

# ANONYMOUS

Witness Name: GRO-B

Statement No: WITN2876001

Exhibits: 0

Dated: April 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 of GRO-B  
GRO-B My date of birth is GRO-B. I am a widower and currently live in GRO-B  
GRO-B

2. I prepare this statement in relation to my late father GRO-B: F (DOB: GRO-B) who passed away on GRO-B as a result of being infected with Hepatitis C following receiving contaminated blood products.

3. This statement has been prepared without the benefit of access to my late father's full medical records.

### Section 2. How Affected

4. My late father suffered with mild Haemophilia A. I was aware of his condition during my childhood.

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5. My father was extremely cautious physically. He did not risk doing many things that involved the potential of a bleed. If he needed a minor surgery or required treatment for a bleed, he always attended the hospital. He was predominantly treated at the Manchester Royal Infirmary (MRI).

6. I am not entirely sure which blood products my father was treated with. He was a very private man and he was very cautious about concerning anybody with his health. He was not very forthcoming and he never shared any details of his haemophilia treatment with me.

7. Once I became aware that he became infected, we talked a lot more. The doctor called a meeting at MRI and told a number of patients that there was a problem with the blood and that there was a likelihood of an infection. Immediately after this, my father was tested and tested positive for Non-A Non-B Specific Hepatitis (now known as Hepatitis C). I recall that he went to my sister's house immediately after the meeting at MRI and was devastated. She telephoned me whilst he was there.

### **Section 3. Other Infections.**

8. As far as I know, my father was not infected with any other infections.

### **Section 4. Consent.**

9. I think that my father probably consented to a Hepatitis test. He was very cautious about his health and would never agree to any kind of experimentation or risky procedure.

10. I do not know about the capacity of information the medical practitioners had at that time so anything was possible.

**Section 5. Impact**

11. It has been 30 years since my father passed away and I remain without any sense of closure regarding the way his life ended.

12. I was aware of his illness throughout my entire life. There were a few medical emergencies such as a stomach ulcer and I was aware that my father would have to be admitted to hospital and the reasons explained. Although I was very close to my father, I did not question him very much in relation to his health. I just assumed that if he looked fine, he felt fine. Throughout his life he was relatively healthy until the later stages of his life and the infection.

13. I emigrated to **GRO-B** when I was 21 years old and stayed there for 25 years. My contact with my father during this time was regular but mostly by writing as this was just before the era of free video calls and e-mail. I cannot really speak about how much he suffered during his lifetime as a result of the infection but I do know that he was in pain.

14. The news of having been infected affected my father. I did not understand the implications of it at the time and I thought that it was possibly curable. I did not realise it was a death sentence but my father realised this and was terrified. When we witnessed the physical changes which he was going through, we were upset but I did not understand that it would affect him as badly as it did. I was still living abroad at this stage and I recall the first time after he had been diagnosed I saw him the following Christmas and I barely recognised him. His face was shrunken and his skin tone had changed to a horrible orange colour. He was not like my father; he looked like a mummy yet he was filled with fluid which meant that his abdomen and legs were bloated all the time. I cannot imagine living like that. He gradually deteriorated from there.

15. Unfortunately, I could not stay to be with him as I had family, employment and responsibilities abroad at that time. As he became got worse I flew over more often. The last time I saw him alive he was admitted at MRI and there were talks in relation to a possible transplant. I recall thinking he was too weak to go through that.

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16. Before this happened, my father worked for in textiles but he took an early retirement. He got married which surprised my sister and me. He deteriorated very quickly after that. They bought a house but by the time the sale was completed, he had started to become very ill which meant that sadly he did not get to enjoy much time with his wife.

17. The impact on me losing my father prematurely was the same as it would be on anybody. It was upsetting and painful. It was even more painful as the years went on. We were friends and we had a close relationship. We were best buddies, so I lost my father and my best friend. I still miss him to this day.

18. I think he lost approximately 20 years which is a lot of life to lose. The thought that I was robbed of so many years with him is difficult to live with.

19. The fact that this scandal reached this state is absolutely inconceivable. I am still angry about it. The doctors associated my father's death with alcoholism as his liver had cirrhosis and did not appreciate when we questioned their attitude. It was appalling.

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

20. At the time of his diagnosis, I was never offered any counselling and I do not believe that he was. If he was, he never told me about it. Aside from routine visits, I do not think he received any extra support.

21. I was unimpressed with the level of care when I visited him at MRI. The ward was grim and dirty (as was much of MRI at that time). He could not sleep because his mouth was so dry. I asked a nurse to help with this but she was unwilling to do so. He was lying there stressed and uncomfortable. Signs on his chart that he should receive nil by mouth were left in place after they should have been removed , so I can't help but think that at least some of his suffering could have been alleviated with better care.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

22. I did not receive any financial assistance and I did not have any dealings with any of the Trusts or Funds.

Section 8. Other Issues

23. I would like to see a recommendation made by the Inquiry that all death certificates are modified to reflect a true cause of death.

Anonymity, disclosure and redaction

24. I wish to apply to retain my anonymity.

25. I would not be prepared to give oral evidence to the Inquiry as I currently live in GRO-B

Statement of Truth

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

Signed GRO-B

Dated APRIL 29th 2019