

ANONYMOUS

Witness Name:

GRO-B

Statement No: WITN2359001

Dated: 4th March 2019

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 12th December 2018. 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
GRO-B My address is known to the Inquiry. I live at this address with my husband GRO-B
2. I have been asked to write a statement about a blood transfusion I received during an operation in GRO-B and the fact that some years later, in 1997, I received a letter indicating that I'd had a blood transfusion and the blood used may have been contaminated. In particular I will discuss the impact this had on my health, my wellbeing and me.

2.How Infected

1. In GRO-B I gave birth to my GRO-B daughter. She arrived very quickly resulting in my womb prolapsing and consequently I had to have a Manchester Repair operation in GRO-B

2. The operation was planned for the GRO-B in GRO-B Hospital in GRO-B. As far as I was aware it went as scheduled. The consultant told me after the operation, I had lost a lot of blood during the operation and unfortunately, I wouldn't be able to have any more children. I was told that as I had lost a lot of blood I had received a blood transfusion.

3. In 1997 I received a letter, dated GRO-B from GRO-B from the GRO-B. The letter said; 'you may have heard or read in the news about hepatitis C', which coincidently I had read an article a few weeks previously in the Guardian. The letter went on to say 'you **may** have received blood in GRO-B from a donor who has now tested positive for this virus.' The letter also offered advice on how difficult it would be to pass the virus on to other people. I was invited to discuss this further with them and was offered tests when I attended the clinic a few months later. I was tested for hepatitis C (HCV) and the results came back negative.

4. In GRO-B started to feel unwell. I was constantly tired and would suddenly get exhausted. My skin would go a yellowish colour and my whole being wasn't right. I was back and forth to my GP, GRO-B at GRO-B GRO-B and he took blood tests on several occasions that showed an abnormal liver function.

5. In GRO-B I was admitted to GRO-B Hospital after feeling very poorly for two weeks. I was hallucinating, fatigued to the point I couldn't stand or get out of bed, I lost my appetite and could not face food, I was suffering with severe headaches and my eyesight was blurred. As well as this my skin and the whites of my eyes had become jaundiced and I had lost a lot of weight. I

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was diagnosed with hepatitis but [GRO-B] the Consultant, couldn't tell me which strain it was.

3. Other Infections

1. None

4. Consent

1. I was unaware until after the operation that I had received a blood transfusion. I cannot recall anyone telling me of any risks associated with a blood transfusion prior to the operation.

5. Impact

1. When I received the letter about the possibility of being infected with hepatitis C (HCV), I became very unhappy and concerned. I was very worried about my health, as I had recently read an article prior to receiving the letter about the infected blood scandal and what was happening to people. I decided to get the tests done as soon as possible and they came back negative. [GRO-B] [GRO-B] verbally informed me that I was one of two patients who could have been infected in [GRO-B] Hospital at the time. I often wonder whom the other patient was and if she has the hepatitis C (HCV) virus or not. It has not been a comfortable feeling knowing that I could be infected and that a flare up of the condition could occur at any time.
2. Since my unspecified hepatitis attack in [GRO-B] I have had periods of tiredness, yellowish skin and acid reflux. The tiredness and jaundice is sporadic and seems to happen when my immune system isn't coping very well such as if I have a cold or feeling under the weather. I am not a hypochondriac but I do worry and get concerned that I may get this unspecified hepatitis attack again. The last attack was awful and I was so poorly I didn't care if I lived or died. I do not ever want to go through that again. This illness frightened me and I can vividly remember my GP telling me that I had got to

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hospital just in time. My grandchildren were very young at the time and I was concerned I would pass something on to them.

3. In **GRO-B** I had my **GRO-B** removed due to so many stones. I am not sure if this is relevant, however I feel it's worth saying this happened.

4. I have suffered off and on with palpitations and chest pain since **GRO-B**. The transfusion episode has knocked my confidence and has certainly undermined my belief of the best practice possible within the health service. I find it incredible that they didn't check the blood and not own up to it. It has made me very wary of any situation I find myself in relating to my health.

5. I have kept this away from my children to a large extent because I don't want them to worry about me.

6. It's always in the back of my mind that one day I may be tested positive. I have similar symptoms to hepatitis C (HCV) and wonder if there is another strain that hasn't been specified. I am very conscious of what could happen after having a hepatitis illness.

7. Over the last **GRO-B** years I have developed an aversion to alcohol. I hardly drink at all, but if I do, just to be sociable, it makes me feel ill.

8. I feel let down by the **GRO-B** **GRO-B** Hospital has been amazing.

9. I am very concerned about my **GRO-B**. She suffered with **GRO-B** **GRO-B** when she was **GRO-B** years old. As a result of this, **GRO-B** at **GRO-B** **GRO-B** gave **GRO-B** plasma in **GRO-B**. He said it was a form of research. **GRO-B** does not know everything about what has happened to me and I mentally cannot begin to think of my **GRO-B** being infected or even telling her there might be a possibility.

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6.Treatment/Care/Support

1. The only advice offered to me when I was undergoing blood tests to see if I had contracted the hepatitis C (HCV) virus was in the letter sent to me initially. I wasn't offered any counselling or support by the GRO-B prior to testing or afterwards.
2. My GP referred me to a specialist Dr GRO-D at GRO-B Hospital in GRO-B in GRO-B. He wasn't very good, in fact he was useless. In 2007 my GP referred me to the GRO-B Hospital in Birmingham to see a liver expert GRO-B. GRO-B refused to fund it so I had to go as a private patient. GRO-B said he could do some surgery on my liver but felt it was better left alone.
3. I have been monitored regularly by my GP and have regular liver function tests. In the main, I look after myself. I eat well and try to exercise regularly, however since September GRO-B I have slowed down considerably.

7.Financial Assistance

1. In 2004 I registered with the Skipton Fund but didn't hear anything from them.

8.Other Issues

1. The information I have with regard to the transfusion and illnesses I have suffered is pretty scant. Does the Inquiry think Health Authorities and Blood Transfusion Services could have provided more information to the individuals concerned on a Wales wide basis, in order to allay a lot of doubts and fears arising from this?

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Statement of Truth

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

Signed...

GRO-B

Dated.....11/3/19.....