

ANONYMOUS

Witness Name: **GRO-B**

Statement No: WITN3353001

Dated: 30th September 2022

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. 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 previously worked as a **GRO-B** in a mental health hospital called **GRO-B** Hospital. I am married and live with my husband. I have two adult children.

2.How Affected

1. As a young woman I lived a very full and active life. I had a job, two children and played hockey. I was fit and healthy.

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2. In **GRO-B** was admitted to **GRO-B** Hospital in **GRO-B** for a hysterectomy operation. At the time, I was told by the doctor that it was all very routine. The **GRO-B** Hospital has since been demolished.
3. Arising from the operation, I had to have a blood transfusion. I can remember having two units of blood and then having a third unit. When I was having the third unit, I can recall specifically having a bad reaction to it. I was shaking and felt unwell. Because I had reacted badly to the transfusion, the medical staff at the hospital did not complete the transfusion from the third unit and took it away. I believe that it was possible that the first two units of blood could have been contaminated and contributed to my bad reaction with the third unit of blood.
4. From that point onwards I was never really well again. I was convinced at the time, and remain convinced, there was something about that third unit of blood which was not right. I believe that it was on this occasion that I was given infected blood of some sort and infected with hepatitis C.

3.Other infections

1. In the past few years, I have suffered from a number of health problems which I will refer to later in my statement. I am not aware that all of these are linked to infected blood, although I have my suspicions.

4.Consent

1. I am not aware if I have ever been treated or tested without my knowledge or consent or without being given adequate or full information or for the purposes of research.

5.Impact

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1. From the time of the blood transfusion in [GRO-B] I have never fully recovered. I can recall at that time telling my sister in law, [GRO-B], that there was something not quite right about the third unit of blood they had given to me.
2. From that time onwards I lacked energy, I never really had any get up and go anymore.
3. I began to experience low level pain in my side. In around [GRO-B] I went to see my GP about it. I was then referred to [GRO-B] in the [GRO-B] Hospital where they carried out investigations and a biopsy. They then informed me that I had cirrhosis of the liver.
4. Liver problems are often associated with people who have unhealthy lifestyles and particularly those who drink excessively. I have never lived like that. I don't really drink at all.
5. Another feature was when I was working at the [GRO-B] Hospital, in [GRO-B] in the 1970s, I was told that I should not give blood donations, although no reason was ever given to me for this. I suspect it might have already been known at that time that I had some sort of blood problem.
6. I was later told that I had autoimmune hepatitis at the same time as I had the biopsy.
7. I continue to be monitored in respect of my liver and attend a liver specialist every six months at the [GRO-B] [GRO-B] where my liver is scanned. My blood is taken every few weeks by my GP.
8. I have been told by my doctor, that I have a cyst on my liver. Most days I tend to feel nauseous. I also suffer with terrible itching on my hands, ears, legs, feet and the side of my body. I believe that is something which is quite common with people who have liver problems.

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9. I also suffer from a number of other health problems, including osteoporosis, rheumatoid arthritis with multiple vertebral breaks, lupus, autoimmune pericarditis, cardiomyopathy, irregular heartbeat and cataracts.
10. The medication that I take for autoimmune hepatitis, cirrhosis of the liver, cyst on the liver, rheumatoid arthritis and lupus has led to osteoporosis, causing multiple fractures in my spine. Every day I am in severe pain. I will never be able to heal correctly and now I am not even able to stand up straight, due to the way each vertebrae tries to fix or fuse itself. I have to try and be as careful as possible with my movements every day, as I live in fear, in case I have another break.
11. I constantly tell doctors and consultants that it must have been the blood I was given which caused such illnesses. I truly believe this to be the source of the illnesses that stemmed after this procedure, as before this, I was a reasonably healthy person. Now I am left with no quality of life, I am not able to drive anymore and have lost all my independence. My entire life solely revolves around hospitals, doctors and lying in bed.
12. I applied for retirement on ill-health grounds around February **GRO-B** but this was not granted until approximately **GRO-B**. My formal retirement date would have been **GRO-B**. I recall that my **GRO-B** was very ill around this time with cancer. I felt that I just wanted to be with her constantly.
13. My husband is effectively my carer. He drives me everywhere and does most of the domestic chores around the house. I am wholly dependent upon him. I don't know what I would do without him.

6. Treatment/Care /Support

1. Apart from the usual difficulties of dealing with the NHS, I have not faced any 'particular' difficulties, or obstacles in obtaining treatment, care and support.

2. No counselling or psychological support has ever been made available to me because of being infected.

7.Financial Assistance

1. I have never applied for any financial assistance or support, linked to contaminated blood.

8.Other Issues

1. When I heard about the Infected Blood Inquiry, I wanted to be involved, as I have always wanted to get to the truth about the blood I was given during my transfusion. I have always been convinced that I was given infected blood in **GRO-B** and that my health has suffered, as a consequence. My life has been severely affected, ever since.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed.....

GRO-B

Dated..... 30/09/22.....