

ANONYMOUS

Witness Name: **GRO-B**

Statement No: WITN1689001

Exhibits: 0

Dated: 30th October 2022

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** I was born on **GRO-B** and **GRO-B**
GRO-B
2. I make this statement on behalf of **GRO-B** **GRO-B: U1** and **GRO-B: U2**
U2 was born on **GRO-B** and died on **GRO-B** **U1**
was born on **GRO-B** and died on **GRO-B**
3. **U2** was infected with Hepatitis B Virus (HBV), Hepatitis C Virus (HCV) and HIV
as a result of being treated with contaminated blood products. **U1** was infected with
HIV and possibly also HCV as a result of being treated with contaminated blood
products.
4. I make this statement as their next of kin as my mother, their younger sister and only
sibling, has died.
5. This witness statement has been prepared without the benefit of access to my late
uncles' full medical records.

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6. The only medical document I have is a letter from Dr Sam Ackroyd, Consultant Haematologist at Bradford Royal Infirmary (BRI) which my mother received following an application to the Skipton Trust
7. I understand from the BRI that U2's notes have been destroyed but that there are microbiology results from the period of U2's death which show that he had HCV.
8. In U1's case, I have been advised that there are no medical records or information available.

Section 2. How infected

9. U2 and U1 were born with severe Haemophilia A. They were both initially treated with Cryoprecipitate. Subsequently, they were treated with plasma derived Factor VIII concentrate.
10. They were treated at the Bradford Royal Infirmary, Bradford, West Yorkshire (BRI). I recall that on occasion they attended GRO-B. However, this was not a regular occurrence.
11. Both my uncles received Factor VIII at home. U1 received more treatment than U2 because he had a lot of intermuscular bleeds. I recall him having a lot of difficulty with his elbows and knees, causing him much discomfort. U1 would take Factor VIII prophylactically every two to three days as a preventative measure, whereas U2 would take Factor VIII when he had a bleed.
12. Prior to the introduction of Factor VIII, and at home treatment, both of my uncles visited the hospital to receive treatment on a regular basis. They must have been some of the first to use Factor VIII, and they started treatment with it as soon as it became available. I believe they were some of the first to be infected as a result of being treated with Factor VIII.
13. As a result of being treated with contaminated blood products, my uncle U1 was infected with HIV which eventually progressed into full blown AIDS. I understand from the letter received from Dr Ackroyd that he may also have had HCV.

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14. As a result of being treated with contaminated blood products, my uncle [U2] was infected with HBV, HCV and HIV which also progressed into full blown AIDS.
15. In 1978 [U2] caught Hepatitis B, from infected blood, and was treated for it in hospital. I believe he cleared the Hep B virus. At the time, we did not know that this was the result of having been infected with contaminated blood.
16. I do not know exactly when my uncles found out that they had been infected with HIV. It was around 1985 that both [U2] and [U2] told my parents that they had been infected with HIV. I believe that they knew about their infection before this but didn't tell us until 1985. My brother had sadly died in an accident in [GRO-B] 1984 at the age of 20 and my uncles may not have wanted to burden us at such a difficult time.
17. Both my uncles told my parents that the reason for their infection was due to contaminated blood products from the hospital. They were told that their infections were deadly, and that there was no cure. I do not believe that either of my uncles were given any information of the risks of spreading the infection, or how it could spread. I am positive however that both my uncles were celibate. My uncle [U1] even before his infection had always been very conscious of germ spreading and wouldn't even share a cup with someone.
18. Another member of my family, my cousin [GRO-B: C] who was a haemophiliac was also infected with HIV as a result of being treated with contaminated blood products. He was the first to die. He died in his 20s of AIDS, which had progressed very quickly. He would have been aged over 50 now if he had survived.
19. [U1] died of AIDS in 1991, and [U2] died as a result of HCV and AIDS in 1994.

Section 3. Other Infections

20. I do not believe that either of my uncles received any infections other than HIV, HCV and HBV.

Section 4. Consent

21. I believe that both my uncles were tested without their knowledge, and treated for research purposes. It is also my belief that they were tested without their consent but I cannot be sure.

22. I remember U1 stating that he and U2 had received different treatments, and been given different medication (despite having the same diagnosis of HIV). U1 came to believe that he had received less effective medication whereas U2 had received the 'good stuff'. I believe this was supposition probably based on the fact that U1's health began to fail earlier than U2's.

Section 5. Impact of the infection

23. U2 and U1 were my mother's older brothers. My mother was the youngest of the three children and they formed a very close family – especially as my grandfather died in 1963.
24. My uncles lived with my Grandma their entire lives. They lived pretty sheltered lives. Neither of them ever married or had the chance to have families of their own.
25. My mother married my father and they had two children, my brother and I. We were a very close family and, growing up, I spent a lot of time with my uncles. I was very close to both my uncles, but especially to U1.
26. U1 was a very sickly man and was never able to work. He was always at home and he was like a second father to me. I feel lucky to have had him there. I went to my Grandma's every day for lunch and I spent a lot of time with him. He taught me how to tie my laces, and how to play chess. U1 had a lot of patience and a lot of time for me.
27. U2 was never as ill as U1 even with the haemophilia. He had a job in an office. He worked for Empire Stores – La Redoute. I think he was on a scheme for handicapped employees. Although U2 did work, he had periods of time where he was too sick to go to work, and would have weeks off at a time.
28. Both U2 and U1 were under the care of Dr Parapia at the Bradford Infirmary for their haemophilia.
29. The mental and physical effects of HIV upon my uncle U1 were awful. He had been ill with his haemophilia his whole life and already lived a very restricted life at the time of his diagnosis. However, after his diagnosis, and as his illness progressed, he became very depressed, and much more of an introvert. Prior to being infected with

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HIV he used to go to the club and meet up with friends and family, and he would go for walks as often as he could. This all changed after he was infected and became more and more ill.

30. I do not know what U1's HIV was treated with, although I recall him having a combination of three different sets of pills.
31. U1 had a lot of physical issues, digestion problems which led to very debilitating stomach upsets. I am unaware whether this was caused by the treatment or the illness itself. He also suffered from severe fatigue. He was just seriously unwell.
32. His HIV infection progressed to AIDS and he spent a lot of time in the hospital. In the year before his death he became blind, and would beg us to let him die.
33. U1 also had dementia brought on by AIDS I remember that he would cry when I went to see him in hospital. He believed that he was at home, upstairs in his bedroom and that his mother wouldn't come and help him. It was heart-breaking to watch.
34. The 12 weeks before U1's death were spent in Bradford Royal Infirmary He just kept deteriorating as the days went by; he became thinner and weaker, with patches of bruising all over. He must have been only 110 pounds when he died. At a height of about 5ft 9, he looked like someone out of a concentration camp.
35. U1 died of AIDS in 1991. Even though he died of AIDS this is not stated on his death certificate which states his official cause of death as bronchopneumonia.
36. U2 had always been the stronger brother and had more of a normal life than U1
37. He was treated for HBV in 1978. I remember that they placed him in an isolation ward. I do not know what he was treated with but I believe he cleared the Hep B virus; however he was not allowed to drink for a year after this. U2 had so few pleasures already and it was infuriating that small pleasures such as having a beer was taken away from him.
38. U2's HIV infection progressed to AIDS. I do not know what his HIV was treated with. His HIV progression was slower than U1's and it didn't seem to affect him as badly as it had affected U1. He gradually got sicker, until his liver started failing due to HCV. It almost felt sudden. I think it was when his liver started failing that he found

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out that he also had also been infected with HCV. As far as I am aware, he was never treated for HCV.

39. [U1] s death in 1991 took a terrible toll on [U2]. It made him very aware of his own death sentence.
40. After [U1] s death, [U2] s health deteriorated. He gave up work and he also had to stop driving due to his illnesses. This affected him socially and financially.
41. My uncle [U2] had a lot of trouble with his liver, all due to the Hepatitis C, however I'm not sure when he was actually infected or tested. I do not believe that [U2] knew about or received any treatment for his Hepatitis C until he was already dying. [U2] s HIV had also progressed into full blown AIDs before he died.
42. In 1994 [U2] s liver failed, and he passed away. His official cause of death was liver failure and there is no reference to his having AIDs on his death certificate. I believe it was a combination of AID's and Hepatitis C that killed my uncle.
43. My uncles were so accepting of their lives – I think being born with a severe disease made them somewhat fatalistic. They were so used to being in hospital and ill and it became normal to them. [U2] was never an angry man, and seemed to just accept his life. He became so used to being ill all the time. [U1] on the other hand used to rage at the unfairness of the world, and it only got worse with the dementia
44. My Grandma looked after [U1] and [U2] throughout their lives. Later on, my mother and father were very involved in helping take care of my uncles, and they became very dependant upon them. This was especially due to the fact that [U1] never drove and therefore had to be driven to appointments. [U2] did learn to drive but eventually was no longer able to drive due to illness.
45. My grandmother found it very difficult supporting her two sons through their illnesses right up until their deaths. She had spent her whole life looking after both [U2] and [U1] cooking for them, washing their clothes and generally just caring for them. She was not young herself and it was tough for her. When [U1] was in hospital, close to his death, my grandmother couldn't bring herself to go and see him much. It was very painful for my grandmother to watch her sons die. To outlive your own children is a terrible fate. My grandmother passed away in 1998.

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46. My mother was in a constant state of absolute grief. She had already lost her son and now both of her brothers. My mother tried to remain very stoic in times of emotional hardship, and kept going, staying strong for my grandmother especially.
47. I went away to university from 1986 to 1990. During this time I came home a lot to see my parents, my grandma and my uncles.
48. When I was home I would go to visit **U1** in the hospital at least once a week. I remember a time towards the end when I visited him and he seemed to have completely lost his mind. He wanted to urinate into a urinal bottle and I said I would call for the nurse. He got very upset, calling the nurses terrible and he said not to let them near him. He screamed at me, begging me to help him. I felt I had no choice and I had to help him. I had to put his penis into the urinal bottle to help him urinate. It was very unpleasant for me to do this, and to see my uncle in this sad state
49. I remember the whole period as being a bad few years, a very difficult and emotional time. It felt as though we had lost everyone. We lost my brother, my two uncles and also my aunt on my father's side. Our entire family was in a constant state of grief for a long time.
50. At the time **U2** and **U1** were diagnosed with HIV, there was a real stigma to having HIV or AIDS and a culture of blame if you had it. There were very frightening adverts on the TV about AIDS - the tombstone adverts. As a result, we could not tell anyone about my uncles' illness, we just couldn't talk about it.
51. My uncles were two unmarried males living together with their mother. To publicise the fact they were HIV positive would have made their lives unbearable due to the stigma.
52. My Grandmother was a regular catholic churchgoer, and the stigma surrounding HIV would have made her life incredibly difficult had her friends found out.
53. We did not tell anyone that my uncles had contracted HIV. My mother did not feel comfortable doing so and felt that it would negatively impact our family. It was always stressed to me that no one was to know about the HIV Infections.
54. I was only able to talk about my uncles illnesses with people at University, outside of Bradford. The environment at my university was more accepting than Bradford, it was

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not considered a bad thing to be gay and HIV/AIDs was not seen as such a stigmatised disease.

55. I remember saying to my family after U1 died that we should be able to talk about what happened to him, I felt we had nothing to be ashamed of. However my family were still not prepared to talk about it. My mother was afraid of what could happen, saying that here were stories of houses being attacked once AIDS sufferers were identified as living here. No one outside of the immediate family was to know.

56. We talked about U1 and U2 being ill but we never told anyone that they had HIV or HCV. When they died, we said U1 had died of cancer and that U2 had died of liver disease.

57. It was only after my grandma passed away that we started to tell a few of our closer family members. Even then my mother was still very reluctant to discuss it. I felt differently to my mother. I felt that we had no reason to be ashamed and that the infections were the government's fault.

58. The stigma surrounding HIV affected everyone in my family. We should have been able to talk about what had happened to U1 and U2 with those close to us. We were not able to because of the stigma and the harm that this could cause to the family.

Section 6. Treatment/care/support

59. I am unaware of any counselling offered to my uncles at any time and none was offered to my grandmother, either of my parents, or to me during my uncles' illnesses or after their deaths.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

60. As far as I am aware the only financial assistance received was through the Skipton Fund. There were no payments made prior to my uncles' deaths.

61. U1 was officially only tested for HIV; however, I have a letter from the haematologist at Bradford Infirmary for the application to the Skipton Trust, stating it is likely that U1 also had Hep C. The Skipton fund made payments for both U1 and U2 as they believed it was probable that they had both been infected with Hep C.

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62. My mother made the original application to the Skipton Fund. The first payment for the Skipton Fund went to my mother, she received two payments of £20,000.
63. The second payments from the Skipton Fund went to me, as my mother had passed away by this time. I received two payments of £50,000.
64. The only dealings that I had with the Skipton Fund were after the passing of my mother, when we became eligible for the second stage payments. They were incredibly helpful and transferred the application into my name.

Section 8. Other Issues

65. I believe the government is trying to avoid owning up to its mistakes, perhaps putting it off until everyone affected and infected is dead, because dead people can't shout very loud.

Anonymity

66. I wish to remain anonymous.
67. 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

30th October 2022