

ANONYMOUS

Witness Name: GRO-B

Statement No: WITN3028001

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 of GRO-B
GRO-B My date of birth is GRO-B 1953. I currently live with my husband and we have one child together, GRO-B who is GRO-B years old. I also have one child from my previous marriage, GRO-B who is GRO-B years old.
2. I make this statement in relation to my late brother GRO-B: B who was born on B 1949 and who passed away on GRO-B 1994 as a result of receiving contaminated Factor VIII Concentrate.
3. My mother, GRO-B and my sister GRO-B are giving their own witness statements to the Inquiry. My sister's witness number is GRO-B
4. 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 infected

5. My brother [B] was born with a hereditary condition called Haemophilia (A) which is a very painful, life threatening blood clotting condition. Blood clotting agents are needed to treat this condition. In the early days this took the form of Cryoprecipitate and later Factor VIII Concentrate for the rest of his life. He was treated at the Manchester Royal Infirmary (MRI) Haematology Centre. My brother, being a severe Haemophiliac, needed treatment on a regular basis and when he was a child, he nearly lost his life on a couple of occasions.
6. Having a brother with this condition was very stressful on our family of course due to its severity [B] would often either be admitted into hospital or have day visits to the hospital to receive his treatment.
7. My brother was infected with Hepatitis C and HIV, which progressed into full blown AIDS as a result of receiving contaminated Factor VIII Concentrate. I believe he was infected around 1986.
8. I am unsure as to when [B] was told of his infections or of any information or advice which he may have been given in this respect.

Section 3. Other Infections

9. I do not know whether [B] was put at risk of vCJD or any other infections.

Section 4. Consent

10. I believe that [B] was tested for various infections including Hepatitis C and HIV without his knowledge or consent and without being given adequate or full information.

11. I also believe that [B] was tested and treated for the purpose of research.

I am aware that the MRI Haematology Unit held my brother's DNA in a lab after his death. I do not know if he gave his consent to this. We became aware of this fact three years after his death in 1997. I refer to my sister's statement for information regarding this.

Section 5. Impact of the Infection

12. My brother died leaving his partner, [B], and their young son, [GRO-B] behind. At the time [GRO-B] was only 8 years old. Tragically, two years after [GRO-B] died, [GRO-B: W] passed away from HIV which she had contracted from [GRO-B]. This tragedy meant that [GRO-B] became an orphan at the age of [GRO-B]. My mother, who is a pensioner, was left to care for [GRO-B] without any financial support.

13. My brother and I were very close and I have very fond memories of our life growing up with our family and when we became adults. We would often go out together socially and later we even worked together in [B] [GRO-B] shop. [B] was a [GRO-B] and [GRO-B]. Our sons were born not too far apart and were like brothers themselves so imagine my grief and shock when I learnt just three weeks before [B] death that he had contracted HIV through contaminated blood. [B] was admitted very poorly, into the MRI Isolation Unit, where he died three weeks later with me, my sister and our mother at his side.

14. There was no palliative care in place; none of the medical team spoke to our mother, nor me or my sister. We were asked to go along to the Coroner's office within the hospital grounds to collect [B] death certificate. The doctor we saw was called [GRO-B]. He seemed very understanding and gave us his condolences. We were very upset and angry as you can imagine, and we wanted answers as to why our brother had died through contaminated blood. He said to us that he had no answers but confirmed that [B] had been killed through the administration of blood treatment that 'they' had administered at the MRI. To this day that question has not been answered. [GRO-B]

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- GRO-B asked our mother what she would like to go onto the death certificate as the cause of death and said he was prepared to put whatever she wanted! My mother replied with 'anything but not that.' The fear was obviously evident in her too!
15. We have been brushed aside whilst decision makers from both the hospital and department of health have covered up their complete negligence and incompetence.
16. My sister and I were totally unaware of our brother's condition; we had known about Haemophiliacs contracting the virus as our GRO-B GRO-B:C had died some years earlier. Our mother GRO-B GRO-B partner GRO-B and our GRO-B (B mother) were the only people who were aware of my brother's condition and they were sworn to secrecy.
17. At this time there was a lot of stigma associated with HIV and AIDS and many people were being attacked and worse. I have no doubt that my brother would have been fearful of this stigma for himself, his son and his family. Of course, we now learn that the victims of contaminated blood were told not to talk about it or reveal it to anyone and were made to sign a nondisclosure agreement before any compensation was paid. How awful this must have been for my brother not being able to talk about this to me or my sister, knowing that one day he would die.
18. The burden on our mother must have been tremendous and it took its course on her physical and mental health. She turned to alcohol for comfort and started drinking heavily. She is now 89 years old and is completely grief stricken which she will never overcome. Following the death of GRO-B mother, our mother took over care for GRO-B and became his legal guardian. There was no support, either psychological or financial to assist her in caring for GRO-B and nobody provided her any advice. This was an absolute disgrace! The hospital were involved with GRO-B legal guardianship, not social workers and this is a travesty also; my mother did not receive the care and support she needed therefore; being a pensioner receiving benefits, she,

I now believe, would almost certainly have been entitled to financial support to care for [GRO-] but at the time nobody advised her. When we look back, we question why myself and my sister didn't realise this, but we were too grief stricken to even think through this process and of course having never claimed benefits, this didn't come naturally to us. Some advice to my mother would have gone a long way. At least then she could have tried to help herself.

19. My mother found it very difficult looking after [GRO-B] but did her best under very emotional circumstances. [GRO-B] seemed to cope with the very stressful situation he found himself in, but when he was in his early adulthood, he had a severe mental health breakdown and still suffers with this today. He finds it increasingly hard to communicate with others. He has no contact with any family members, not even his grandmother who raised him. He is unable to work because of his condition and is very isolated. We are all very concerned for him. We strongly believed that this is a direct result of losing his parents in such a distressing manner so early in his childhood. Had he been given the support he needed then, he may well be a different person today. Our brother would be horrified that there was no support for him.

Section 6. Treatment/care/support

20. I am unsure as to whether my brother suffered any barriers or obstacles in relation to receiving medical care. I refer to my comments in section 5 above regarding [B] being admitted into the isolation ward at the MRI.
21. Neither I, nor my mother, sister or nephew or indeed any family member had received any counselling or psychiatrics support in consequence of what happened. I am disgusted with this and I feel we have been ignored, brushed aside and simply forgotten. The lack of compassion and humanity for my family is truly shocking.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

22. I believe my brother received a payment from the Government as compensation but I do not know the amount or whether he received his full entitlement.

Section 8. Other Issues

23. I believe this tragedy had been covered up by the government and its departments and they are totally negligent. They failed to ensure safe practices resulting in the loss of our brother, son, father, uncle, cousin, friend and so many other innocent lives. The course of action they took was to look the other way, say nothing, sweep it under the carpet and hope for the best.

24. I and my family would like to know why this tragedy was allowed to happen, exactly what happened, why it happened and what is going to be done about it? We would like all those responsible to be held to account and if necessary, be prosecuted. I would like the infected and the affected to be able to have some sort of closure from this Public Inquiry and seek justice for our brother and our cousin who died alongside countless other victims.

Anonymity

25. I do not want to remain anonymous.

26. 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 29/5/2019