

# ANONYMITY

Witness Name: Ms **GRO-B**

Statement No: WITN2875001

Exhibits: WITN2875002

Dated: 19 April 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**. I was born on the **GRO-B** 1955 and live at **GRO-B** **GRO-B**, Cheshire **GRO-B** with my son. I am registered disabled.
2. I make this statement as the daughter of **GRO-B: F** who was infected with, Hepatitis C from contaminated blood products and who died on **GRO-B** 1989
3. This statement has been prepared without the benefit of access to my father's medical records.

### Section 2. How Infected

4. My father suffered from Haemophilia A. classed as mild. I am not sure when he was diagnosed but I believe it was at a young age.
5. When I was pregnant I was advised to see if I was a carrier of the Haemophilia gene. I felt at ease when the doctors told me if my child was a haemophiliac it would be of the same severity as my father, as his was very mild. Although I am a carrier my son is not infected.

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6. My father was treated at the Manchester Royal Infirmary hospital ("MRI"). I am unaware of who his consultant was at the time. My father received Cryoprecipitate and Factor VIII at the MRI according to the records of National haemophilia Database. I refer to **Exhibit WITN 2875002**.
7. I was informed by my father that he was infected with what was then described as Non A Non B Specific Hepatitis (NANB) which is now referred to as Hepatitis C. I am not aware when precisely my father received the contaminated blood. His haemophilia was so mild that he only received blood products, infrequently, and was rarely in hospital. I believe it was only when he had dental work that he required Factor VIII. I therefore believe my father received contaminated blood products in the early 1980's, when he had teeth removed.
8. As far as I am aware, my father was not given any advice regarding the potential risk of infections from Factor VIII. His haemophilia was mild and therefore it wasn't necessary for him to have been put into such a dangerous position. Knowing my father I do not believe he would have accepted such a risk. This makes the whole situation worse as it could have easily been avoided.
9. I remember my father was called into the MRI when he was told that he had received contaminated blood products. I am not sure of the date when this happened. He was not told in a way I believe to be suitable in order to deal with such devastating news. It seems like a lot of people were given this news in a group meeting, rather than individually. The information provided by the MRI seemed very vague.
10. My father was very upset after he was given the information. He came to see me straight from the meeting. He was so shaken by it that he couldn't remember or explain much to me. He told us there was a meeting with a lot of people that had been affected and everyone had been addressed together. He wasn't aware of what was going to happen, it seemed like the medical professionals were unsure themselves. He was inconsolable and I was more worried by how upset he was than the news he had given me. My father didn't talk much about it and it was difficult to get anything out of him. I had never seen him so upset or frightened before and that's how I knew it was serious.
11. My father was made aware that the diagnosis was life threatening which is why he was so upset.

**Section 3. Other Infections**

12. I am not aware of my father receiving any other infections as a result of being given contaminated blood products.

**Section 4. Consent**

13. I believe my father was tested without his knowledge, consent or sufficient information being provided as he did not know he had been tested for Hepatitis before being told the result. I am not aware if he was tested for the purpose of research

**Section 5. Impact**

14. My father was distressed when he was given the diagnosis. I believe this diagnosis led him to suffer from severe depression and from panic attacks which were horrible to witness. He was absolutely terrified about what was going to happen to him. After the meeting at the hospital he was constantly worried and concerned.
15. I am unsure of all the ways it possibly impacted his life as he was trying to protect us. He wasn't one to express himself but I could see the effect it had on him. I also believe that if he had received treatment earlier he may not have been so unwell. By the time he was diagnosed with Hepatitis C he was already very unwell.
16. My father suffered from oedema and really bad water retention. He was lethargic and usually tired. He suffered from a multitude of physical effects and developed amnesia which meant it was hard for him to function in a normal way.
17. In December 1981/1982 he took himself to the Haemophilia Department of the MRI as he wanted something to stop some bleeding he was experiencing. It was Christmas Eve and there was no one in the Department, except a "young lad" everyone had left to start the festivities. The "young lad" gave my father an injection, unfortunately of the wrong drug. This mistake caused my father to have a stroke. At the time my father did not want to take the matter further. Later down the line he had cirrhosis of the liver and then fell into a coma before he passed away.

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18. In or about 1998 my father's health went downhill very quickly. He suffered from severe diarrhoea that was so bad he was admitted to the MRI. During this period he had also been losing consciousness and passing out. The medical consultants believed that there was some treatment that could help him and he was sent to a hospital in Birmingham. The treatment did not work and he was then returned to the MRI.
19. I was a single parent at the time and my son had been born prematurely and was very fragile. I was completely on my own and it was very hard to deal with. When my father was admitted back to the MRI he was very confused. I am not sure of the treatment he was receiving at the time. He kept most things like this to himself.
20. My father being infected with the Hepatitis C impacted on me and the rest of my family. My son, as he was only 6 months old when my father passed away, never really had the chance to meet him. My father was confined to his home or the hospital and could only really travel in an ambulance.
21. It was a very difficult time. I didn't have the time to give my father the attention I wanted and needed because I was on my own with a premature baby. If he was well I'm sure he would have liked to have helped out and spend time with his grandson. He had been very excited about becoming a grandfather. I therefore not only lost my father but also the support and knowledge he could have offered. My mother died two years before my father and it was already a stressful and difficult time. My brother lived in America so he unfortunately couldn't be involved on a day-to-day basis. My brother was able to come over and see my father before he passed but I'm sure it was difficult for him as well because they had a close relationship and he didn't get to spend much time with him.
22. I feel how I believe anyone would when they lose a parent. You realise as time goes on that you miss them more and more. I wish my son had been able to enjoy time with his grandfather.
23. My father had just bought a new property which he wasn't able to enjoy before he passed away. He had also recently married. I can't imagine my father, or his wife, managed to particularly enjoy this period of life in the way they should have been able to.

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24. I believe my father's illnesses led him to making decisions that were completely out of character. His will was written when he was very ill and confused only days before he died. This shows his state of mind because many of the choices he made were not what he would have made if he wasn't so unwell. At the end we voluntarily signed a Declaration of Trust to benefit his wife in the ways we thought were inline with his original wishes.
25. My father had recently retired slightly earlier than the normal retirement age as he was not very well. This could possibly have had a financial effect on him.
26. I remember that when my father passed away his wife told me that those who wrote his death certificate apologised for what they had to write. This upset me as it was stated he had died as a result of an alcohol problem. This was particularly devastating because he rarely drank alcohol. Hepatitis C causes cirrhosis and this was the cause of my father's death. The fact they tried to absolve the blame is terrible.

### **Section 6. Treatment/Care/Support**

27. I am not aware of my father facing any difficulties receiving any treatment, care or support.
28. I have never been offered any sort of counselling or psychological help. I was not offered any bereavement services after my father passed away.

### **Section 7. Financial Assistance**

29. As far as I am aware my father did not receive any financial assistance as a result of being infected with the Hepatitis C
30. I have not received any financial assistance. Until now I was not aware that any funds or trusts even existed, they were not well publicised.

### **Section 8. Other Issues**

31. I think it is disgraceful that the whole issue has been covered up. I think those responsible should have the decency to own up to what they have done and admit they were in the wrong. They're more worried about the repercussions they could face than the families that they have hurt. The whole situation is heart-wrenchingly sad.

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32. I would like to see my father's death certificate amended. I want it to be accurate as to the cause of his death. They have made it look like he died at a fault of his own even though the liver cirrhosis was due to Hepatitis C. I believe it is terribly unjust to not only have caused my father to have an illness that wasn't his own fault. But to then try and cover it up and blame him makes it even worse. The whole situation is appalling.

33. This ordeal has caused me to wonder if other things have been covered up and are continuing to be covered up. It is important that things like this never happen again.

### **Anonymity, disclosure and redaction**

34. I wish to be anonymous and 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

Dated.....

19.4.19.....