

ANONYMOUS

Witness Name: GRO-B

Statement No: WITN4019001

Exhibits: 0

Dated: February 2020

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 was born on the GRO-B
I live at GRO-B with my
husband GRO-B
2. I make this statement in relation to my son-in-law GRO-B: S who
married my daughter GRO-B He was infected with Hepatitis A, B, C
(Hep A, Hep B, Hep C) and HIV after being treated with contaminated blood
products.
3. I am aware that S has also provided a statement, GRO-B My
husband has also provided a statement GRO-B
4. This witness statement has been prepared without the benefit of access to
S full medical records.

Section 2. How Affected

5. S is my son-in-law and has been a part of the family for 20 years. He
met our daughter GRO-B and they married in GRO-B They presented us

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with [GRO-B] We are a very close family and love [S] [GRO-B] and the [GRO-B] dearly.

6. I believe that [S] was infected as a child and we admire his strength of character and will power during the many years he has needed treatment for his condition. He has suffered pneumonia and cancer during this time.
7. We have had full empathy as a family in respecting [S] wishes to keep the infections of HIV and Hepatitis a secret from everyone except the very close family. We respect this and understand how difficult it was to reveal what had happened to him. To us, he was very afraid as to how we would react.
8. [S] suffers from severe Haemophilia A and I believe he was diagnosed at a young age. I believe he was treated with Factor VIII (FVIII) at Birmingham Children's Hospital (BCH).
9. [S] was infected as a result of the treatment that he received in relation to the haemophilia. He attended the BCH as a child and then the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Birmingham as an adult, which he still attends on a regular basis.
10. I first met [S] in [GRO-B] when he was seeing [GRO-B] I am therefore unsure in what capacity and to what extent information was given to [S] parents and himself beforehand about the risk of infections from using FVIII products.
11. As a result of [S] using FVIII he was infected with Hep A, B, C and HIV. I believe there was a delay in telling [S] parents that he had been infected with HIV.
12. [S] had become very close to [GRO-B] after a [GRO-B] and he made the decision to tell [GRO-B] and full extent of his medical condition. They had been together approximately [GRO-B] by this time.
13. I remember that [GRO-B] cried for a day until we impressed upon her that she must tell us what was wrong. [GRO-B] told us of [S] condition and we

needed support to find out information about HIV and Hepatitis. We had a family get together with [S] and his parents and the next day I accompanied [GRO-B] to our family doctor for more information and support.

14. We endeavoured to support our daughter and her boyfriend as we know how attached they were and how much we loved them. There were lots of fears to overcome, such as [S] wellbeing, when they married-would they be able to have children, could [GRO-B] contract the infections, could they get a mortgage and life insurance. They were very much in love but what would the future hold for them? In fact [S] was determined that there would be no risk to [GRO-B] when it came to the time that they wanted to start a family they endured three rounds of IVF before the [GRO-B] were born.

15. Please refer to [S] statement for further information in relation to this section.

Section 3. Other Infections

16. As a result of being infected with HIV and Hepatitis [S] has suffered with pneumonia, testicular cancer and liver complications (liver biopsy and scans). When [S] contracted pneumonia he was very ill and hospitalised. He was diagnosed with testicular cancer [GRO-B] [S] endured the operation and weeks of radiotherapy. This put great worry and stress on the family. I have been told that [S] liver function has not been good over the years resulting in constant monitoring and painful biopsies.

17. Please refer to [S] statement for further information in relation to this section.

Section 4. Consent

18. I did not know [S] when he was infected with infected blood products as this happened when he was a child. I believe that [S] was treated and tested without his parents' knowledge, consent and without being given adequate or full information.

19. Please refer to [S] statement for further information in relation to this section.

Section 5. Impact of the Infection

20. [S] lives in constant reminder of the infections with his nearly weekly monitoring visits to hospital for blood tests, scans, consultant visits and treatment. [S] has always been very resourceful and strong willed and tried very hard to maintain a full-time job. However, if he did not work in the family company he could not have so much time away from work for hospital appointments and those days when he does not feel well. He works part-time for his father. This puts added stress onto the family unit and [GRO-B] always feels that she must maintain a professional and well paid job for the family.

21. [S] always lives with the fact that he has HIV and hepatitis and feels there is still a stigma with the infections. He feels very strongly that only close family should know about what had happened to him. We all support each other and help out with childcare when [S] is unwell and is at the hospital. We did write to the hospital and became involved in campaigning for [S] to receive safe and the best treatment for his haemophilia.

22. I think you are constantly aware that [S] has and is suffering with haemophilia, HIV and Hepatitis. He is poorly often and so we are always there to help and support him.

23. Obviously you worry about the long term efforts for [S] [GRO-B] and children. As a family we respect [S] wish to keep the secrecy of HIV and Hepatitis. This can be difficult at times when people do not understand the circumstances of his illness and question you.

24. Our son was told and as always he has been very understanding and kept what happened to [S] confidential. Our son recently got married and it was a very difficult decision if and when to tell his wife. [S] was very upset over this situation as we are a very close family.

25. I believe [S] lost a great deal of time away from school due to the infections and the illness that it has caused. During his working life (when I knew him) he has always tried very hard in a variety of jobs to work hard and attend. Unfortunately due to the infections he was forced to have time off from work which has led to him giving up a position or being dismissed. As stated earlier [S] now works part-time in his family's business in sedentary clerical role. This puts a financial constraint on the family.

26. Once we got to know [S] we were involved in getting treatment for the infections. He had to fight to get treatment for Hep A, B and C. He was told that unless his liver was in a really bad state 'near cirrhosis' he wouldn't be able to have the treatment for Hepatitis. I remember [S] saying that he fought with a consultant about it. I recall another time when the doctors told him why he should be given the more expensive treatment that is screened when he already had all the infections. I remember writing letters to the doctors about this. I believe he was given treatment for hepatitis which cleared the infection.

27. [S] fought for anything and everything that would help him. He even agreed to have trials. His perseverance to keep going to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital which isn't near us on a weekly basis was and is amazing.

28. I am not sure if the treatment [S] had for hepatitis affected him mentally or physically. He has days where he is very tired and just needs timeout. Thankfully he works for his father's company and he can call in sick if he needs to. [S] has always been in employment, but he had to give them up because of his symptoms. There are days when [S] is in severe pain, especially during the winter months and I do not know if this is because of the infections or the haemophilia.

Section 6. Treatment/care/support

29. I do not know if [S] faced any difficulties or obstacles in obtaining treatment, care and support in consequence of being infected. Please refer to [S] statement in this regard.

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30. As stated above I did campaign with the rest of the family for there to be fully screened treatment for hemophiliacs. That was denied to [S] at one point because it was stated that he had already been infected with HIV and Hepatitis.

31. I have not received any counselling and I am not sure if it was offered to [S] and his family when he was diagnosed with the infections. Please refer to [S] statement in relation to this.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

32. I believe [S] received some financial assistance from the Trust and Funds that were set up, but I do not know what amount he received. I wish to rely on [S] statement in this regard.

33. I have not received any financial assistance from any of the Trust and Funds that were set up.

Anonymity, disclosure and redaction

34. I wish to remain anonymous.

35. 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 12th March 2020