

ANONYMOUS Witness Name: **GRO-B**

Statement No.: WITN3714001

Exhibits: None

Dated: 15th August, 2022

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF **GRO-B**

Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is **GRO-B** although I go by the name **GRO-B**. My date of birth is **GRO-B** and my address is known to the Inquiry.
2. I live on my own in a flat in **GRO-B** near to my **GRO-B** daughters and grandchildren. I moved back to **GRO-B** as I wanted to be close to my children to support them and because I had separated from my husband. I moved **GRO-B** with the intention of finding a home and I found support with a Solace Women's Aid (a women's refuge charity) who helped me to do so. It was no longer feasible for me to live with my husband.
3. I intend to talk about the impact of hepatitis C on my husband **GRO-B: H** **H** whom I am separated from, as well as the impact this has had on me, my relationship with him, and my children **H** has submitted his own statement to the Inquiry, which sets out in detail the circumstances of his infection. His witness

number is [GRO-B] In my statement I would like to highlight my experience as a victim of domestic abuse, which I attribute, at least in part, to [H]'s hepatitis C infection. In my view it is important that the Inquiry is aware of the impact that this diagnosis has had on our lives and possibly others.

Section 2. How Affected

4. I met [H] through mutual friends [GRO-B] years ago. It was not until around [GRO-B] [GRO-B] that we started to become involved romantically. We were married on [GRO-B] and we moved to [GRO-B]
5. I was not involved in his life when he was first infected with hepatitis C in [GRO-B]. Nor was I involved with him when he was first diagnosed with hepatitis C in [GRO-B]. [GRO-B] [H] was always very open about his diagnosis C. It was part of his identity, that he had hepatitis C as a result of receiving contaminated blood from [GRO-B]
6. After we became a couple [H] insisted that I go to the [GRO-B] to meet the nurses and discuss the virus. He was anxious that I was aware of exactly what it was and how it would affect him. I believe he thought this was respectful. I went to the hospital on a number of occasions to discuss with a [GRO-B] about the risk that the virus could be transmitted to me. I was very supportive and tried to find out as much as I could. [H] made sure that he educated myself and my [GRO-B] children on the virus, explaining everything in detail and all the things he had to go through as a result. That way the focus could solely remain on him, and his pain.

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7. Before we became involved [GRO-B] had no documented evidence that he had been infected as a result of contaminated blood. He was aware that others had been infected in this way but he had done no research to prove that he himself had received contaminated blood. [GRO-B]

GRO-B

8. [H] went through three rounds of treatment. The first time was before we were involved with each other, and it was not successful. The second round was also unsuccessful [H] underwent the third round of treatment in [GRO-B] It did successfully clear the hepatitis C. He suffered and struggled with each round of treatment and made sure we were aware of his pain. The focus was on [H] and ensuring that he was comfortable. Hepatitis C is a debilitating disease and despite the treatment being successful he still suffers from the affects now.

Section 3. Other Infections

9. [H] was infected with hepatitis C, only.

Section 4. Consent

10. I do not have much knowledge on the subject of consent. I understand he would have consented to any treatment he was given. I don't know if he was involved in any trials or research.

Section 5. Impact

11. In terms of the symptoms of hepatitis C, over the years [H] suffered from neuropathy, brain fog and different mental health issues. He suffered massively with his tiredness. It ruined his life because he had no energy for anything. I didn't always understand this. He was often very tired and would just lie in front of the television for hours unless, on the rare occasion, he was working. He couldn't sleep in the same bed as me, often sleeping on the sofa, because he was too hot and itchy. [H] was also self-medicating through drinking alcohol, in his mind his life was over and he was only going to get progressively more ill.

12. [GRO-B]

13. [H] suffers with depression. His personality type is his own, but the hepatitis C made things worse.

14. [GRO-B]
[GRO-B] That was it, from that point onwards he was abusive but I had made a commitment to him and wanted to try to make things better and help him in some way so I stayed.

15. I thought marrying him would provide some stability in mine and [GRO-B] lives. I thought it would be helpful to have a man around who was financially secure. After we were married, he retired. He put his feet, so to say, under the table and was comfortable, he had what he wanted. I essentially became his

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carer [H] likes the idea of someone being there to cook for him and clean up after him. It was a weird, dysfunctional home where he was in control.

16. When I met him I had a career as a [GRO-B] and I was thoroughly involved within the community [GRO-B]

[GRO-B]

[GRO-B]

I was a proactive healthy woman and I had a great social life with lovely friends. Once I became involved with [H] this all peeled away. I married him and my life became a living hell, he was offensive and cruel. He made decisions about when the kids could visit, and often said he was not feeling well as an excuse for them not to come over. I tried to provide us with a nice life and beautiful home but he embarrassed me in front of others to the point that I lost many of my friends. We were a tight-knit family and then [H] came into our life and he was destructive. Even on little day trips he was not fun, he was always doom and gloom.

17. For years [GRO-B] pestered me to sell my flat and buy a place in [GRO-B]. At first I said no [GRO-B]

Eventually, [GRO-B] I agreed and sold the flat [GRO-B]

[GRO-B]

I soon realised I had made the biggest mistake of my life.

[H] had sold his flat and spent all his money and then he bullied me into selling mine.

18. Looking at the bigger picture I would say [H] was very frightened of the virus and this manifested itself as anger and controlling behaviour. I believe that the

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progression of the symptoms exacerbated his fear, and the lack of control over himself and his body made him want to control everyone around him. He took out this deep anger on me physically, mentally, and emotionally. I was often blindsided and gaslighted, he would use the illness or the treatment as an excuse for his behaviour. I was told once by a policewoman to take my money and run. But I put up with him because I believed in my heart that I could support him and make him happy. I didn't see myself as a victim.

19. **H** is not a bad person but he is not good with people or with relationships. He tried to manipulate me and **GRO-B**

GRO-B

GRO-B

20. Learning that you cannot help someone who does not wish to help themselves is a painful lesson to learn. They say that the liver is linked to your emotions and so that's part of the disease. I suppose that's why they use the word liverish. **H** has serious anger issues that he has never dealt with, I believe a big part of this is as a result of the way that he was infected. He promised many times he would undergo therapy but he never did.

21. My health was impacted significantly. I was constantly stressed and there was a lot of grief. It was not until I moved back to **GRO-B** that I was diagnosed with PTSD which was as a result of the chaos of living with **GRO-B**
- GRO-B** At the same time as caring for **H** I have had to deal with my own medical problems. I had to cook and clean, he was unable to accompany me to my hospital appointments. **GRO-B**

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GRO-B
GRO-B My life is better now,
I speak to GRO-B every other day and they often take me out to treat me.

Section 6. Treatment/Care/Support

22. I do not believe he faced any difficulties or obstacles in receiving treatment or support. The last round cleared his hepatitis C.

23. I do not believe any psychological support or counselling was made available.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

24. H did receive support from the financial schemes but I did not have much to do with it. I supported him as much as I could. GRO-B

GRO-B

Section 8. Other Issues

25. In terms of recommendations from the Inquiry, all I know is that H believes he will receive compensation for himself and that me and GRO-B will be compensated too. I believe we have suffered greatly as a result of living with someone infected with HCV and I hope that what we have been through is recognised by the Inquiry.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed

GRO-B

Dated

15th August 2022