

ANONYMOUS

Witness Name: **GRO-B**

Statement No: WITN3876001

Exhibit: WITN3876002

Dated: 24th January 2020

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF **GRO-B**

I provide this statement in response to a request under Rule 9 of the Inquiry Rules 2006 dated 13th December 2019. I adopt the paragraph numbering in the Rule 9 request for ease of reference.

I, **GRO-B** will say as follows:-

1. Introduction

1. My name is **GRO-B** my date of birth is **GRO-B** and my address is known to the Inquiry. I am married with **GRO-B** children and work as a **GRO-B**

2. How Infected

1. On New Year's Eve **GRO-B** I collapsed at home following an injury I received whilst playing football a day or two before. I was taken to the **GRO-B** at **GRO-B** On admittance, medical staff were unsure as to what the problem actually was. It was thought at first, that the problem could be my appendix or

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an ulcer. I was told that they were going to carry out an 'exploratory' operation to find out. It appeared to me at the time, that this was a rushed procedure. It turned out that my spleen had ruptured. I was informed that if the doctors had not operated on me swiftly at that time, I would have died. During the operation I was given at least seven pints of blood.

2. It was during the splenectomy operation that I believe I was infected with hepatitis C. My hospital records for this period have unfortunately been destroyed and I am unable to provide evidence of the transfusion.
3. I have however, been able to obtain some records from my GP surgery although I believe these to be incomplete. The records show entries in relation to my splenectomy operation. I exhibit at WITN3876002 a letter dated GRO-B from GRO-B to GRO-B
GRO-B
GRO-B The letter confirms the details of my admittance and that a laparotomy was performed resulting in an operation and my spleen being removed.
4. I was not advised at any point either before my operation or afterwards of any risks of being exposed to infection as a result of the transfusions or the operation, although I do remember being advised by the doctor that I should not donate my blood because I had been transfused.
5. From about GRO-B I suffered with stomach inflammation problems, joint pain, fatigue, headaches and extreme tiredness. I constantly felt as though I had no energy and everything seemed a huge effort. I recall attending the doctors constantly with various ailments. The doctor just put my symptoms down to the after effects of my injury and my spleen operation. I felt I had to just put up with feeling unwell, but it was difficult to still function normally and go to work. It didn't occur to me that my symptoms could be as a result of infected blood, until I saw TV coverage of the Inquiry.

6. In **GRO-B** I had my liver tested and it was clear apart from just being a bit fatty.

7. Some of the infected people interviewed in the programme described their symptoms of hepatitis C. These completely accorded with my own symptoms such as joint pain, headaches, tiredness, and feeling lethargic. I believe over time, my body fought the hepatitis virus and I managed to clear the infection naturally.

3. Other Infections

1. I don't believe that I have contracted any other infections other than hepatitis C. However, my immune system is poor and I believe this is a result of being infected with hepatitis C.

2. I suffer from recurring stomach inflammation.

3. It is recognised amongst clinicians that a splenectomy increases susceptibility to pneumonia in patients and therefore I have to receive regular prophylaxis vaccinations for this and hepatitis. No regular blood tests are carried out when I receive these vaccinations.

4. Consent

1. I believe I was treated without my consent as I do not recall giving my consent to be transfused. At the time of the operation I was told that it would be an 'exploratory' operation and I do not believe the possibilities of that operation were fully explained to me. The whole process seemed rushed.

2. I don't believe that I was tested for research purposes.

5. Impact

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1. Since finding out about the infected blood scandal, it is on my mind constantly. It makes me feel sad and frustrated. I experience feelings of anger towards the people that allowed this to happen. This should not have been allowed to happen to innocent victims.
2. I often suffer from frequent stomach problems and the doctors seem to assume these are down to the splenectomy, but I am not convinced about this and feel they could be as a result of my infection of hepatitis C.
3. Once I had seen the TV coverage in [GRO-B] in relation to hepatitis and believed that was what I had become infected with, the impact was huge. I was concerned for my family and worried that I may have infected them. In the Autumn of [GRO-B] I contacted the [GRO-B] and tried to access my records, only to be told that they had been destroyed. I also contacted my GP and asked to be tested for hepatitis C. I was worried for my wife because she is Type 1 Diabetic and has her own health problems.
4. Whilst waiting for the result of the blood tests from my GP, I found it difficult to concentrate at work because of the worry. I felt tired and lethargic. I had low mood and no motivation. Fortunately, the test was negative.

6. Treatment/Care/Support

1. I have not received any treatment for my hepatitis C infection as I believe I cleared the infection naturally. My GP also confirmed this is a firm possibility.
2. My family and I have not had or received any offer of counselling as a result of my hepatitis C infection.

7. **Financial Assistance**

1. I have not applied or received any financial assistance.

8. **Other Issues**

1. I believe that records of transfused patients should have been kept by the Health Authorities for the purpose of a possible investigation into the infected blood.
2. I think that the Health Authorities should have informed patients who had been transfused of their possible infection with hepatitis C. It was their moral obligation to do so and recall patients for testing.
3. I believe there has been a cover up and that the records of patients were purposely destroyed.
4. I want whoever is responsible for the distribution of infected blood to be brought to justice.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed

GRO-B

Dated.....24/01/2020.....