

ANONYMOUS

Witness Name: **GRO-B**

Statement No: WITN2649001

Exhibits: WITN2649002

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** I was born on the **GRO-B** and I live at **GRO-B**
GRO-B I currently live with my husband who is retired.
2. My previous occupation was a **GRO-B** I retired in **GRO-B**
3. This witness statement has been prepared without the benefit of access to my full 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. I believe I was infected with Hepatitis C (Hep C) through a blood transfusion which I had during an operation on the **GRO-B** at the **GRO-B**
GRO-B I had received 2 pints of blood during the transfusion. I copy of the Clinical Abstract, dated 17/06/1974 is exhibited to this witness statement at **WITN2649002**. I had this operation in order to have a child to help with my

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fertility. Since the operation, I was able to have 2 children, the first child being born in 1976.

5. In the early part of 2018, my legs were swollen and my back was in a lot of pain to the point where I could not walk and bend over to wear my shoes. I knew something was wrong with me. I went to **GRO-B** hospital and after carrying out a few blood tests, I was told that there was nothing wrong with me. Even though the blood tests did not show anything, I knew I had to get a second opinion as the pain was too much to bare and it had to be attributed to something.
6. I took myself into A&E at the **GRO-B**, London on the **GRO-B** as I fell very ill and had severe abdominal pain. After a few blood tests and scans, I was diagnosed with Hep C and I was told that as a result I had cirrhosis.
7. I was so upset to hear this news as I had previously been healthy and did not expect to have been suffering with such a serious infection.
8. The doctors asked me whether I previously had any blood transfusions. I initially thought I had a blood transfusion during my caesarean when I had my first child in 1976, but I realised it was during the operation I had in 1974, as stated above. The doctors therefore believed that I contracted Hep C through the blood transfusion in 1974.
9. I believe I was infected at the **GRO-B** which has now closed.
10. After I was diagnosed with Hep C from **GRO-B** Hospital I was an inpatient at the hospital for approximately 10 days. I was later transferred to **GRO-B** **GRO-B** Hospital, London as an outpatient and this is where I am now being treated for the Hep C. I was told that I may require a liver transplant. Currently the doctors are keeping an eye on my liver and I am waiting to be told whether I will need a liver transplant or not.

11. I was not told about the risks involved of having a blood transfusion. I just trusted the doctors at the time.

12. When I was diagnosed with Hep C in 2018, I was kept well informed about the infection and about the treatments available to treat it. I believe the doctors are doing everything they can to help me and to make my health better.

Section 3. Other Infections

13. I suffer from abdominal distension and physical pain on a daily basis and I believe the symptoms are as a result of the Hep C.

14. I do not believe I contracted any other infections other than Hep C.

Section 4. Consent

15. I usually have yearly blood tests for my thyroid. I do not recall having blood tests for anything else.

16. I believe I was treated with my knowledge and consent at GRO-B Hospital. I was informed why I was having the blood tests and I believe I was given adequate information.

17. As far as I know, I do not think I was tested for the purposes of research.

Section 5. Impact of the Infection

18. Prior to my diagnosis of Hep C, I felt very tired and very exhausted all the time. However, at that time, I did not know about the infection and so I was not able to link the symptoms to it. However, it is a possibility that the above symptoms were as a result of the Hep C.

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19. After I was diagnosed with Hep C, I was very worried and very upset. I do not have any energy to do anything. I have been healthy all my life, and all of a sudden I am ill and feel so helpless. The biggest impact for me is that I am not able to spend time with my grandchildren. This has had a huge mental affect on me, as I am no longer able to have my grandchildren stay over, as I have no energy to cope and look after them.
20. I now have impaired mobility, as a result of the infection.
21. As previously stated, treatment was available for me. I had a 12 week course which I completed at the end of December 2018. The treatment consisted of Ribavirin and Harvoni. The doctors have told me that I will have to wait 3 months before any results can be given as to the status of the Hep C.
22. As part of my treatment, I also had Ciprofloxacin. I believe this treatment was for my kidneys.
23. I believe that my social life has been affected because of the infection. The infection has ruined my family life as I am no longer able to spend quality time with my grandchildren. They used to come over and stay but they are unable to anymore as they run around and I am unable to keep up with them due to the lack of energy. It makes me very sad and emotional as I would love to be able to take them out on holidays and just spend time with them.
24. I have never told my friends about my diagnosis as it is very upsetting talking about it, and I do not want to come across as someone that wants sympathy. I have only told my family who have been very helpful and supportive.
25. I was diagnosed very recently in 2018, and therefore my education and work was not affected. I had already retired in GRO- and am currently receiving a pension.
26. I do not believe there has been any negative impact on those close to me such as my husband, children and grandchildren apart from the fact that I am no longer able to look after my grandchildren. We are a very close family and

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we support each other through everything. Everyone is happy that I am still alive, as it could have been worse.

Section 6. Treatment/care/support

27. I have not faced any difficulties or obstacles in obtaining treatment as a result of the Hep C. Treatment was offered to me straight away. I believe that the hospital provided me with all the care and support that I needed in order to understand the infection and treat it.

28. Counselling and psychological support was never offered to me but even if I was offered it, I do not think I would have needed it as I have a very tight-knit, supportive family.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

29. I have not yet received any financial assistance from any of the Trusts or Fund that have been set up, as I have not yet applied. However, I will apply to the EIBSS and have some leaflets explaining how to do it. My family members have also been encouraging me to apply.

Anonymity, disclosure and redaction

30. I confirm that I wish to apply for anonymity.

31. I do not wish to give oral evidence to 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 27/1/2019