

ANONYMOUS

Witness Name: GRO-B

Statement No: WITN3017001

Exhibits: 0

Dated: May 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 live at GRO-B
GRO-B My date of birth is GRO-B
2. I make this statement on behalf of my late brother, GRO-B. He was born on GRO-B and died on GRO-B aged just GRO-B years from bronchopneumonia caused by the AIDS virus.
3. I have another brother, GRO-B who is GRO-B months younger than me.
4. My mother, GRO-B (GRO-B) and GRO-B (GRO-B) have also produced witness statements for the Inquiry.
5. This witness statement has been prepared without the benefit of access to my late brother's 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 Affected

6. [GRO-B] was diagnosed with severe Haemophilia A with low Factor VIII clotting level at birth.
7. I believe [GRO-B] was initially treated with cryoprecipitate and was given Factor VIII concentrate (FVIII) at an early age in the early 1980s, but I cannot provide an exact date. I do not know if my mother was provided with any information or advice beforehand about the risk of being exposed to infection.
8. As a result of the FVIII concentrate, [GRO-B] was infected with HIV. I also believe he was infected with Hepatitis C (Hep C).
9. I did not have a normal childhood due to [GRO-B] Haemophilia and had constant trips to the hospital usually in the back of an ambulance and often in the middle of the night or through the day when I should have been at school. I believe initially [GRO-B] received FVIII blood products at [GRO-B] [GRO-B]. I believe he also received FVIII blood products at [GRO-B] at [GRO-B].
10. Like most younger brothers, [GRO-B] and [GRO-B] were always trying to get involved in whatever I was doing, whether it be climbing a tree or swinging on a rope hanging from a tree. This wasn't a problem with [GRO-B] but invariably this resulted in [GRO-B] hurting himself in some way and then having another trip to the hospital. I would get the blame for him hurting himself.
11. My mother was constantly on the phone or at the doctor's office having meetings about [GRO-B] health. At night time she would put us all to bed and get a neighbour to babysit whilst she went out to work cleaning offices. My father wasn't around too much as he was always working away. This led to arguments when he did come back home. The stress and strain weighted heavily on them both.
12. We lived in a large house with 4 bedrooms and a large garden at the rear with outbuildings and a greenhouse. Money was always scarce, but we seemed to

be doing ok and always had clean clothes and food in our bellies and never really wanted for much.

13. [GRO-B] had problems with one of his knees. It was much larger than the other and caused him to walk with a limp. He also was supposed to wear a removable cast which we called a pot leg. He hated it. The constant bleeding had caused damage in his knee which was not repairable without an operation. Operating on a haemophiliac was fraught with danger. Not many surgeons or hospitals were prepared to carry out an operation on his knee because of the associated risk of him dying on the operating table. He was only about [GRO-B] years old and my mother was told that unless he had an operation on his knee, when he gets older he would be confined to a wheel chair. My mother was not going to allow this to happen and set about finding a surgeon with the necessary skills that would carry out the operation to save his knee.

14. Sometime earlier my mother received a letter from [GRO-B] inviting my mother and brother to discuss [GRO-B] future care in the [GRO-B] region.

15. It turns out he was the very best doctor in the country specialising in haemophilia.

16. The first meeting with [GRO-B] seemed to go quite well but I remember my mother being worried on the way home in the car. I know now that in the meeting she had been told that [GRO-B] could only treat [GRO-B] if she lived in the catchment area of the [GRO-B]. She was obviously deep in thought about how she could make this happen. She will have also been thinking about having to move myself and [GRO-B] away from family and everyone we have ever known and the effects it would have on our schooling.

17. I don't know the full details of the conversations with my father, but I do know that he decided he wasn't going to move. This resulted in constant arguments and eventually they split up and filed for a divorce.

ANONYMOUS

18. My mother had a friend who lived in [GRO-B] and asked if we were all able to live with them until she was able to find a place of her own. My father had moved out by now and as the divorce hadn't gone through and the house hadn't been sold, money was tight. My mother was struggling to pay bills because she only had a part time cleaning job. The opportunity of somewhere to live in the [GRO-B] area was too good to pass on. Time was of the essence, the longer that [GRO-B] knee was left untreated the less chance there was of the operation being a success.
19. I remember us all moving to [GRO-B] and remember feeling depressed about the fact that I no longer had any friends to play with. I also remember having my 10th birthday there. My other brother [GRO-B] was only [GRO-B] years old and was a lot meeker than me and wasn't as understanding of the situation that we were in. I was the eldest and I was the one who had to grow up fast. I could wash cook, iron and clean before most of my friends could run a bath. I was always the one who my mother confided in and we were more like friends. Whenever there was a decision to be made, she explained things to me as if I was an adult.
20. [GRO-B] and I started at a new school in [GRO-B] and we both hated it. We were [GRO-B] and the other kids were mean to us because we spoke differently. I found myself constantly fighting and having to fend off bullies. [GRO-B] was constantly upset about not being able to see father and all his friends in [GRO-B]. It was decided that myself and [GRO-B] would go back to [GRO-B] and stay with our father for a few weeks. I think this was when [GRO-B] had his operation.
21. My father was now living back at his mother's house because our house was up for sale. We stayed there with him and my grandma. During this time my grandma told us that we would probably never see him again (my father). I have no idea why she said that or whether she meant it to sound so callous. I suspect it was because she wanted us to stay with him and she thought a short sharp shock was the way to make this happen. There was no way I was going to leave my mother and [GRO-B]. [GRO-B] was heartbroken and decided that he wanted to stay with father. Another argument ensued with mother and

ANONYMOUS

father then eventually my mother decided to let GRO-B stay with him. As you can imagine she had lots of things going on with GRO-B and realised she was making GRO-B unhappy and she didn't have the time to spend with him that he needed. She thought that GRO-B would miss us and return in a few weeks. Unfortunately this didn't happen.

22. I returned to GRO-B on my own and went to school on my own and then returned home at night time on my own and stayed in reading books. There was nothing else for me to do. I still had no real friends and my mother was usually at the hospital with GRO-B as he started to get poorly.

23. We stayed in GRO-B for about a year until GRO-B had his operation and was on the road to recovery. Then my mother rented a house in GRO-B

24. By this time I was 11 years old and ready to start at senior school. This meant a change of area, no friends again and a new school. I wasn't exactly happy.

25. I recall my mother suffered some kind of breakdown when she was at the GRO-B and it was decided that GRO-B should go to a special boarding school where he would get a better education and my mother could be given time to recover. The school had a live in nurse that was able to give GRO-B FVIII injections if he required them. All this was decided by the social services/LEA and was against my mother's better judgement. I remember the first time we took him there and I remember his face when we drove off leaving him. I also remember my mother looking crushed.

26. We lived in GRO-B just long enough for me to make some friends and then moved again, this time to GRO-B. Again a change of area, change of school and no friends. I didn't complain because there was no point, my mother had enough problems without me adding to them.

27. At around this time it became evident that GRO-B was not enjoying being at a boarding school. My mother was also finding it very difficult. I'm not sure how long we lived here but from here we moved back to GRO-B and I started my third senior school in as many years. I was finding it difficult to keep up with the learning. Mainly because in one school I would learn something and

ANONYMOUS

then when I changed schools the new school was learning the same thing I had already been taught and I had completely missed sections of my education.

28. In the mid 1980s [GRO-B] had developed a rash that eventually turned into sores that bled and wouldn't stop bleeding. The doctor came to see him but for some reason only stood at the front door and asked my mother to raise [GRO-B] top. I couldn't understand why he wouldn't come into the house or examine him properly. I think that it must have been mentioned on [GRO-B] records that he had HIV. At this time it had not been mentioned to my mother. She just thought he had chicken pox or something and guessed the doctor didn't want to catch them, or maybe the doctor had a cold and didn't want us to catch his cold. The sores didn't heal, and [GRO-B] had to have more FVIII injections than usual. We made many trips to [GRO-B] and nothing they did seemed to stem the bleeding.

29. Several nights had passed and the sores did not heal. [GRO-B] was bleeding and woke me up saying that his pyjamas were wet. I ran and woke my mother up in the middle of the night saying "[GRO-B] is bleeding". My mother took one look at him and screamed. His pyjamas were completely covered in blood. The following day I believe she rang the [GRO-B] and [GRO-B] was taken to the hospital. I believe that several trips were done at [GRO-B]. However my mother lost faith in [GRO-B] and insisted to see [GRO-B] at the [GRO-B]

30. She was given an appointment at [GRO-B] with [GRO-B] and without hesitation she bundled us all into the car along with a few bits of clothing and some blankets and off we went to [GRO-B]. My mother cried almost all the way, I didn't realise then that she had no money for petrol and nowhere for us to stay so she was obviously deeply worried. By the time we got to [GRO-B] [GRO-B] had started to be unresponsive and the blanket he was wrapped in was showing signs of blood seeping through it. My mother in a fit of panic decided to make a detour to [GRO-B] because she was worried about his condition. We now know that if she hadn't, he would have been dead before we got to [GRO-B]. [GRO-B] had lost so much blood they weren't sure if he was going to have organ failure. They

rushed him into the hospital and gave him blood to build up his blood count. My mother was completely beside herself at this point and told the nurses what had happened and that she was desperately trying to get GRO-B to the GRO-B. She also told them she had no money. Luckily GRO-B responded to treatment and was showing signs of a recovery. By this time GRO-B and I were sleeping in the hospital waiting room, unaware of these events. The nurses took pity on us all and arranged an ambulance to transfer GRO-B straight to the GRO-B as soon as he was well enough to be moved. They also gave my mother some money for petrol out of an emergency fund they had.

31. At some point during my exams at 15/16 someone had told my mother that GRO-B had contracted the HIV virus and this almost led to her having a nervous breakdown. She couldn't believe that he was going to die and that she could have been the one that administered the fatal dose of FVIII to him. A guilt that she still feels to this day.

32. I do not know what information or if adequate information was provided. I definitely consider that information should have been provided earlier.

33. I do not know if any information was given to my mother about the risks of others being infected as a result of the infection.

34. Further information is detailed in my mother's witness statement.

Section 3. Other Infections

35. I wish to rely on my mother's statement in relation to this section.

Section 4. Consent

36. I wish to rely on my mother's statement in relation to this section.

Section 5. Impact of the Infection

37. My mother made constant trips to [GRO-B] where she met with a social worker called [GRO-B] and [GRO-B]. Any signs of illness were treated with panic. When my mother found out that [GRO-B] had been infected by contaminated/tainted blood she set about fighting for justice. She threatened to go to the newspapers with her story if people were not told about the disease and how to avoid contracting it. Soon after this, adverts were screened on TV depicting tomb stones and the word AIDS wrote on them. This was an attempt to let the general public know that this disease was deadly and can be contracted through unprotected sex. These adverts caused a lot of problems for us as a family because people were scared of going near [GRO-B] or me. We ignored all the hate and carried on regardless.
38. When I left school I had no idea what I wanted to do and decided upon a career in the [GRO-B]. I was due to go in the [GRO-B] in the mid 1980s. Unfortunately just before this [GRO-B] was seriously ill again and this forced my mother to move again to the [GRO-B] so that [GRO-B] could be treated by [GRO-B] [GRO-B] at the [GRO-B]. (He was still the best doctor in the country dealing with Haemophilia).
39. I didn't want to move again and so it was decided that I should stay with my father for a short while before I went into the [GRO-B].
40. My father was not my best friend and made me know that I wasn't his favourite son at every opportunity. [GRO-B] who had lived with him since my parents had separated was his golden eyed boy and I was made to feel like a poor cousin. I slept in a sleeping bag on the floor in [GRO-B] bedroom. I wasn't allowed to change anything. I couldn't even put a calendar on the wall unless [GRO-B] agreed. Of course I ignored all this and just did what I had to do.
41. Around this time I started seeing a girl and this resulted in me deciding not to go in the [GRO-B]. Instead I enlisted on a YTS course called [GRO-B] [GRO-B]. I was given a placement at a local TV shop and was trained to repair TVs, Videos, and Hi-Fis. I was still living at my [GRO-B] house

and was still sleeping in my younger brother's bedroom but now I had been given a fold up camp bed to sleep on.

42. I lived with my father for a couple of years until my mother moved back from the [GRO-B] and then I moved back in with her and [GRO-B]. My relationship with my father had slightly improved over my time with him but we never really saw eye to eye.

43. When things settled down with [GRO-B] my mother rented a house a couple of miles away on [GRO-B] in [GRO-B] and I felt that I needed to be there for her and [GRO-B]. Over the next couple of years I learned of some of the struggles that my mother and [GRO-B] had endured when they moved to the [GRO-B] leaving me with my father. AIDS had become known as a disease associated with homosexuals and drug addicts. This had led to small minded people terrorising people like my brother. They had endured red crosses daubed on the front door in gloss paint along with the word "AIDS". Someone had tried to set fire to the house with them in it by posting lit papers through the front door. Bricks were often thrown at the windows and my mother's car. Many more things happened that are too ghastly to report here. We lived in [GRO-B] for a couple of years and then my mother bought a bungalow around the corner on [GRO-B].

44. I realise that the street names and addresses mean nothing to anybody else but me. However in my mind they represent my last memories of my late brother. Not long after we moved to [GRO-B] [GRO-B] became seriously ill. My mother was told by [GRO-B] that he only had around 6 months to live. At this time [GRO-B] would have been just [GRO-B] years old. My mother has never been one for giving up and immediately contacted [GRO-B] at the [GRO-B]. He told her that she needed to move back into his catchment area so that he could attempt to prolong his life past 6 months. My mother had no money, no job, nowhere to stay and was completely at a loss. This did not stop her from moving [GRO-B] immediately. She left me in charge of the house in [GRO-B] and drove straight to [GRO-B] without delay. I believe that both of them lived in her car until she managed to find somewhere to rent. There was no support mechanism in place to help [GRO-B] or other people with

ANONYMOUS

AIDS at this time. Nobody seemed to care apart from [GRO-B]. When he found out they were living in a car he arranged for [GRO-B] (Social Worker) to meet with my mother and I believe she helped her find accommodation.

45. I was about 140 miles away in a now empty and lifeless house on my own wondering how I could possibly help. The biggest problem was the fact that all my mother's money was tied up in the bungalow that I was now living in alone. I set about trying to find a way of selling the house or a way of being in a position to get a mortgage on the house so I could buy it, thus releasing the funds for my mother to buy another place in the [GRO-B]. Unfortunately at this time houses were not being bought and sold, as it was the start of the housing market crash.

46. I spoke to a friend of mine who was renting a flat and talked him into getting a joint mortgage with me to buy the house. My mother reduced the asking price to a level that enabled us to get a mortgage. The mortgage was arranged by a friend of my mothers who was a financial adviser. He enlisted a friend of his that was a manager at The [GRO-B]. We completed the mortgage application and the house became ours in a week. This was record time and was really what was required. I didn't worry about the fact that I had just signed up for a mortgage of £646.40 per month. I was more interested in prolonging the life of my younger brother. I had 3 jobs at the time in order to pay my share of the mortgage and I mainly lived on chips and gravy. I didn't care, nothing was more important than looking after [GRO-B] and my mother. I would do it all again if I had to.

47. I recall that [GRO-B] received some money from The Macfarlane Trust and with the money from the sale of the house and some of [GRO-B] money my mother bought a house in [GRO-B]. If I remember correctly they put a deposit down between them of £50,000 cash and spent a lot of money on redeveloping the property so that [GRO-B] had his own apartment at the side of the house. This was also around the time that the government had agreed to pay a little extra social security money to people infected by the virus. This money was supposed to help them afford to pay for heating and better food. It was decided that if people ate better, ie. a diet consisting of more greens and

fresh fruit they were less likely to get ill. Bills were a constant worry for my mother, the heating in the house had to be on 24/7 because if [GRO-B] developed a cold he could easily die from it.

48. I vividly remember the last time I saw to my youngest brother alive. We were sat in a smoking room in the [GRO-B]. He looked pale, thin and completely helpless. I know that he knew that he had not got long to live. He told me when he went to the toilet bits were coming out of him. This statement still haunts me to this day. How could he be so brave at such a young age? I can't stand the sight of needles; I couldn't possibly go through what he had to endure. Just 20 years old but had endured a life of pain and suffering from the very beginning of his existence.

49. On [GRO-B] [GRO-B] died at the [GRO-B] from bronchopneumonia caused by the AIDS virus. On his death certificate is says cause of death: 1a. Bronchopneumonia. II Haemophilia A. There is no mention of AIDS. He was buried in a lead lined coffin so that his decomposing body doesn't contaminate the land that he is laid to rest in.

50. As you can imagine my mother was beside herself overcome with grief and guilt. This led to her having a mental nervous breakdown.

51. Soon after my brother's death all his benefits which my mother had been using to help pay for the house were stopped. No consideration was given to my mother at all and with everything that was going on with [GRO-B] she was late in paying the mortgage. She had not been able to work whilst caring for [GRO-B] and now was most definitely not in the right frame of mind to even attend or think about attending interviews for jobs. The social security people and whoever was in charge of benefits could not care less. They told her she was now not entitled to any benefits and that she should look for a job.

52. What a "shower of shit" these people were. How could they say that to a lady that had given up her whole life to look after her disabled son? Her son that had been murdered by people who had put money before his life.

53. I didn't then and do not even now, know any woman stronger and more determined than my mother.

54. The [GRO-B] showed her exactly the same sentiment. She did try to talk to [GRO-B] to try and set up a payment plan. All she was told was that if she didn't find a way of paying the mortgage they would repossess her home. They sent a guy round to speak to my mother about the mortgage arrears. It turned out that he lived around the corner from her. He offered to buy the house off her for a fraction of what it was worth. When she refused his offer he told her that he would report back to the [GRO-B] and tell them that she had no means of paying either the arrears or the mortgage going forward. He said that then they will evict her and he will buy the property anyway. This in fact is exactly what happened.

55. The house was sold for a fraction of the market value, my mother lost the £ [GRO-B] that she and [GRO-B] had put down as a deposit. To add insult to injury there was a shortfall on the mortgage because the property was sold so cheap, and my mother is still to this day paying that shortfall back by standing order every month.

Section 6. Treatment/care/support

56. I wish to rely on my mother's statement in relation to part of this section.

57. I was never offered any counselling or psychological support.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

58. I wish to rely on my mother's statement in relation to this section.

Section 8. Other Issues

59. I am finding it really difficult to write this statement, I have put off writing any of this down for about 6 months. I am now finding all the memories of these events have suddenly come back, both the good and the bad. I am sat here

wishing this was someone else's life that I am writing about and that I still had a little brother to talk to and spend time with. I am regretting all the arguments I had with him and the number of times I ran away from him so he couldn't follow me and my friends. I can see him chasing me with his pot leg on, throwing his leg in front of him as he runs desperately trying to catch up with me. When I think back, I must have been a horrible brother to him. I am now old enough to know that siblings can often be mean to each other when they are young and usually all those bad things are forgotten as you grow older and the sibling becomes a friend as well as a bother. I never had a chance to get to know [GRO-B] as an adult, so these memories stand out and I am still feeling guilty. If only I had known that his life would be cut short by a set of circumstances brought about by people in Westminster juggling budgets and putting money before his young life. I just hope that this process brings the people responsible to justice.

Anonymity, disclosure and redaction

60. I wish to remain anonymous.

61. I do not want to give oral evidence to the Inquiry.

ANONYMOUS

Statement of Truth

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

Signed

GRO-B

Dated

28/5/19