

Witness Name GRO-B

Statement No: WITN3893001

Exhibits: 0

Dated: December 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 live at GRO-B
GRO-B I was born on the GRO-B I currently work for GRO-B
GRO-B I am married with two children and I have two grandchildren.
2. I make this statement in relation to my late father, GRO-B: F
F who was born on the GRO-B 1922. He passed away on GRO-B
1980, aged 58 as a result of receiving contaminated blood products. My
father's death certificate states that the cause of death was 'Hepatic Failure'
and Chronic Active Hepatitis'.
3. I am the GRO-B
4. This witness statement has been prepared without the benefit of access to my
late father's 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 Affected

5. To the best of my knowledge and recollection my father had a blood transfusion during the mid 1970s. The blood transfusion would have taken place at GRO-B
6. I can remember visiting my father with my mother GRO-B during the period my father had the blood transfusion.
7. The reason for the transfusion was a bit vague, however I do remember him going into hospital during the mid 1970s for a stomach problem. He was diagnosed with a stomach ulcer. Through taking aspirin this had caused a bleed which then led to him to need a blood transfusion.
8. During the latter part of the 1970s, my father had a motorcycle accident which questionably may have triggered the beginning of his liver problems.
9. Around March 1980, my father was omitted to GRO-B and diagnosed with a liver complaint which eventually led to his death in GRO-B 1980. As stated above the official diagnosis from his death certificate was 'Hepatic Failure' and 'Chronic Active Hepatitis'.
10. As far as I am aware I do not believe that my parents were given any advice or information beforehand about the risk involved with a blood transfusion.
11. As a result of receiving the blood transfusion at GRO-B my father was infected with Non A, Non B Hepatitis, now known as Hepatitis C (Hep C).
12. We did not know my father had Hep C until we saw my father's death certificate which was shown to me after my mother had passed away.
13. I wouldn't know if adequate information was given to my father about the infection. I believe that we should have been provided with some information.

Section 3. Other Infections

14. I don't believe my father received any other infections other than Hep C.

Section 4. Consent

15. I would imagine that my father or mother would have had knowledge and given consent to the blood transfusion.
16. I don't know if my father was tested without his knowledge.
17. I don't think my father was treated or tested for the purposes of research.

Section 5. Impact of the Infection

18. Near to the end of my father's life the illness got a grip of him that was when I saw the biggest change in him. He was in constant pain and didn't seem coherent; he was physically worn down and drained of energy. I noticed that my father was getting a bit grumpy.
19. Before my father received the blood transfusion he was a very sociable person. He would be out most times talking to people. He used to go dancing and loved to play football. He used to go down to the local club every now and again. Everyone knew him. People would ask me if I was and say my father was a strong character. Everyone knew my father as because he had . When he started to feel poorly he still had some of his friends come to his house, but his social life was non-existent.
20. When I saw my father in the hospital he was yellow in the eyes and he looked awful. After some time in hospital he did eventually come home. I don't know if he wanted to or if he was sent home. He went through the course of chronic liver failure. I said I would go see him but my mother said he was in a coma. I was at work and the next day someone came and told me I needed to go home. When I got back home my mother told me that my father had passed away at around 4 in the morning.
21. I do not know what treatment, if any, my father received for the Hep C.
22. It was a bit of a shock that my father actually died. I felt embarrassed telling people that he died as a result of liver failure; straight away I would say 'he

wasn't a drinker'. I did not know the medical terminology until I saw the death certificate. I was thinking 'what is that all about' and then my brother alerted me that it was because of the blood transfusion that he received that he caught the infection.

23. At the time I did not know my father had Hep C and I did not know that he was dying as a result of it. I could only give my support to both my father and mother. Being only 23 years old to see my father gradually deteriorate as he was such a strong character, hard-working and no-nonsense man was emotionally and mentally difficult for me. It was apparent that there was such a huge strain on my mother seeing her husband like this.

24. When my father died I didn't talk about it for 2 years. I found it difficult and couldn't talk about it with my mother. I thought I would get tearful and look like a fool.

25. With my father being the figure head of a large family of GRO-B this obviously impacted on every member of the family. Losing our father aged GRO-B was difficult for everyone as he had not had the chance to play his 'role' as a father/grandfather for example attend weddings, meet his grandchildren, attend social occasions, Christmas' and birthdays'.

26. For me personally, if my father hadn't been ill, I believe that I would have been working alongside him, so it was an emotional time for me.

27. My father couldn't go to work when he became ill. He started to decline quickly and had to give his work, which he loved. It hit my family financially as he was the main breadwinner in the house.

28. I recall an incident when my father started to talk to me on a personal level, which he never did before. For example I was dating a girl and he told me to sort myself out and get married. This was a very odd comment that he made.

Section 6. Treatment/care/support

29. I don't know what care and support my father received.

30. I do not believe that counselling or physiological support was ever offered to my father. I was not offered any counselling or physiological support as a result of what happened to my father. If I had been offered it, I believe that it would have definitely helped. As stated above, it took me approximately 2 years to talk to anyone about what happened. My father was the first person close to me who died.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

31. I do not believe that my father received any financial assistance.

32. I did not receive any financial assistance from any of the Trust or Funds that were set up.

Section 8. Other Issues

33. [GRO-B] was my father's GP Surgery and he was a patient of [GRO-B]. We approached them for my father's medical records, however this was to no avail as we were informed by the surgery that records were destroyed 30 years after death.

Anonymity, disclosure and redaction

34. I am seeking anonymity and would like my Statement redacted before publication. However I understand this statement will be published and disclosed as part of the Inquiry.

35. I would give evidence if I had to.

ANONYMOUS

Statement of Truth

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

Signed

GRO-B

Dated

12th December 2019.