

**ANONYMOUS  
ANONYMOUS**

Witness Name: GRO-B

Statement No.: WITN7184001

Exhibits: WITN7184002 - 008

Dated:

**INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY**

---

**WRITTEN STATEMENT OF** GRO-B

---

I provide this statement in response to a request under Rule 9 of the Inquiry Rules 2006 dated 26 September 2022.

I, GRO-B will say as follows: -

**Section 1. Introduction**

1. My name is GRO-B My date of birth is GRO-B 1946.  
I was born in GRO-B and I now live in GRO-B Kent. My full address is known to the Inquiry.
2. I am married to my husband, GRO-B With him, I have three biological sons. I also have five granddaughters and one great grandchild.
3. I intend to speak about my infection with Hepatitis C (HCV). In particular, the nature of my illness, how the illness affected me, the treatment received and the impact it had on me, my family and our lives together.

## ANONYMOUS

4. After finishing school, I went onto college to get the Higher National Diploma (HND) in design engineering. I had a career break for ten years to start a family, and then I went onto starting my own business in bridal wear. I had six shops until I was sixty-years-old. After losing the shops due to bankruptcy for reasons related to having been infected with HCV that I shall come onto later, I went on to run a catering company.
5. I can also confirm that I have not chosen to have legal representation and that I am happy for the Inquiry to assist me with my statement. The Inquiry Investigator has explained the Inquiry's Statement of Approach and the anonymity process to me. I wish to be anonymous.
6. I also confirm that the Inquiry Investigator has explained the 'Right to Reply' procedure, and that if I am critical of a medical professional or organisation, they will have the right to reply to that criticism.
7. I wish to acknowledge that naturally as time passes, memories may fade. I have been able to provide approximate time frames to matters based on life events in some instances. However, these timeframes should be accepted as 'near to' rather than precise dates.

---

### **Section 2. How Infected**

8. On expecting my fourth child, midwives at Kings College Hospital found that I had a missed abortion; the baby had no heart beat and had died in the womb (**Exhibit W7184002**). I was discharged after this appointment and I had come home. I went to Maidstone Hospital and on 18 April 1985, I underwent an operation to remove the baby. After the operation, I came out of the theatre and I had a haemorrhage. I lost a lot of blood and required a large blood transfusion.
9. Before the blood transfusion, I was going in and out of consciousness and no risks about receiving the blood were explained to me. The

## ANONYMOUS

clinicians at Maidstone Hospital may have asked whether or not it was okay to proceed with the transfusion but I cannot recall if they did; I was not in a good way. Nonetheless, in this era, the ins and outs and risks of the procedures were not outlined as much as they would be today so it is unlikely any risks would have been explained to me or anyone else. It is strange as despite mourning my baby, I felt great in myself after the blood transfusion.

10. Despite the fact I required medical support as I was still lactating and producing a lot of milk, no doctors, nurses or midwives came to see me. I was left all alone after having lost my baby, and I had to go and ask a midwife to come and help me.
11. Ever since my missed abortion in April 1985, I had not been feeling particularly well. In July 1985, we were coming close to the end of the school term and the kids were excited about going on a little two-week holiday to Wales where we rented a property. All week I had been charging away at work and I started to feel really even more unwell on Friday. My urine was brown and I was going jaundiced.
12. A letter to my GP at the time, Dr GRO-D from Preston Hall Hospital dated 15 August 1985, details how three weeks prior to admission, I felt "nauseated, anorectic and tired" and one week before admission I reportedly developed right hypochondrial discomfort (**Exhibit W7184004**).
13. I called my GP, Dr GRO-D at GRO-B Maidstone, who came out to see me. He took one look at me and said he could not help me so I needed to go to hospital. I was admitted to Preston Hill Hospital, part of the Maidstone Hospital Group, on 27 July 1985. My husband took me to Preston Hill Hospital and settled me into the ward.

## ANONYMOUS

14. The clinicians at Preston Hill Hospital undertook blood tests and unbeknownst to me at the time, realised that I had hepatitis of some form rather than a blocked duct in my liver as they initially thought.

15. In confirmation of this, a medical patient discharge letter from Preston Hill Hospital dated 3 August 1985 confirms a diagnosis of "hepatitis". **(Exhibit W7184003)**. Further, a letter to my GP at the time, Dr **GRO-D** from Preston Hall Hospital dated 15 August 1985, details how the results of my liver function tests were "diagnostic of hepatitis" and that I had either Hepatitis A or non-A, non-B Hepatitis **(Exhibit W7184004)**. At the time, I was not told about the diagnosis and I have only now seen on my medical records that the clinicians knew about it and did not tell me.

16. Whilst in hospital, without being told why, I was isolated and moved to a side room away from other people. I had a lot of further tests without any explanation and looking back, I wonder why they put me through it.

17. However, having now received my medical records after many years, it seems the clinicians put me in one of the side wards until they could confirm I was "negative for serum hepatitis antigens" so I could be discharged. It was believed, as a result of published District guidelines on infectious disease, that "patients with infectious hepatitis are only infectious until two days after jaundice appears". On this basis, the clinicians concluded that I was "probably non-infectious, if this is the diagnosis" **(Exhibit W7184004)**.

18. Despite being extremely unwell, I was discharged from hospital in August 1985. On my medical notes, it is written that I felt fine on discharge even though I had to literally be carried out by my husband from the hospital. I could not even get out of bed or get dressed out of my nightgown as I was so unwell. The clinicians sent me out of the hospital when I was unwell.

## ANONYMOUS

19. During this hospital visit, it was the first time someone had told me I suffered from asthma and confirmed I had it. Although, I am unsure if this is relevant as, I had been having an on and off cough since my childhood with apparently no cause.
20. Years passed till I overcame the illness that I did not know was HCV. We moved here to GRO-B nineteen years ago and registered with a new doctor, Dr GRO-B a GRO-B. In around 2003, I went for an introductory appointment with my new doctor and when going through my medical history, she mentioned that I had hepatitis. Obviously, I was very surprised and taken back as this was the first time I had been told that I had HCV.
21. No further tests or treatment were offered at this point, I simply received a diagnosis that had been known and in my medical records for many previous years. At this point, neither my GP or I knew whether or not I still had an active HCV infection. No risks or anything further were explained by my GP. She did not take any further action apart from arranging further liver function tests every so often to check everything was okay. Although, she was a very good doctor and I had told her what had happened; she was incensed and could not believe the way in which I was treated.
22. In 2004, for unrelated reasons, I went to see a cardiologist, Dr D A Lythall and told him about my potential HCV infection, not wanting anyone to catch anything off of me. Dr Lythall undertook further investigations. In a letter dated 9 May 2004 from Dr Lythall to my GP, Dr GRO-B Dr Lythall notes "history with hepatitis after a blood transfusion" and that "serology shows that she is positive for anti-hepatitis C antibody" (**Exhibit W7184005**). Dr Lythall arranged a HCV viral load test, a HCV genotype test and liver function testing in a letter dated 19 June 2004 (**Exhibit W7184006**).

23. Dr Lythall referred me to Dr **GRO-B** a consultant physician and gastroenterologist at **GRO-B** Canterbury (**Exhibit W7184007**). After this referral, in a letter dated 16 March 2005, Mr Lythall writes again to my GP, Dr **GRO-B** stating this time that my second HCV PCR is entirely negative. He goes further and states "our interpretation of this is therefore that she has been exposed to HCV, hence the HCV antibody, but she has no evidence of continuing viral infection" (**Exhibit W7184008**).

24. As above, it was only confirmed that I was negative of HCV in March 2005, nineteen years after clinicians at Preston Hill Hospital had diagnosed me and failed to inform me of this diagnosis.

### **Section 3. Other Infections**

25. I do not believe that I received any infection other than HCV as a result of being given infected blood.

### **Section 4. Consent**

26. When I was given my blood transfusion, as I have previously mentioned, I do not know if permission was sought or whether I gave permission. Nonetheless, I would have accepted the transfusion as it was an emergency. Most people would have just said yes because they are frightened they might die, and so they trust that the medical profession knows what they are doing.

27. Looking back, I wonder if I was tested for HIV without my knowledge. The clinicians would have tested me for everything. Overall, the lack of information provided to me at all points during my blood transfusion, diagnosis and treatment is ridiculous.

**Section 5. Impact**

28. My biggest concern is that I was never told that I had been infected with HCV when it was discovered by the clinicians at Preston Hill Hospital in 1985 despite them writing my diagnosis on my medical records. The diagnosis would have explained why I was feeling so unwell but no one thought to tell me. Until I saw Dr [GRO-B] in 2003, no one had spoken to me about the diagnosis or offered any support, guidance or treatment.
29. I have always wondered if my previous GP knew about the infection with HCV and also decided to keep the diagnosis from me. In light of receiving my medical records, it seems that my previous Dr [GRO-D] ought to have known as he received a letter from Preston Hall Hospital (**Exhibit W7184004**).
30. Despite the clinicians at Preston Hill acknowledging my infection since 1985, no follow up was ever provided. Unbeknownst to them, I did eventually get better as I had made antibodies against HCV. As above, I was only confirmed to have no evidence of a continuing HCV infection by my Cardiologist Dr Lythall in 2005 (**Exhibit W7184008**). Whilst I was pleased my body had fought it and I had antibodies; I was angry that I had not been kept informed.
31. Even when I was moved to an isolation ward, the clinicians knew and it is only in light of hindsight and having received my medical records that I know it was hidden from me. Overall, the treatment from the medical profession has been appalling and gruelling.
32. When I was discharged from Preston Hill Hospital after being admitted as I was jaundiced, my husband and I had just moved house. I came into my new home and spent weeks upon weeks in bed.

## ANONYMOUS

33. As they did not tell me what was wrong, I thought I was still jaundiced. I changed my lifestyle accordingly to prevent my liver being damaged and tried to eat healthily in an attempt to get better; despite never drinking much, I made sure to stop drinking and I have not had an alcoholic drink since I was admitted to hospital.
34. Further to this, as I was never told that I had HCV, I did not know I was infectious. I look back and think I could have unknowingly gone home and spread it around my children and family. Even when I went to the doctors or hospital, if I had had an accident, I could have spread it to others. It makes me angry that I was unknowingly a walking danger to everybody around me.
35. I had no professional help whatsoever or any sort of follow up after leaving hospital with regards to my HCV. No nurse came to visit me and I was just lying-in bed trying my best to get better.
36. I have never had any fibro scans or ultrasounds on my liver and I do not know what condition it is in. I was just left to get on with it myself. However, unrelated to this, I underwent a full body MRI after recently battling bowel cancer and hope that the scan would have picked up anything concerning my liver.
37. After my blood transfusion, I began to experience severe migraines to the point that if someone had put a pill in front of me to stop the pain that would also kill me, I would have taken it. At the time, I would put the cause of the headaches down to stress and depression. However, in hindsight, whilst I had always experienced headaches, they got a lot worse from the time I would have been infected with HCV. The migraines got out of hand and my body would ache constantly. I used to be physically sick all the time.
38. My GP, Dr **GRO-D** would come and treat me for the migraines. I was referred to a migraine clinic in London. I kept being prescribed



## ANONYMOUS

more and more tablets to help relieve the pain. As a result of the pain and depression, I overdosed on the pain relief tablets.

39. GRO-B rushed me into Maidstone Hospital but from the get go he felt that they were not interested whatsoever. My circumstances were not deemed an emergency. From my understanding, you normally have to pump out someone's stomach when they overdose but the clinicians did not seem to be in a hurry to do anything.

40. GRO-B went to speak with the matron to complain but nothing came of it. I was just left sitting there being told I was going to be okay. It felt like I was not given any respect or anything by them. Despite being admitted into hospital for that overdose, there was no record of it in the thousand pages of medical notes I received.

41. At the time of my deteriorating health GRO-B was a self-employed builder and was not able to work during the periods that I was unwell, so we lost a lot of money. My family were impacted as a result of me being infected with HCV as they did not have a mum around as well.

42. GRO-B had to take over the mother role for our children and be at home to look after them, take them to school and pick them up from school. Even when he was able to work, he would only be able to do a few hours due to the commitments he took on. GRO-B was running the house and we also had three dogs to look after. All of this definitely affected my husband quite a bit and had a negative impact on him.

43. GRO-B had a road traffic accident, resulting in a broken neck and brain damage, as he was working longer hours due to me not being able to work, and he now experiences difficulties with his short-term memory. It was so difficult as two of my sons were travelling around Australia at the time.

## ANONYMOUS

44. To further complicate everything, as I was poorly, my business went downhill as I was not able to do anything. Everything was falling around me and the last thing I wanted was to lose the business. Even when I could not get out of bed, I kept trying and trying but eventually I went bankrupt and lost my business. It was so hard seeing something you worked so hard for slip through your fingers and disappear.
45. It was the ripple effect of everything. I blame the infected blood for all of this. My husband and I lost a lot of money, we also lost our home, our car and we were not able to take our children on holidays. I was not able to help one of my sons through university as I had hoped.
46. Our children missed things they looked forward to and their summer holidays were wiped out, which was sad for them as they were so young. We lost everything.
47. When I was fifty-years-old and my husband was fifty-two-years-old, we started again and moved here to **GRO-B**. Luckily, we had come into some inheritance and were able to move into the house we live in now.
48. I want to make it very clear that this is most important for me to highlight and I want to bring your attention to this point. Everything was difficult for the family, and one point is, because I was so ill, due to the HCV, **GRO-B** and I never had a chance to complete our family as planned.

### **Section 6. Treatment/Care/Support**

49. As mentioned above, I faced difficulties and obstacles in obtaining treatment, care and support in consequence of being infected with HCV as I was never told about my infection. It was left to progress in my body with no monitoring. I was lucky that I cleared it.

50. There has not been any counselling or psychological support ever been made available to me in consequence of being infected as described. I think counselling would have 100 per cent helped me. No one can make decisions unless they are given as many true facts about whatever is happening and sometimes guidance is needed to work through things with someone objective to the situation.

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

51. I went online asking for my records from 1985 and I got a reply back saying it was not possible. As I had moved and had not been under the care of Maidstone for nineteen years, I was told my records would have been destroyed. It seemed they did not even bother looking for them.

52. I went down to the records office and demanded my records. I waited there until they were ready to prevent them from attempting to alter them in any way. As a result, I recovered around one thousand pages of medical notes.

53. Despite receiving over a thousand pages of my medical notes, a lot of notes are still missing from tests I can remember. It seems that the proof has been destroyed or removed.

54. I am of the mindset that you cannot let people crash you down or silence you. I have always stood up for anybody who is being put down. I was lucky I got better when a lot of people lost their lives.

55. However, I want a more peaceful life as I am getting older. I do not want to keep fighting these big people who do not care at all. Having to fight worries me a lot.

**Section 8. Other Issues**

56. Overall, I would like to see the government take responsibility and apologise. People should lose jobs and learn from their past mistakes. I want to know why, despite the hospital knowing, why they carried on giving the blood and why I was not provided with more information. Wrong decisions were clearly made by people who did not know what they were doing and they were not given the right information by Government decision-makers.

57. It would have been so easy for hospitals in the past to have deliberately erased all these notes if they wanted to. I wonder whether they have just done this for those who may have been infected with hepatitis and AIDS as a result of infected blood or blood products in an attempt to cover things up.

58. At the end of the day, whatever the Inquiry decides, it would be impossible to give me back what I have lost. Whilst I did not lose my life, that's the only other thing they could have taken. People often say I am lucky and I ask them whether they would want to walk through my footsteps and endure the suffering I have.

**Statement of Truth**

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

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

GRO-B

Dated \_\_\_\_\_

21.11.2022

# ANONYMOUS

Exhibit Number	Details	Dated
<b>WITN7184002</b>	Clinical Notes confirming Missed Abortion.	18 April 1985
<b>WITN7184003</b>	Discharge letters from Preston Hill Hospital, confirming a diagnosis of 'hepatitis'.	07 August 1985
<b>WITN7184004</b>	Letter from Preston Hall Hospital to GP, confirming ongoing symptoms, hepatitis infection and District guidelines on infectious diseases.	15 August 1985
<b>WITN7184005</b>	Letter from Dr Lythall, Consultant Cardiologist to Dr <b>GRO-B</b> GP at <b>GRO-B</b> noting history of hepatitis after a blood transfusion and presence of anti-hepatitis C antibody.	09 May 2004
<b>WITN7184006</b>	Letter from Dr Lythall, Consultant Cardiologist to Dr <b>GRO-B</b> Consultant Physician and Gastroenterologist regarding anti-HCV antibody and arrangement of further tests.	19 June 2004

# ANONYMOUS

<b>WITN7184007</b>	Letter from Dr Lythall, Consultant Cardiologist to Mrs <b>GRO-B</b> regarding abnormal hepatitis test.	19 June 2004
<b>WITN7184008</b>	Letter from Dr Lythall, Consultant Cardiologist to Dr <b>GRO-B</b> regarding results of HCV PCR test confirming no evidence of continuing viral infection.	16 March 2005