

# ANONYMOUS

Witness Name: GRO-B

Statement No: WITN7156001

Exhibits: 0

Dated: August 2022

## INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

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FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF GRO-B

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I, GRO-B, will say as follows:-

### Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is GRO-B. I was born on GRO-B 1966, and I live at GRO-B.  
GRO-B
2. My partner, GRO-B: P (born GRO-B 1961), is infected with the Hepatitis C Virus (HCV) through a contaminated blood transfusion. P has provided his own Witness Statement to the Inquiry (Witness Number GRO-B). This Statement should be read in conjunction with P's Statement.
3. This Witness Statement has been prepared without the benefit of access to P's medical records.

## **Section 2. How Infected**

4. [P] had a blood transfusion at Hackney Hospital in or around 1979. We had no idea that [P] was infected with HCV until June 2022.

## **Section 3. Other Infections**

5. I am not aware of any other infection. When [P] was told that he was infected with HCV, I was told that I too needed to be tested as I had been exposed to the risk of cross-infection. I was found to be HCV negative, as was our son and daughter. We have asked our son and daughter not to say anything about it (the HCV infection) to anyone. [P] feels stigmatised and it is not the sort of thing you want others to know. Our son and daughter love their dad dearly. We are all very worried about him.

## **Section 4. Consent**

6. [P] was no older than 18 when he became infected with HCV through the contaminated blood transfusion. A major artery in his arm was severed and he was losing blood fast. [P] was not prewarned about the risk of infection. He was given the blood transfusion as an emergency. He said that he passed out and woke up on the ward when it was all over. [P] wasn't made aware that he had been placed at risk of infection afterwards. He had no idea that he had HCV for something in the region of 43 years.

## **Section 5. Impact of the Infection**

7. [P] and I go back a long way. We met and formed a relationship in 1988, when I was 21 years old, and [P] was 26 years old. [P] has been unwell/feeling the effects of the HCV infection for such a long time. Now that we have a diagnosis, I can make sense of why [P] has been feeling the way that he is feeling.
8. [P] used to be the very life and soul of every party. In latter years, he has become anxious, depressed and withdrawn. The last time he sat in a pub, he was sat on his own. He used to be surrounded by people and loved to chat. We came close to owning our own home on two occasions in our younger years. We had the deposit saved and had worked through our mortgage application and offer. [P] then said he felt too anxious to go through with it and we withdrew. [P] and I have become isolated, and I cannot see anything much happening to improve things. When we are invited to a wedding, we never now end up going. [P] has lost interest in doing things. We don't even go out to shop. We do our shopping online. I don't want to go out and leave [P] on his own. It really is sad because [P] used to be very sociable.
9. [P] always complained about pain in his back. [P] suffers with severe joint and muscle pain. It was a huge blow to him when he had to accept that he was no longer able to work. He hasn't worked since 2005. Finding out that he was infected with HCV for decades has had a further impact on his already poor mental health. I too have mental health issues and [P]'s anxiety has had a significant knock-on effect on me. I suffer with anxiety, depression and I have panic attacks. They are now worse, and they have now had to 'up' my medication.
10. I have a multitude of serious (physical) health issues to include Arthritis in my knees, hips and hands. [P] used to be able to help me with straight forward household tasks to include lifting things in and out of the oven. The cocktail of drugs he now takes including morphine makes him very tired and sleepy. [P] used to be a big bloke and he used to enjoy his food. He now says that he feels

sick and bloated all the time. He doesn't have much of an appetite. I used to do bigger meals for him, but I don't often cook now. P has lost a lot of weight. At one stage we believed that he had a lactose intolerance. I put his weight loss down to the fact that he had cut out dairy. Having HCV has affected P's mood and his weight. We are both under a big strain.

#### **Section 6. Treatment/care/support**

- 11 P has just started on a three-month course of Epclusa as clearing treatment for HCV. We have not been offered any counselling.

#### **Section 7. Financial Assistance**

- 12 P and I struggle. We are both financially reliant upon Disability Living Allowance.
- 13 P intends to apply for financial assistance through EIBSS. In the last month or so we have done a lot of work in making contact with EIBSS, the Hepatitis C Trust and the Blood Transfusion Service (to name a few). It is very stressful, having to work through it all.

**Anonymity**

14. 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 .....23.08.2022.....