

ANONYMOUS

Witness Name: GRO-B

Statement No: WITN1349001

Exhibits: None

Dated: January 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
GRO-B born on GRO-B. I am single and have been
living with my partner for the last GRO-B years. I lived at home with my parents until
I was GRO-B years old. I moved out briefly and then returned when I was GRO-B years
old, in GRO-B. I work in an GRO-B.
2. I provide this witness statement in response to a request under Rule 9 of the
Inquiry Rules 2006. I am aware that GRO-B
GRO-B will also be giving statements.
3. This witness statement has been prepared without the benefit of access to any of
my late father's medical records.

Section 2. How Affected

4. I make this statement in relation to my late father, [GRO-B:F] born on [GRO-B] who was infected with HIV by contaminated blood products in the early 1980s. He died in [GRO-B] on [GRO-B] aged [GRO-B] years old after a big bleed in his head.
5. My father was a Haemophiliac and I remember he used to go for regular blood tests. I saw him taking his injections in front of me.
6. I believe that he started taking Factor VIII in or about 1980 and he was being treated in the [GRO-B] at the time.
7. I believe that his blood was tested from 1980 but he was never told of the possibility of contracting HIV from this. My mother has told me that in [GRO-B] he was told that he had contracted HIV and this had a devastating effect on him. Therefore I assume that he was given the infected blood products at some point between 1980 and 1983. I was only [GRO-B] at the time so I can not remember exactly.
8. He was infected with HIV, Non A Non B Hepatitis and Hepatitis B.

Section 3. Other Infections

9. I do not know if my father had any other infections.

Section 4. Consent

10. I do not know if my father gave consent to being tested or whether he was treated for anything.

11. I believe that the [GRO-B] was an HIV specialist hospital, so they might have tried experimental tests and treatments on my father but I do not know.

Section 5. Impact of the Infection

12. Before my father was diagnosed with HIV and Hepatitis, I remember that we all used to go out together as a family. I went to air shows with him and the odd holiday to [GRO-B] and other outings. I would say that I had a happy younger childhood but also I also remember my parents started arguing more at that time but I didn't know why.

13. From the time my father retired he aged a lot very rapidly. He looked 60 or 70 years old when he did but he was only about [GRO-B] years old. His hair went really grey and he looked skinny and gaunt. He couldn't walk very well and had to use two walking sticks. He also used an electrical wheelchair sometimes.

14. In 1983 when I believe he was diagnosed, I was only about [GRO-B] years old and so my parents hid it from me until I was about [GRO-B] years old because he was basically on his deathbed. My father didn't want to discuss it with me but my mother told me what was going on. I think he had pneumonia and it was thought that he was about to die. He was bedbound and brought home from the hospital on a stretcher bed. He stayed in bed for months before he got out of bed again.

15. He stayed in the living room when his legs got so bad that he couldn't get upstairs anymore and we eventually moved from our house and into a bungalow because of this, around [GRO-B]

16. After his pneumonia death scare he used to just sit around and watch TV constantly. He was always at home but he didn't used to speak to me much. I felt that he lacked an interest in us all really. He never really got off his chair. He

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even used his wheelchair to get tea or food occasionally; otherwise my mum would do everything.

17. My father started taking AZT tablets which caused him to have very bad bleeds from his Haemophilia. I remember ambulances and paramedics were always coming to see him. I do not know if he was taking anything else as he did not like speaking about his illness and I was only young anyway.

18. GRO-B
GRO-B In a way, I thought this was good for him as at least he got out of the house for a while.

19. His health progressively deteriorated throughout his illness and towards the end he was completely bed bound again. I think his HIV tablets may have slowed down his deterioration.

20. My father's social and private life was also heavily affected by his infections. He became very introverted because his social life effectively ended when he had the infections and people found out. Everyone assumed that he had AIDS and no one wanted to know him. He lost all his friends and he became depressed really. He never used to say much and we did not really talk.

21. He started going out GRO-B for a while but then even that stopped.

22. I think that he took all his feelings out on our family a lot. He treated my mother quite badly. She was effectively his nurse and he objected to her doing it. I think he was embarrassed about it.

23. My mother used to do everything for my father. She became his carer on top of all the housework. She used to help him with everything really, even showering. There were times she used to talk about leaving him because he would treat and speak to her horribly. He would not give my mother money or things that me and

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my [GRO-B] needed and my mother had to go out to work in [GRO-B] and earn some money. My mother gave money to my brother when he left home.

24. My father took anger out on my mother and even with me as he used to shout and lose his temper a lot. He never did before his infection. [GRO-B] even got kicked out of the house.

25. I think my father was very jealous of us being healthy and so he did not want to know about things we were doing. I remember telling him that [GRO-B] [GRO-B] He just asked me why I was doing such childish things. I was only about [GRO-B] at the time and so I felt embarrassed and upset. His reply just stopped the conversation. [GRO-B] even used to take me to [GRO-B] because he just was not bothered. It was like not having a father. He did not get involved in anything with us. To be honest, he just was not very nice. It was a horrible atmosphere in the house. I used to spend as much time as I could outside.

26. My father used to play mind games on me too. After my O-Levels I took an [GRO-B] [GRO-B] and I wanted him to buy a [GRO-B] to help me. I asked him and he said no, but then later he bought one for himself. He let me use it but I had already failed my course by then anyway. I do not know why he used to do things like that, maybe he thought it was fun, I do not know.

27. He also used to accuse me of slowing the internet down and instead of coming to tell me about it he would just turn the router off. It was weird behaviour and I never understood it.

28. Family life only really used to include my [GRO-B] and my mother. She gave me lifts everywhere even though my father was still able to drive at the time. My father was always proud of having new cars from his mobility allowance. He used to like cars and used to do them up when he was younger. He didn't like my mother using the mobility cars he would get but he did not drive them himself. She then bought her own car.

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29. My mother started chain smoking every night due to all the stress she was under. She only ate very unhealthily, including a lot of chocolate. She developed **GRO-B** I don't think she realised the impact everything had on her until after my father had died and her health deteriorated.

30. I think my father drove a wedge between us as a family. My **GRO-B** got kicked out of the house and then we never really spoke. It was only in my **GRO-B** that we reconnected.

31. There was a lot of stigma around HIV at the time and this also really affected us. We used to be very friendly with our next door neighbours and we used to socialise with them frequently. They found out about my father's infection and assumed he had AIDS. They cut us off completely.

32.

GRO-B

GRO-B

GRO-B

33. It was due to this that I already had an inclination that something was not right when my mother eventually told me about my father's infection.

34. I moved out of the family house when I was **GRO-B** to go and live with my partner at the time. My father had a rule that I was not allowed anyone to stay over so I moved out. I moved back in when I was **GRO-B**. This was the same year that my father died.

35. I was too young to know any different life. I don't feel like I really had a **GRO-B** or a father. I do not know if things could have been different for me because I was so young. I felt alone and I had to figure things out for myself.

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36. I do not even want children now. This may be due to how I was treated and how I felt as a child. Maybe it had a subconscious effect on me, I do not know, but I have never really got everything off my chest and I am still affected by it.
37. I never told anyone about my father's infection. I only told my partners that he had Haemophilia and arthritis. I kept it all to myself and it was hard. My mother told me not to speak to people about it due to the reaction my father got from all the people close to him, so it was to safeguard me really.
38. Even at school I never told anyone about my father's infection. I always used to get into trouble at school and I was disruptive. I used to like having a laugh in lessons and sometimes played the role of the class clown. I don't know if this subconsciously had something to do with not getting any attention at home. I even used to drink alcohol a little as a teenager, I don't know if this was due to my father's illness and wanting to get away from it all.
39. After my O-Levels I went to work in [GRO-B] and ended up staying there for [GRO-B] years. This was not what I wanted to do.
40. I am not sure about the financial effects of my father's infection had; however, I know that he took voluntary redundancy. I think his work knew about his infection and they did not want to keep him on after he got infected. He was only about [GRO-B] [GRO-B] when he retired.

Section 6. Treatment/care/support

41. I believe that care or support should have been offered to help my mother look after my father. My mother used to do everything.
42. HIV was a disease that people didn't understand and even the doctors and nurses stayed away and did not want to come and help I think because of this. He did still see his GP however.

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43. I don't think my father had counselling at that time and neither did I. My well being was never really taken into account and I believe counselling would have helped me, especially given my age at the time.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

44. I do not know if my father ever received any financial support as a result of his infections.

Section 8. Other Issues

45. None of this should have happened to anyone and no one should have been infected. There should have been some kind of screening and people should have been made aware of what had happened as soon as it was known. It certainly should not have been kept a secret. What happened was unfair and hard for a lot of people. It affected many lives.

Anonymity

46. I wish to remain anonymous.

47. I do 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..

24/02/19