I received any other infection other than HCV. I haven't got HIV or AIDS. As far as I am concerned it is just HCV. I have only shared my towel once with one other person circa 1989 after 5 a side soccer.
17. At the time they didn't test for HIV I don't think.

Section 4. Consent

18. I was unconscious at the time of the accident so I couldn't give consent and I was a child. I am not aware of whether my parents were asked for consent to a blood transfusion. I am using my intelligence here to extrapolate what happened. It would have been a '999' phone call to take me to hospital to patch me up. My parents didn't have a phone it is possible that the hospital phoned the police who came round to tell them.
19. The duality of the dilemma was that the NHS saved my life, but stabbed me at the same time, the analogy is like oh I think you are a great person but I'll punch you in the face!
20. My prospect of life expectancy might be reduced. It is highly speculative but when I got HCV I was 14 years old and was about 5ft 1" tall. How does anyone know that I wouldn't have grown to 6 ft? I was a champion sprinter and my achievement records were still standing 20 years later. I have got a large capacity, but who knows if my capacity wouldn't be exponentially larger now if I hadn't contracted HCV.

Section 5. Impact

21. This was on my mind for a long time. About 10 to 15 years ago I spoke to my Doctor about this so he did a blood test which was normal except for one liver enzyme AST, ADD or ADT, which was elevated. He said that liver enzyme might always be elevated.
22. It continued to stay on my mind because I was a fit guy, running half marathons at the time. I was also a vegan, I didn't drink any alcohol, I never ate cheese or had any dairy products in my diet. I didn't eat meat nor drank tea or coffee. I was working on a health farm, in a health

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commune at the time and had access to a full range of legumes and herbs. I thought to myself that I would see how this goes.

23. In around June or July of 2006 I was at home one day watching the local 6 o'clock BBC regional news when an article came up regarding Guy's Hospital wanting volunteers for a drug trial they were conducting under the umbrella of Guy's Hospital, London. So, I phoned directory inquiries and obtained the number. I was told that they would pay my travel expenses to attend.
24. They performed an ECG and took my blood pressure. I passed that and went back for a second medical. This time they took a blood sample. A doctor in a white coat came to speak to me and he told me that I had Hepatitis C (HCV). I was told this on the same day that I attended for the second medical. I was amazed. This particular doctor told me that there was no cure for it. He said that someone who was 65 years of age had had it for 40 years, and that there was no cure. Obviously, I wasn't able to go on the drug trial then. I thought how the hell have I got this as I know me?
25. He advised me that I might want to go back to see my local GP, so I made an appointment with my former doctor, who has now retired, Dr. GRO-B. GRO-B at GRO-B in GRO-B.
26. Dr. GRO-B arranged a hospital appointment for me. I was feeling down from it. He said that there was a cure so I totally cheered up. I went to hospital. They told me not to drink alcohol but I hadn't drunk alcohol for about 10 years. When I went to see my doctor, he gave me a booklet. When I read the sentence that Hepatitis C is a blood to blood infection, I knew exactly where I had got it from. The second I read that I knew it was when I had fractured my skull. The previous paragraph in the booklet mentioned causes of infection being dodgy sex or drug use. I had never done either.

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27. It is another smoking gun. I know me, I've never done dodgy intravenous drugs or had dodgy sex and I have never had sex with a prostitute. I have no tattoos. I have had in the vicinity of 10 sexual partners in my life.
28. It's got to be contaminated blood, if you are healthy and some of your blood got into me I may be ill or my immune system may shrug it off but I will only contract HCV if the person had contaminated blood and not normal blood. Normal blood inside me would not create Hepatitis C. I was diagnosed as Geno type 3A with a high viral load of 15 million. It gets all technical and I was only interested in beating it.
29. I am a healthy guy, the thing in my head was to get over this, beat this. I did the chemotherapy treatment. I told my doctor there and then, that the accident was where I got it from. My view was let's beat this and get this sorted first.
30. My family have good constitutions. I don't know if this thing is going to knock 10 years off my life. Who knows what this could do? There may be a margin around my life and it could knock 10 years off my life.
31. Again, I am extrapolating intelligence here. I am 5ft 7" tall and at 14 years of age I would have been about 5ft tall and I was about 8 stones and I lost a lot of blood. In that context there is a probability I was given blood or a product. There is a probability that I would have been given blood following the accident, given that I was slight.
32. I went to the gym, I was pro-health and fit which counteracted any virulence of the virus. Because of my lifestyle the only indication of any illness was the margins around my eyes.
33. I remember the consultant advised taking the injection when you would be able to spend the following 2 days resting. After the injection I would get the shakes which lasted for the day. I took the injection on a Friday evening and practically overnight, for several hours I would get the shakes. I couldn't do any work.

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34. I would take it on a Friday and it would largely knock me out. The results are lethargy that totally knocks you out. The only exertion I did for a couple of days was go to the train station and get a newspaper which would largely wipe me out and I would sit in the chair. Largely I didn't move out of the chair. It gave me pins and needles in my legs when they were stretched out so I would have to draw them up to alleviate the pins and needles several times, and it gave me the shakes.
35. I didn't eat for 2 maybe 3 days after the injection. I experienced extreme lethargy and I was living alone. I am a cerebral man, I was able to read the paper play an album or 2. The impact on me was to slow me down, grind me to a halt so that I couldn't do much in those 6 months. It was the impact of healing.
36. I volunteered at Oxfam as a 'music man'. Once or twice when I was helping out whilst taking the medication I couldn't do my usual 2-3 hours but just 40 minutes because I was wasted.
37. I took it for 2 weeks to see what my condition was like in response to the medication. I was on benefit at the time so I told them that I was on the chemo for 2 weeks and that I couldn't work so they told me to carry on taking job seekers allowance for 6 months after that. I waited 3-4 weeks after taking the medication to get some vigour back before going to the job centre.
38. My HCV infection had an impact on my relationships. I remember that there was this beautiful girl I was chatting up and was getting close to. She came round to see me but I wouldn't let her into my flat because my legs were shaking as I had just had the injection. I didn't answer the door because I was having the shakes and didn't want her to see me like that.
39. I think I lost several kilos in weight. There were no other effects of the treatment other than a lot of my hair fell out, the fatigue and shakes which I mentioned. I had long hair at the time and I combed it in the morning and big chunks came out, but because it was long it disguised it. I noticed it

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when I was in a mirrored area in a shopping centre, the wind blew my hair and I saw bald patches. I believe that is where my bald patch comes from now. I hacked away at my hair and shaved it off after that.

40. It is a curious dilemma, a bit like with this covid-19 now, yes, I wear a mask and I don't believe that I've had it, but it is possible I have, and shrugged it off.
41. My frame of mind is so strong that I think I just thought I am going to get through it. The thing is, I am not a 'chancer'. I don't think my HCV infection held me back in life because of my strength of mind. It's difficult like with Covid, I see people and they are really worried. My first question would be can you heal from this, if not then that would crush me, like when the first doctor who gave me my HCV diagnosis and told me there was no cure but subsequently my doctor told me there was a cure. It is dependent on what your mind is like. This is the thing though, who knows whether this is going to chop 10 years off my life?
42. With regards to the financial impact there was a short period of time when I was unemployed, slightly before diagnosis and treatment and slightly after. It is difficult to quantify. I have a strong character and a strong frame of mind. It comes back to Covid and how your mind can help you heal.
43. I am the guy that inhabits this thing in my head. It's a mindset and you don't know what it is. The dilemma is that it is like they healed me and then stabbed me in the back.
44. Who knows if it stunted my growth and diminished my capacity? Who knows if it knocked years off my life? I am a fit guy for fifty-odd years but what if something happens at 72 years of age, when all my relatives died in their 90s? Its quantifying it. It is known as the silent killer because you have it for years and years and years. Your balance goes and people think you are drunk. Had it not been for that drug trial that I participated in I would have had HCV without knowing it and ended up at 65 years of age and my liver would have been irreversibly knackered. I believe in God,

maybe God is looking out for me here. It was just fortune that I found out about the HCV.

45. I don't know what the impact of this will be on my life, who knows it may knock 10 years off my life.

Section 6. Treatment/Care/Support

46. I have never been offered any psychological support or counselling. When I received the HCV diagnosis it was a massive impact. The doctor who gave me my diagnosis told me to see my local doctor. The doctor at the drug trial said you might want to go and see your GP, having told me that there was no cure. No mention was ever made of any psychological support or counselling.
47. My liver is pretty good. I asked my doctor years later to do a blood test. It doesn't show a date but it showed the raised enzyme.
48. I have never had a liver biopsy or a fibroscan as far as I am aware.
49. I don't have any criticism for anyone. It was enough of an impact to be told that I had got HCV and told to see my main doctor. I read the booklet I was given by my doctor and it was good.
50. I first went to get tested at the Haematology department of the Royal Surrey Hospital in Guildford where they have their own HCV unit. When I next went there was a main consultant who showed me how to use the elaborate injection device, he then gave me the tablets. The Interferon and Ribavirin treatment consisted of tablets and injections. Every couple of months I had to go and see them. After the second or third time I said that it wasn't working.
51. Another factor was that there was a nurse pioneering another injection system. The first week it worked but the second and third weeks it didn't

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and the fourth it did. So, after 9 to 10 weeks I'd only had 4 to 5 effective injections.

52. From memory my treatment lasted for a 26-week period. I took one type of treatment for thirteen weeks and another type of treatment for another 13 weeks - one form of injection for the first 13 weeks and another form for next 13 weeks. I administered the injection into my stomach below my belly button in the radius around my belly button. It was a weekly injection as I recall. I think the tablets may have been twice daily but I can't remember exactly as this is coming up to 14 years ago.
53. As mentioned in paragraph 51 above, at the time they were pioneering a new very elaborate injection procedure run by a nurse at the hospital, so it was in her interests for it to work. It worked the first week but not the next 2 weeks and did work the 4th week and it was like that for about 10 weeks intermittently. She told me that I wasn't doing it right. I went to the head consultant and said if I've only got one lot of treatment I want one that works. I said that if I only had one portion I want needles that work so he put me on the other form of treatment.
54. The cost of the treatment wasn't mentioned, but one of the consultants said that you have one go at this or words to that effect and that they can't keep giving you treatment. They told me that you have one portion of treatment as there were 2 lads on the treatment who were drinking which was nullifying the treatment and got kicked off the treatment. So, I thought I am going to make this work.
55. At the end of 26 weeks you have to give 3 follow up samples. They wanted one after a month, 3 months and then one 6 months later. However, I would see them a year later. Following that I returned a year later. I had the first sample after 1 month, and then the following year and then the following year. I had the attitude that I am going to be behaving so it was a consolation for me to go a year later to be tested. I was clear and the consultant told me that because of me they had changed certain procedures.

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56. I have no criticism towards the person telling me that I had contracted HCV. They are giving bad news like being told a relative has died and I have no criticisms of them.
57. Thirty-five years ago, they were just checking that you were healthy and at the time of my accident they didn't test for HIV or HCV.
58. I have never really noticed any stigma associated with my HCV diagnosis from any former employer. I saw my dentist before I found out about having HCV so I didn't know that I had it, and the next time I went to the dentist I had been cured. I think I told him the next time I saw him and that I had been cured.
59. I have not been in a position to be refused insurance because I insured my flat for about 10 years. I think I insured it from 1999 to 2009 and I found out about my HCV infection in 2006 and stopped insuring my flat.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

60. Eighteen months after I was deemed clear of the virus I got in touch with the Skipton Fund. I cannot recall how I came to hear about the Skipton Fund. There may have been some sort of documentary or something on television, because it was years after I had finished with the chemotherapy.
61. When I made my application to the Skipton Fund they told me to get in touch with the hospital records department, so I did. They phoned me back 3 or 4 hours later but said they had no records. However, Skipton later told me that they had my accident record of what had happened to me in the 1970s. They came up with a particular medical term, so to me this is another 'smoking gun'. They seemed to have the records when I put in the appeal, but didn't have them before!

62. My application was supported by my GP, Dr. GRO-B. He wrote the word, 'possibly' on my Skipton application form which I told him to cross out, so he replaced it with the word, 'probably'. It was probable not possible that the blood transfusion I received gave me HCV. I was a manager of a betting shop so I know more about possible and probable than most.
63. Dr. GRO-B letter dated 22 March 2011, states that it was highly probable that I would have had a blood transfusion. I provide this letter to the Inquiry (WITN4799002). As such the work certificate is a collectors' item for me, of my life experience. I only ever had one work sick certificate when I was taking the HCV Interferon and Ribavirin treatment.
64. Skipton referred to an injury occurring in 1970 which is incorrect and they also referred to another specific injury regarding the occiput bone at the back of the head. They mention records in their communication but I had been told there were no records on 2 separate occasions from Ashton Under Lyne Hospital.
65. I received an admission card which was a brown, greenish card which I kept and also a credit card sized piece of card which I threw away. My mind told me it may be some kind of esoteric thing. They told me nothing else and that was all that my doctor gave me.
66. My Skipton Fund application form was rejected and I appealed. The appeal was declined in 2013 on the basis that I was unlikely to have received a blood transfusion as there was no evidence of a subdural bleed. They mentioned another specific definition.
67. I telephoned Skipton and I was told to phone the hospital records department. I did so and was told that they would call me back in 3 to 4 hours' time. They said nothing then all of sudden where do you get the occiput thing? Another smoking gun! The difficulty of getting evidence is that you have to extrapolate evidence where you can.

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68. A large part of my evidence was that I have never been with a prostitute or taken dodgy drugs, so you tell me where did I get it then? You can try telling me I am a liar if you want. Where did I get contaminated blood then? I felt that I got lots of half facts here.
69. They rejected my application I think for a 2nd time. I had one remaining application left I think. On receiving this news, I just didn't accept it. I was disappointed and to be honest I thought it was part of a cover up. I just thought negatively. I felt I had been given a half a statement, the Doctors can't just say no, where did I get it from then?
70. I remember thinking during my appeal that it was like being accused of a crime that I didn't do because I had no evidence. This happened 40 years ago and it is not even like looking for a needle! My way of defining it is that the doctor says we don't think we gave it to you and for me that's actually half a judgment. My answer is you are a doctor so you tell me how I got it because I have never had dodgy sex or taken dodgy drugs.
71. I thought it was a flawed judgement. It's not enough to give a half answer. I think they were being unfair, it was half a job, half a judgment. This is the nebulousness of this whole matter. I made the application it was refused, I appealed and it was rejected and all the way along I was asked to prove this. I don't think the balance of probabilities was applied. I saw that judgment and I saw that it was flawed. I thought it was half a judgement with only half a fact. Where is the other half of the judgment, where did I get it from? I am not going to be doing dodgy drugs with dirty people with my pro health-conscious mind.
72. I think the omission of the half a judgement is highly significant, the omission of the consideration of where I got it from. The fact that I was a pro-health person should have been given consideration.
73. The onus was on me to provide evidence of the transfusion. At the time of my accident my 2 older brothers and my sister had left home. My 2 younger brothers were 9 years old at the time and wouldn't be able to

remember the details of what happened as they were too young. My father died 2 years ago. I am no longer in touch with the friends who were with me on the day of the accident. My mother died in 2002.

Section 8. Other Issues

74. The Inquiry needs to give a large degree of latitude upon the factors presented to it, because of the scarcity of records and the big nebulousness of the matter. Ordinary people don't have records, they just have patches of information. The Inquiry needs to extrapolate what is there from the evidence.
75. The Inquiry should place good and well-grounded consideration to the facts. They should consider the zeitgeist of the time in question which was not the same as it is now. For example, in the 1980s, a Manchester hospital is not going to have had the records then that they have now. A Manchester hospital wouldn't have had the same records then as a London hospital.
76. I believe that there should be recompense from the former Skipton Fund. Some people stick their necks out but others worry about their jobs. Imagine a doctor standing up in the 1970s, they would have been fired.
77. If a situation like this arises again, there will be dissident voices that will say something. However, proper input of their voices always goes with the validity of it being profitable and viable, especially in the health service, as it saves lives.
78. An idiosyncratic factor of my personal situation may have some bearing for other people, when doctors say, "No, I don't think." As this can now leave a large hole as the matter hasn't really ended there. My idiosyncratic situation on this matter, with the doctors saying you don't have HCV from us, so then where did I get it from? This could be of relevance to other people, because it has not been developed to its full conclusion. The

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question is then, where did I get it from? Skipton's view was then more likely than not you got it from somewhere else. It is not enough that the Doctors say no. The Doctors then need to be asked, "Where did I get it?" and they will probably say, "It's not in my remit to comment." Well, the person whose remit it is needs to answer that question, because the only culprit in this matter, by a mile is Ashton Hospital in 1979.

79. Also I was led to believe that the matter was to be considered under the 'balance of possibility'. I believe my matter was considered under 'balance of probability'. My situation is viably possible! Very possible.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed

GRO-B

Dated

1/9/21