

ANONYMOUS

Witness Name: GRO-B

Statement No: WITN1314001

Exhibits: WITN1314002-004

Dated: May 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. I was born on GRO-B. I live at GRO-B.
GRO-B
2. My late husband, GRO-B: H (born GRO-B), passed away on GRO-B.
GRO-B 2003, aged GRO-B H. He started his career as an electrician and became a market trader from 1992. H and I had a daughter called GRO-B (born on GRO-B 2000). In 2018, GRO-B went to GRO-B to study a sport course.
3. This witness statement has been prepared without the benefit of access to all of my husband's medical records. If and in so far as I have been provided with limited records the relevant entries are set out in the medical chronology at the end of this statement.

Section 2. How infected

4. [H] suffered from severe Haemophilia B, with a clotting factor of less than 1%. [H] was diagnosed when he was young (I think it was within the first year of his life) as he had a lot of bruises on his body. [H] family were not aware of Haemophilia prior to his diagnosis.
5. [H] was under the care of Dr Dolan and Nurse Anne Massing Ham at The Queens Medical Centre in Nottingham. Prior to this, I believe [H] was treated at Nottingham General Hospital, as upon review of some of his medical records I found a letter from them.
6. As a child [H] was in hospital for months on end. I do not know exactly what treatment he received. When we were together [H] would treat himself with Factor IX and he would inject himself weekly. [H] would receive Factor IX in hospital if the bleed was severe or if he was having an operation, for example when he had a knee replacement.
7. Exhibit WITN1314002, is a letter from Dr Dolan dated 02 April 2004, confirming that [H] was first treated with Factor IX concentrate in 1975 and the letter states that 'there is great difficulty determining when the actual infection occurs' but 'it seems reasonable to conclude that infection occurred shortly after this time'.
8. I am not aware that [H] or his parents were warned of any risks associated with Factor IX concentrate. I know that his parents would not have provided consent if there was such a serious risk.
9. [H] was infected with Hepatitis C (HCV) as a result of being given contaminated blood products.
10. I do not know the circumstances surrounding [H] diagnosis. We met in approximately 1993 and he was aware of the HCV.

Section 3. Other Infections

11. [H] received a letter about vCJD which stated there was a possibility he was at risk of vCJD.

Section 4. Consent

12. I believe [H] was probably tested without his knowledge, consent and without being provided with adequate information.

Section 5. Impact of the Infection

13. When I first met [H] as far as I could tell, he was not suffering from any physical effects. His symptoms then seemed to come on all of a sudden.

14. [H] told me he had HCV but I did not understand the severity of the infection. I was more worried about his haemophilia. When he went to hospital for his regular appointments there were discussions about him having a liver biopsy but it did not seem urgent as the doctors kept pushing the date back. [H] had a biopsy in April 2000 however, there was a problem with the biopsy and the doctor took a piece of muscle instead of a piece of [H] liver. The hospital decided not to do another liver biopsy.

15. We never really thought about it and in January 2003 [H] suffered with extreme bloating in his stomach. He went to hospital and had a scan and he was told to go back for the results a few days later. However one night, before the results were ready, [H] suffered again with severe stomach cramps and I telephoned the hospital and I was told to take him to hospital. [H] went into hospital by ambulance.

16. The hospital gave [H] another scan in the early hours of the morning. I was told that [H] had liver cancer and was unlikely to survive the day. This was a complete shock. I could not believe what I had just been told. I asked if there was a chance that [H] would be a candidate for a liver transplant but the doctors said that he wasn't as it was most likely that the cancer had spread to other parts of his body. We had no idea that he had cancer and that was the

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first time that cancer had ever been mentioned. We thought [H] had food poisoning because he said it felt like when he had food poisoning before. [H] passed away the same day as we found out he had cancer. I never thought that [H] was going to lose his life. [H] death certificate, exhibited at WITN1314004, states that he died from intra-abdominal haemorrhage, metastatic hepatic carcinoma, and chronic Hepatitis C infection.

17. A few months later at Exhibit WITN1314003, is a letter dated 15 April 2003 from Dr [GRO-B]. In that letter Dr [GRO-B] described the cancer as 'extremely extensive' and there were a 'large number of nodules or lumps of cancer within the liver and also cancer within the lungs which implies that the cancer had spread from the liver elsewhere'.

18. In November 2002 [H] commenced with the interferon and ribavirin treatment. He went into hospital once a week and the nurse would inject into his stomach. When [H] was confident enough he then injected himself at home.

19. [H] waited far too long for the treatment. I do not know why he was not offered the treatment before, but he should have been. If the treatment worked it may have cleared the infection.

20. The side effects from the treatment were bad. [H] suffered from nose bleeds (which may have been from the cancer as explained in Exhibit WITN1314003), muscle pains and extreme fatigue. They lowered [H] dose on the treatment because he could not cope with the horrific side effects.

21. [H] could not work while he was on the interferon treatment. He was struggling with work before but when he started the treatment it completely prevented him from working again. I still had to work because we needed the money in order to survive. However it was logistically really difficult for me to work because when [H] was not well I had to take time off to look after him and our young daughter.

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22. [H] loved his family and when he found out he had cancer he was more concerned about us than himself. Straight away he wanted to know what would happen to [GRO-B] and me.
23. There was such a stigma associated with Hepatitis and people frowned upon it because it was associated with drug users or promiscuity and sexual intercourse.
24. The sudden loss of [H] completely knocked me out. I had a two year old daughter and she was the only thing that kept me going. I am so mentally scarred from what happened to [H] and I am still so angry. I will never get over the loss of my husband and the father to my daughter. Losing [H] has ripped my world apart and literally all my plans and dreams just disappeared over night. I have always tried to be strong and hide my grief from [GRO-B] but I will never fully recover from what has happened. I have been lucky in that we had a lot of support from my family, especially my parents but this should never have happened to us.
25. I cannot underestimate how devastating for [GRO-B] losing her father has been. She still grieves for her father and gets upset that he is gone. Even at 18 years old when she comes home from university she sleeps in my bed.
26. I had 10 months off when [H] died, and I was paid sick pay for some of that time. After that we just struggled through. When [GRO-B] went to nursery, I went back to work but I had to give it up again because she did not like being left with anyone. It wasn't until she went to school at age 4 and a half years old that I got a part time job. I am still doing that job now.
27. We had so many problems financially throughout our life because of the HCV and [H] was unable to get life insurance or any form of mortgage.

Section 6. Treatment/care/support

28. The doctors should have given [H] a biopsy as soon as they knew he had been infected with HCV. They should also have monitored his liver regularly and by the time he was monitored it was all too late.

29. We have never been offered any counselling or psychological support.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

30. I received £20,000 for the stage 1 payment and £50,000 for the stage 2 payment from the Skipton Fund.

31. I now receive the top up payment from EIBISS in the sum of approximately £1,300 a month.

32. I received the widowed parent allowance for [GRO-Bup] until she was 18 years old and that was approximately £130 a week.

33. Sending all the documentation to the Skipton Fund was a lot of hassle. You have to send the same documentation year on year, including wage slips, council tax, and [H] death certificate. I felt like I had to fight for things that you should be entitled too. It is emotional all the time.

Section 8. Other Issues

34. [H] was not involved in the litigation in the 1990's.

35. I want to know who is to blame and why it happened. I want someone to be held responsible.

Anonymity, disclosure and redaction

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36. I am seeking anonymity and would like my statement redacted before publication. However I understand this statement will be published and disclosed as part of the Inquiry. I do not want to give oral evidence to the Inquiry.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed

GRO-B

Dated

2/6/19

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MEDICAL SUMMARY

(This summary is not intended to be exhaustive but sets out key points in the records relevant to the Statement)

This witness statement has been prepared without the benefit of access to my full medical records. .