

ANONYMOUS

Witness Name: **GRO-B**

Statement No: WITN1809001

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**. I was born on **GRO-B** 1964 and I live at **GRO-B**
GRO-B. I currently live with my youngest son, **GRO-B**, who is **GRO-B** years of age. I also have **GRO-B** other children aged between **GRO-B** years old. I am self employed.
2. I make this statement as the youngest son of **GRO-B: M** **GRO-B**
GRO-B who passed away shortly after receiving a blood transfusion and contracting Hepatitis. I am unsure as to which type.
3. My older siblings, **GRO-B** and **GRO-B** shall also be submitting their witness statements to the Inquiry in relation to the above.
4. **This witness statement has been prepared without the benefit of access to my mother's full medical records.**

Section 2. How Affected

5. Prior to my mother's death, my parents had separated and I recall my parents were in the process of divorce. The divorce may have been finalised by the time of her passing.
6. The area in which my father lived was close by to my school and so for travelling purposes, I moved into my father's home in the months of August/September [GRO-B]. Both my siblings stayed with my mother, where I visited them all every weekend.
7. In or around mid February [GRO-B], I went to visit my mother but did not find her at home. I was aware that she had been poorly and had already been to hospital previously, but was not given details as to why she had been admitted on this particular occasion.
8. I was only [GRO-B] years old at the time and so my family thought it best not to tell me all of the details concerning my mother's health.
9. I was told my mother had an operation at Sunderland Hospital, where she received a blood transfusion and was discharged soon after. Following the procedure however, my brother advised she suffered from bouts of shakiness, fainting and extremely poor health and was admitted to Newcastle Hospital only half a day later, where she eventually passed away.
10. She passed away on [GRO-B]
11. I believe my family told me at the time, that she developed jaundice as a result of the transfusion and that this was the cause of her death.
12. I am unable to confirm with full confidence in which hospital she received the contaminated blood.
13. Around 31 years later, upon my father's death in [GRO-B] my brother revealed that when my mother was receiving the blood transfusion, she had actually

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been infected with Hepatitis. I am unable to confirm which type she had contracted.

Section 3. Other Infections.

14. I believed at the time that the cause of my mother's death was jaundice. I was not provided with information of whether my mother was put at risk of other infections.

Section 4. Consent.

15. As per the circumstances detailed above, I do not know whether my mother was given adequate information or provided consent in relation to her treatment at any given time.

Section 5. Impact

16. I have found it extremely difficult to talk about how I lost my mother. I was never happy after she died.

17. On my GRO-B I believe my grandmother received a telephone call from the hospital to say that my mother had passed away. My grandmother, brother and sister knocked on my door in the early hours of the morning and informed me of my mother's passing. My brother and sister stayed over and from that point onwards, it is all a blur.

18. It is extremely hard to remember the details as I was so young at the time and have never talked about this so openly.

19. Our mother's death was never spoken about. My father shut down and did not attend the funeral, which we assumed was his own way of grieving.

20. I remember the hearse parked in my grandmother's street and I recall parts of the sermon; my aunt shouting strange things throughout the service.

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21. I recall having felt traumatised throughout the course of the day, but I also now have gaps in my memory relating to this time.
22. After the funeral, my siblings moved into my father's home. We used to go out together, but by this point everything had changed.
23. As the house was small I had to share a room with my brother, but I spent much time segregating myself. As my siblings were older they were out of the house a lot. I would pass time in my room, watch children's TV programmes or go out a little myself.
24. My father attempted to maintain a relationship with us, making our tea, etc. but mostly we all went our separate ways. We no longer felt like a family unit. We rarely spent time together and it seemed as if our family had been torn apart and I had nobody to turn to.
25. I had other family members; but my memories of my grandparents only consist of them drinking tea. They did not speak much about my mother's death, which I assume might have been their way of grieving too.
26. Following my parent's separation, there was much "bad blood" between the two families. My father discouraged us to maintain a relationship with my mother's side of the family, because as far as he was concerned it was all over and done with.
27. My mother had also been the only one to take us to visit her side of the family and so after her death, we did not take it upon ourselves to continue with this and in doing so lost all contact with them. My mother had 5 other siblings and around 10 or so nieces and nephews.
28. My siblings did not want to ask questions. Everyone's attitude was that there was nothing they could do because she had already passed away. My brother

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and sister have a better recollection of the events which occurred as they were older and lived with my mother before she died.

29. When I returned to school after my mother's death, the children were cruel and told me that my house was haunted. I struggled and disliked school from then on. I did not make friends and I kept away from people once the bullying began. I was late all of the time because I did not want to be there and so my grades suffered as a result. I managed to pass Geography and English, but before my mother's death, I used to be in top groups and used to enjoy being there.

30. I left school at 16 and started working as a van boy. I continued working there for 6 months, until my sister arranged for a position for me in the call centre where she worked. I worked there for GRO-B.

31. The family began to disintegrate during this time as the atmosphere in the home was terrible. I left my father's home at GRO-B years old and my brother and sister pursued romantic relationships and moved to live with their respective partners.

32. I did not know how my life was going to change and I do not know what my life would have been like had my mother have been alive today.

33. We were always a very private family and so few details were revealed to anybody else. Additionally, everything in relation to her infection was unknown to me, until revealed in GRO-B. Everyone was silent for so many years and so I presumed were dealing with her death in their own ways.

34. Once my father passed away, my brother and I started to talk more and believe she could have still been alive today and the Government at the time were possibly to blame for our mother's death.

35. I was the youngest out of the family and in many ways the most sensitive too, which is why it is difficult to discuss the matter without feeling very low. This is

also why I'm unable to confirm details regarding the circumstances, which I feel I should know.

Section 6. Treatment/Care/Support

36. Upon my mother's death, we were not offered any form of counselling/psychological support from any governing body or otherwise. Once the funeral had taken place, the matter was deemed to be "over and done with."

Section 7. Financial Assistance

37. I do not believe that any financial assistance has been given to my siblings or I.

38. I am aware of an earlier Inquiry but did not have any part in this. I cannot confirm whether my father or my mother's side of the family decided to pursue anything in relation to this matter.

Section 8. Other Issues

39. I have not taken part in any sort of campaigning and have not used Facebook or other social media platforms to be involved in the Inquiry.

Anonymity, disclosure and redaction

40. I wish to apply to retain my anonymity; however I shall confer with my siblings and confirm my position, once they have completed their own witness statements.

41. I would be prepared to give oral evidence, pending further discussion with my siblings.

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

Signed... GRO-B

Dated..... 8/4/19