

ANONYMOUS

Witness Name: GRO-B

Statement No: WITN2798001

Exhibits: 0

Dated: September 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 and I presently live at GRO-B
GRO-B, GRO-B. I live with my partner and I have my own
GRO-B.
2. I make this statement in relation to my late father, GRO-B: F, who was born on GRO-B
GRO-B. My father was infected with Hepatitis as a result of
receiving contained blood products.
3. This witness statement has been prepared without the benefit of access to my late father's
full medical records. I have requested his medical notes and records but I have been told
that they either cannot be found or have been destroyed.

Section 2. How Affected

4. My father suffered from severe Haemophilia A. He went for all his treatment at the GRO-B and was treated with Factor VIII. He did not treat himself but always attended the GRO-B Haemophilia Centre or Ward 13 when he had a bleed and needed treatment. The head nurse of the centre was GRO-B and the lead consultant at the time Dad was alive was GRO-B.
5. As a result of receiving contaminated blood products, my father was infected with Hepatitis. I cannot say for certain whether this was Hepatitis B or C, or both as it was a long time ago and I have not seen his medical records. My father never told me that he had been infected. I believe my father did know of his infection but I cannot be sure and I do not know if he received any treatment for it.

Section 3. Other Infections

6. I am not aware of any other infections other than Hepatitis.

Section 4. Consent

7. I cannot say whether my father was treated or tested without his knowledge or consent as he never discussed this with me.

Section 5. Impact of the Infection

8. My mother died in GRO-B and my father moved in with his sister in law who looked after him. My father was a very private man and whether or not he knew of the infection or the extent of the illness I am not sure. My sister and I were never told that he had been infected with Hepatitis until after his death.
9. The cause of my father's death on his death certificate is that he died from a GRO-B GRO-B. I do not have a copy of his death certificate.

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10. We were a very close family although he was a very independent and private man. Looking back over the years prior to his death he had become extremely fatigued and was plagued with constant colds.
11. I lived approximately half a mile at the most away from him. Growing up he had always been a get up and go kind of person but in the last 3 to 4 years of his life he could not be bothered to do anything. I would ask him to come over and have a bite to eat with us but he wouldn't; he appeared to have no energy.
12. Looking back I realise that he tried to protect us. We were quite a tactile family and growing up in those days a kiss on the lips from Dad was normal but he stopped kissing me on the lips and would hug me instead. I realise now that it was probably because of his infection that he stopped doing that. I like to think that that was the reason for the change.
13. He was admitted to the **GRO-B** on **GRO-B** on **GRO-B** **GRO-B** I remember that a week previously he had a blood shot eye and in the latter months he had indicated that he didn't feel like the same man but I had no idea of the extent of his illness.
14. On **GRO-B** his sister in law rang me and said that he had taken ill in bed and she said that he thought he had had a stroke. All of Dad's brothers had had cerebral haemorrhages because of Haemophilia and I thought immediately that it may be this. An ambulance was called and he was taken and admitted to the **GRO-B**
15. I went straight to the hospital but he was unconscious. He didn't know who I was. I stayed overnight but we were told that even if he did survive he would be severely brain damaged. He died the next morning.
16. I wasn't with him when he died. I went on to the ward and I was told that he had died and the nurses were attending to him. We decided that each one of us would like to say our own private goodbyes to him at the Chapel of Rest and so we left the hospital.
17. Shortly after I contacted the Undertaker to arrange to visit my father to say goodbye. I was told by him that I was unable to see my father in the Chapel of Rest because he had been placed in a locked coffin. I was told that they could not open it. I told him that he had never been instructed to do that and at this stage he told me to contact the hospital. I was furious.

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18. I contacted **GRO-B** who was the head nurse at the Haemophilia Centre. I was told there and then that my father's body had had to go in a sealed bag because he had Hepatitis and that it was highly infectious. I asked her how he had got this infection and she told me then that the hospital had had a batch of bad blood or blood product (I cannot remember her exact words) in the 1980s and that my father was one of the recipients of it. I was told that that was why his body had been immediately inserted into a sealed body bag to reduce the risk of contamination to those who came into contact with him. I was told that a body would release bodily fluids post death and that they wanted to protect others. I was distraught.
19. My father's infection had a massive impact on the family at the time. I can only speak for myself in saying that it was difficult to cope. I was so upset that I was unable to say my private goodbyes to him and still to this day I am haunted by this. I hate to think that my father may have been carrying the burden of infection with him for years and I hate to imagine that he may have felt so embarrassed or ashamed that he was unable to tell anyone about it.
20. I was incredibly close to my father. My mother was disabled from an early age and my father was both Mum and Dad to me for all my life. His death and the fact I did not say goodbye to him has affected me hugely. My life changed. I was prescribed antidepressants and my marriage failed; I could not cope. My sister was also badly affected and still to this day cannot talk about it.
21. My son was born whilst Dad was alive and was "his world". My son also has Haemophilia A and whilst I have been reassured that the treatment he receives is safe it is still always at the back of my mind that he too may be infected with something. All the staff at the haemophilia centre have been fantastic but it still affects me greatly.

Section 6. Treatment/care/support

22. I do not know whether my father was ever offered any treatment, care or support in consequence of being infected with Hepatitis.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

23. Approximately 8 years ago, my sister and I received an amount of £20,000 from the Skipton Fund between us.

24. It was [GRO-B] at the Centre ([GRO-B]) who supported us and told us about the Skipton Fund. I wrote a letter to them and submitted an application which was initially refused.

25. I subsequently submitted an appeal on the basis that if Dad did not have Hepatitis then why had the hospital put him in a sealed body bag immediately on his death. Eventually they made the Stage 1 payment.

26. We have received no other financial assistance.

Anonymity

(27) I wish to remain anonymous.

28. I do not want 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: 15.10.19