

Witness Name: GRO-B

Statement No: WITN7154001

Exhibits: 0

Dated: September 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 1982, and I live at GRO-B
GRO-B

2. My mother, GRO-B: M (born GRO-B 1952), was infected with the Hepatitis C Virus (HCV) through contaminated Factor VIII (FVIII) concentrate.

3. This Witness Statement has been prepared without the benefit of access to my mother's medical records. Moreover, a large part of my own medical records is missing. I have tried to trace them between here and GRO-B with no luck. This is of relevance because my mother became infected at the time of my birth, as detailed in this Statement.

4. My mother has provided her own Witness Statement to the Inquiry (Witness Number GRO-B This Statement should be read in conjunction with her Statement.

Section 2. How Affected

5. My mother (Mum) is thought to have a blood disorder, but the nature of the disorder has never been accurately diagnosed or confirmed. She was initially told that it was a hereditary haemorrhagic disorder, then Christmas Disease, then Von Willibrand Disease and currently a platelet storage pool deficiency/disorder. Dr Charles Forbes diagnosed VWD in 1976. Mum's blood condition was not registered with UKHCDO.
6. Mum was previously treated with snake venom, plasma and cryoprecipitate (for tooth extractions and after a car accident). Mum was first given FVIII concentrate as a preventative against bleeding before childbirth (at my birth) in 1982. It was administered to Mum before induction of her labour. She was given FVIII concentrate again less than 7 weeks later to treat a massive haemorrhage she had at home. Mum and I were flown by air ambulance to the GRO-D). Mum was in agony, and it was very traumatic for her as, at GRO-D, I (a baby just over six weeks old) was separated from her and left alone for hours to cry in a hospital corridor.
7. Mum wasn't told that she had been infected with HCV until 1995. She was informed by letter that she had HCV antibodies 'and must therefore have had a past infection, from blood products a number of years ago.' Dr Watson at the GRO-D subsequently told Mum that the FVIII treatment she had in 1982 was the source of her HCV infection. My mother believes the product to be Hyland/Hamofil. Dr Watson gave Mum a batch number ie Batch No 649.

Section 3. Other Infections

8. Mum carries a green card and was told that she was at high risk of vCJD.

Section 4. Consent

9. No warning was given to Mum about the risk of infection before the FVIII treatment was administered to her. She was told by Dr Audrey Dawson at the [GRO-D] that cryoprecipitate was no longer being used and that FVIII was 'much better'. Her records show that her clotting levels were in fact 290% before it was administered. Therefore, the treatment was not needed anyway. I was Mum's second child. During her third pregnancy/childbirth, she received no products and had no bleeding or issues.
10. Mum was tested for HBV and HIV without her knowledge and consent. She is of the firm view that she was used 'as a guinea pig', for the purposes of research.

Section 5. Impact of the Infection

11. Mum has developed a number of serious health conditions through being infected with HCV. She has fibrosis/scarring of the liver. She has Sjogren's Syndrome. She has Fibromyalgia, Osteoarthritis and Rheumatoid Arthritis. Mum has annual attacks of shingles, skin rashes and joint and muscle pain. Mum suffers with depression and fatigue.
12. Mum's infection with HCV had a terrible effect on our family. I was around 13 years old when she found out. It had a devastating effect on her mental health as she was told she would very probably have liver cancer. Mentally she began to prepare for dying, leaving three children. I blamed myself, as it was during my birth she was infected. There was huge stigma around HCV, so no one could be told and we could only speak about it within the family. I carried it around my head at aged 13 that my mum was going to die soon, but no one could know. It was an incredibly stressful time. We were taken to the Dr and tested too, which was terrifying.

13. I had a lot of caring responsibilities as a child, due to Mum's pain, fatigue and depression as a result of her HCV infection. I would help get her out of bed, help her in and out of shower, help put on her clothes and get my younger sister ready for school. She didn't leave the house much, so I also often did the shopping, collected prescriptions etc and looked after my younger sister.

14. Mum has recently been diagnosed with Pancreatitis and Stomach Cysts. She is losing weight and struggling to eat very much. She is in a lot of pain from Pancreatitis, and awaiting an appointment with a surgeon.

15. It has dominated our lives for years, and even after the treatment it hasn't 'ended it' for her. Mum has been very much involved in the fight for justice and transparency for all those infected. It has taken its toll on her mental and physical health. I hope that the end of this Inquiry will help put an end to it all for her and all infected persons are awarded the compensation they deserve.

Section 6. Treatment/care/support

16. We were never offered counselling or support as a family.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

17. I refer to Mum's Statement.

Anonymity

18. I wish to apply for anonymity, and I understand that this redacted Statement will be published by the Inquiry.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed. GRO-B

Dated 22/9/2022