

ANONYMOUS

Witness Name: GRO-B

Statement Number: WITN2485001

Dated: 14th 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 and my address is known to the Inquiry.
2. As a result of receiving contaminated blood products my father, GRO-B: F, is infected with HIV and hepatitis C (HCV).

2.How Infected

1. I am a GRO-B and I have been married to my wife since GRO-B although we have been together for GRO-B years. My father contracted

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HIV and hepatitis C (HCV) [GRO-B] My father is a haemophiliac and was given blood treatment which was contaminated. As a result, he was infected with HIV and hepatitis C (HCV).

2. I found out about my father's infections when I was around [GRO-B] years old. As a child, I was not aware of my father's health conditions. I am writing this statement as an affected person, to support my parents and hopefully make the public aware of the terrible events that occurred resulting in my father becoming infected with HIV and hepatitis C (HCV).

3.Other infections

1. My father was infected with both HIV and hepatitis C (HCV).

4.Consent

1. I cannot comment regarding consent, as I was a child when my father received the contaminated blood and unaware of the situation. My father's statement will discuss this more.

5.Impact

1. My family members reacted very badly to the news that my father was infected with hepatitis C (HCV) and HIV. They held many misconceptions surrounding the ways in which the infections can be contracted. This caused a rift between family members and as a result, contact was cut between my immediate family and my extended family. As a child I was quite close to my cousins, we lived [GRO-B] where everyone knew each other, and I would spend time at their homes. I was also very close to my grandmother who used to take me swimming regularly.
2. The family on my father's side were the only living family I had; I had no one on my mother's side. Once my extended family learned of my father's infections, all contact ceased. I believe this was due to misinformed information and

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negative perceptions of the infections. This had a huge impact on me and my parents and as a child I was left wondering why I no longer had contact with my family. My mother became very depressed, her health declined, she stopped working due to depression and worried constantly about people **GRO-B** talking about them in a negative way. Because of this situation my parents never spoke about my father's conditions to anyone else.

3. I remember my mother would become very distressed and upset from story lines surrounding HIV in the media, I remember not really understanding why, this then clicked at a later time in my life when I became aware of my father's condition. I was sheltered from the suffering my parents experienced, although it was difficult to have my contact cut with well loved family members. In later years my parents have confided in one set of friends who they felt they could trust, other than that, they have never told anyone. I do not discuss my father's conditions with anyone, none of my friends are aware of what happened, my ex-partner wasn't aware, however, my current partner knows the situation. I do not feel it is my place to tell anyone. I also feel concerned about reactions especially from my previous experience of how my own family reacted to the news. I feel there is still a huge stigma surrounding HIV and hepatitis C (HCV).
4. My father's condition has had a huge impact on my mother's mental health which for me is very distressing, watching someone that I love suffer in this way. As a result of the gossip and the environment in the **GRO-B** that my parents lived in, my parents have moved to **GRO-B** where they feel they can start a new life where nobody knows them. Since this, my parents seem happier and my mother now gets out and socialises more. My mother had led a very full life before meeting my father, she had travelled and worked all over the world, it wasn't in her nature to become so demotivated. This shows the level of impact this situation has had on her mental health.
5. I worry how my mother will cope when my father's health declines or, furthermore, how she will cope when she loses him. I am anxious about the fact I know my father's life will be cut short due to his health conditions, because we have no family support now. I feel my wife and I would be heavily

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responsible for my mother's care when my father passes away. My father is very over protective and when I was child he would try to stop me from doing anything with a risk factor. My mother was aware of this and tried to balance the situation a little. I think this is because of his horrendous medical experiences.

6. I have a very close relationship with my parents, they are very supportive and would do anything for me. My father could not get life insurance because of his health conditions and my mother is therefore meticulous at arranging finances to ensure she has secured the future.
7. I am angry and upset about the failures that have occurred. I am angry that this will cause my father's life to be cut short, I am upset that this will leave my mother alone and me without my father. Because of what has happened, I have no support from my extended family.

6.Treatment/Care Support

1. I know very little about my father's treatment, he tends to keep his medication hidden and has never been open to discussing his treatment. I am not able to comment on any aspect of medication, treatment or medical support.

7.Financial Assistance

1. I am unable to comment on any financial assistance.

8.Other Issues

1. There are no other issues that I wish to comment upon.

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Statement of Truth

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

Signed

GRO-B

Dated.....05/12/2022.....