

ANONYMOUS

Witness Name: GRO-B

Statement No: WITN3011001

Exhibits: WITN3011002

Dated: 11th July 2019

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF GRO-B

GRO-B will say as follows:-

Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is GRO-B and I live at GRO-B
GRO-B I was born on GRO-B I married my husband,
GRO-B: H in GRO-B, we had been together since GRO-B and we have GRO-B grown up
children. I work in GRO-B
2. I make this statement in relation to H who unfortunately died on GRO-B
2019 after being infected with Hepatitis C (HCV) having been treated with
contaminated blood products.
3. This witness statement has been prepared without the benefit of access to
H's full medical records.

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4. Before [H] died he was able to meet with Collins Solicitors who prepared a first draft of his witness statement. However [H] passed away before being able to sign his statement.
5. There is now produced and shown to me marked Exhibit WITN3011002 a copy of [H]'s draft statement ([H]'s statement). I was present at the meeting and confirm that the content is an accurate reflection of the evidence [H] intended to give to the Inquiry. I also wish to rely on the content of [H]'s statement.

Section 2. How Affected

6. [H] had mild Haemophilia A. He was diagnosed in [GRO-B] when he was a about 2 years old at [GRO-B] after a bleed in his mouth.
7. In [GRO-B] he was transferred to [GRO-B]. He was originally treated with cryoprecipitate before receiving Factor VIII concentrate.
8. At the age of 21 [H] developed an antibody to Factor VIII and had to be given Autoplex instead, a man made Factor VIII. He was treated with this until [GRO-B] when he had chemotherapy that cleared the antibody allowing him to be able to have Factor VIII again.
9. As a result of receiving blood products [H] was infected with HCV.
10. He was told of the infection in [GRO-B] when he was [GRO-B] years old, during an appointment which he attended on his own at the [GRO-B]. He originally went to the hospital because he was feeling unwell.

11. I do not believe that he was given much about the infection at the time as I cannot recall that [H] brought any information home with him following the appointment.

12. I do feel that [H]'s diagnosis should have been given to him earlier. [H] felt that they had known for some time that he had been infected with HCV before they told him. Also I did not receive any letters or anything telling me that he was infected, neither did [H].

Section 3. Other Infections

13. As far as I am aware, [H] did not have any other infections as a result of receiving blood products.

Section 4. Consent

14. I do not believe that [H] was tested or treated without his knowledge.

Section 5. Impact of the Infection

15. When [H] returned home from his appointment in [GRO-B] and told me that he had been diagnosed with HCV, my initial reaction was worry and concern due to the stigma attached to the infection and what people would think. I was also confused as to how this could even have happened to [H] as it was not as if he was a drug user.

16. I am that type of person that needs to know and have information, more so than [H] so I researched HCV. [H] was a more laid back person but quite pragmatic. He accepted things and then tried to sort them out and work through them.

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17. The **GRO-B** was quite helpful at providing information but they did not know everything but as more people started to be diagnosed, more information about the virus became available.
18. I was constantly stressed that **H** would be infected with HIV or CJD; would that come later? I worried about what treatment **H** would receive or whether any was available; as well as if he was going to die from an infection.
19. We had **GRO-B** young children at the time and it was hard having these thoughts and worries constantly. I was also worried about cross infection and whether we had to be careful with toothbrushes and the like. I was also worried as to the wider impact of the news of **H**'s infection.
20. There was never any warning that Factor VIII could be infected. No one ever said that it could be infected. That had a massive impact for me as we just thought it was treatment; we were caught in such shock.
21. As **H** was a mild Haemophiliac, he did not attend as many check ups as a severe Haemophiliac would have; maybe this is why they did not have full knowledge that he was infected.
22. We had a false sense of security thinking we were lucky that **H** did not get HIV and then later on, he developed cancer.
23. I changed from working part time to full time in around **GRO-B** as our children were growing up. This was about the time that **H** started to receive treatment for HCV. I do not recall having any time off work while **H** received treatment for HCV. Also it was important that I continued to go to work as **H** was unable to do so for a year of the treatment he received.

24. It was though very stressful as we had quite a young family, I was working full-time and came home to the children and [H], it was a difficult time, very stressful and constantly hectic.
25. After the first treatment [H] received in [GRO-B] failed we were both gutted after having gone through so much during this treatment.
26. During the second treatment [H] received for HCV in [GRO-B] it was easier as he was physically a lot better, which made things easier for him to deal with.
27. There was only about a year between the treatment [H] received which cleared his HCV [GRO-B] and [H] receiving his cancer diagnosis [GRO-B]. Hearing the news of [H]'s diagnosis of cancer almost finished me off. It was so devastating after the news of him clearing HCV.
28. I always took [H] to, and attended, all of his appointments after he was diagnosed. I went to his chemotherapy sessions for the first 3 or 4 months before he got used to them. My employer was very understanding and let me have time off whenever I needed it.
29. On [GRO-B] I stopped working when [H] was admitted to the hospice. I was fortunately given compassionate leave with pay. I was very lucky and was grateful for this.
30. [H] died at the hospice on [GRO-B] he was [GRO-B] years old.
31. I returned to work on [GRO-B] after [H]'s funeral; I thought it was best for me. My [GRO-B] are living with me at the moment which is a great support to me.

Section 6. Treatment/care/support

32. I believe that [H] and I were offered counselling once but we declined the offer. We were offered no other care or support.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

33. [H] contacted the Skipton Fund after finding out about it from the Haemophilia Society and [GRO-B]

34. He received a Stage 1 lump sum payment of £20,000 in January 2005 and a Stage 2 lump sum payment of £50,000 in [GRO-B]

35. He also received the Stage 2 monthly payments as of [GRO-B] which stopped when [H] died. At the time he died the amount he received was £18,432 per annum being £1,536 per month.

36. After [H] died I received a bereavement payment of £10,000 as well as a funeral grant of £4,500.

37. I also refer to the further details contained in [H]'s statement at Exhibit WITN3011002.

Section 8. Other Issues

38. I truly believe that had [H] not been given contaminated blood products all those years ago, he would not have contracted HCV, nor would he have got cancer and he would still be here with me, his children and the rest of his family. His recent passing has devastated our family and our lives will never be the same again. By giving this statement I am determined to help get justice for not just [H] but all those others who have suffered because of this infected blood scandal

Section 9. Anonymity, disclosure and redaction

39. I confirm that I wish to apply for anonymity and that I understand this statement will be published and disclosed as part of the Inquiry.

40. I do not wish to be called 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

GRO-B

Dated: *11th* July 2019