

ANONYMOUS

Witness Name: **GRO B**

GRO B

Statement No.: WITN3752001

Exhibits: WITN3752002-003

Dated: 18th January 2021

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 27th August 2019.

I, **GRO B**, will say as follows: -

Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is **GRO B**. My date of birth is the **GRO B** 1950 and my address is known to the Inquiry. I have been married to my husband **GRO B** and we have **GRO B** children together. I intend to speak about my infection of hepatitis B, in particular the nature of my illness, how the illness affected me and the impact it had.
2. I do wish to be anonymous for this statement.

Section 2. How Infected

3. I gave birth to my eldest child [GRO B] on the [GRO B] 1971 at Bellshill Maternity Hospital. About a month or so after I gave birth to him I haemorrhaged suddenly and was rushed back and re-admitted. It was an emergency situation, so while I was unconscious, I understand that I received four units of blood. I cannot recall the name of the treating consultant.
4. As I was unconscious, I did not receive any information about the blood transfusion or any advice about any potential risks. My husband who [GRO B] did not receive advice or information about the transfusion either as far as I am aware. This blood transfusion did help me and I recovered without incident. I was released from hospital about twenty four hours after I was admitted.
5. I fell pregnant with my second child, [GRO B] later on in 1971. From this point, I found that there was a significant change in how I was treated by the medical staff compared to how I was treated when I was pregnant with my first child in 1970 [GRO B] 1971. I gave birth to [GRO B] in [GRO] 1972. During this pregnancy, I found that the nurses and doctors were wearing masks, gowns and gloves every time I went in for an appointment. This was different from when I had been pregnant with my first child. While I can't recall a lot of the details due to the passage of time, I can recall that I found this change quite scary, particularly since there was no explanation.
6. During this second pregnancy I attended the hospital to provide routine blood tests. About one month after undergoing these routine tests, I was contacted by the hospital and advised that there was an "anomaly" in my blood. I was not clear what it was and how this had occurred. I found out later on that it had come from the blood transfusion, but this information was not immediately obvious to me. My blood had been fine when I had been pregnant with my first child [GRO B] so it was clear where this

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“anomaly” had come from. I was advised that there was something in my blood, with no clear information about what it was. The doctors admitted nothing and the lack of explanation was quite scary.

7. Bellshill Maternity Hospital permanently closed in 2001.

8. My GP surgery is based at **GRO B**
I have been with this surgery since birth, however in the copy of my medical records that have been provided to my solicitors are suspiciously small. At the beginning of my records there is a list of consultations that took place for me over the years and I notice that the summary of consultations begins in 1987. Within the records themselves, there are hardly any references to me giving birth to **GRO B** children. There are no references to hepatitis B, or the hepatitis B surface antigen. Instead there are only two references to the Australian antigen which I exhibit as **WITN3752002** in 1973 and **WITN3752003** in 1980.

9. I should have been told straight away when this “anomaly” was spotted in my blood and provided with full information to understand the situation. There was never any sort of discussion about any risks posed to my children. I can’t remember the exact phrases that were used during these conversations, but I can remember that I found these conversations scary and the impression that I was left with, was that I had something, that I could die from. The only other information I was given was that I would have to advise dentists and doctors in the future that there was something in my blood, so they could take the necessary precautions.

10. I cannot recall when this was exactly, but by the early 1980s I was advised during a routine appointment that this “anomaly” in my blood was no longer present, which was a relief. Since then this has not come up again and it has been this new Inquiry appearing in the media and conversations with my son that has prompted me to provide this statement.

Section 3. Other Infections

11. I am not aware of being exposed to any other infections from the blood transfusion.

Section 4. Consent

12. I am not aware of being treated or tested without my knowledge or consent. I would make the comment that I was left very unclear about what it was that had appeared in my blood in 1971 and this lack of information was very frightening.

13. It is always possible that my blood has been used in some form of research, however I have not identified medical records to draw to the Inquiry's attention about this from my GP records.

Section 5. Impact

14. I recall that there was a time in the 1970s when I always felt tired, however I also recognise that I was raising young children then as well. I was extremely busy and simply did not have the time to focus on my health. From 1971, my health has been fairly stable and thankfully there has not been a significant decline in it. I am not aware of having developed any significant conditions over the years either that are related to hepatitis.

15. I have never been offered any form of treatment and this is not something that has become necessary for me as far as I am aware.

16. I took everything in my stride at the time and so did my husband. As my health has remained fairly stable things have been ok however I have been left in the dark about what has actually happened.

17. There were no work related or financial impacts for my family from this matter.

Section 6. Treatment/Care/Support

18. No emotional support was ever offered when I became pregnant with my second child, GRO B in 1971 or since then. I was ok though because my health has remained stable.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

19. I have heard of SIBSS through conversations with my son after this Inquiry began. I have not contacted them though as I am not clear if I am eligible.

Section 8. Other Issues

20. I have no other matters to raise for the Inquiry.

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Statement of Truth

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

Signed

GRO B

Dated

23rd February 2021