

# ANONYMOUS

Witness Name: **GRO-B**

Statement No.: WITN7191001

Exhibits: none

Dated: 27 OCTOBER 2022

## 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 20 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** 1972 and my address is known to the Inquiry. I am a solicitor.
2. This statement is about my mother **GRO-B** and how she contracted Hepatitis C ("HCV") and subsequently liver cancer, which I believe is a result of a blood transfusion my mother received when she had an emergency caesarean in 1972. I will also set out in this statement the impact this has had on our family life.
3. I can confirm that I have chosen not to have legal representation and that the Inquiry Investigator has explained the anonymity process to me. I wish to be anonymous.

4. The Inquiry Investigator has explained to me the 'Right to Reply' procedure, and I understand that if I am critical of a medical professional or organisation, they will have the right to reply to that criticism.
5. I wish to acknowledge that naturally as time passes, memories can fade. I have been able to provide approximate timeframes for matters based on life events. However, these timeframes should be accepted as 'near to' rather than precise dates. My statement has been prepared without the benefit of access to my mother's medical records.

## **Section 2. How Affected**

6. My father: **GRO-B** has provided a statement to the Inquiry which provides details of the emergency caesarean my mother had to undergo on **GRO-B** 1972 and the reasons why my father believes that my mother was given a blood transfusion at that time. In his statement, my father also explains the circumstances leading up to my mother being diagnosed with terminal liver cancer.

7. By the emergency caesarean, my mother had triplets: **GRO-B** and me. We were **GRO-B** born in the maternity ward of the new John Radcliffe Hospital in Oxford. **GRO-B**

**GRO-B**

8. My Parents worked hard to ensure that my brother, sister and I had a good education and a happy family life. and my brother, sister and I were successful in our chosen careers which I think made my mother proud. My brother **GRO-B** died unexpectedly in 2004 due to heart problems he had since birth and understandably this tragedy hit the family very hard, especially my parents **GRO-B** death made me reflect on life in general and it made me realise how precious life was and that I should not take

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my family for granted. At the time, I was living in London with my boyfriend [GRO-B] and shortly after [GRO-B] death, we made the decision to move to [GRO-B] so that I could be closer to my Parents which would allow me to spend more time with them and be there to support them as they got older.

9. [GRO-B] we moved to a village in [GRO-B] which was close to my Parents' house [GRO-B] and I married the same year.

10. I recall that in early February 2007, when my Parents returned home from a trip to Spain, my mother was feeling unwell as she had lost her appetite during her holiday and her appetite had not returned. I was busy at work at the time so I relied on my father updating me on my mother's various visits to her GP and hospital appointments to try and find out what was making her feel unwell.

11. My mother was admitted to hospital on 26 February 2007 for tests.

12. On 07 March 2007, I returned home late one evening from a work function to be told by my husband that my father had rung with some terrible news. My husband told me that my mother had been sent home from the hospital, she had terminal cancer, the hospital could not do anything for my mother and they had estimated that she may have [GRO-B] months or so to live. Given this devastating news, I immediately went to visit my mother that evening. She was always a strong lady and very practical. When I arrived to see her, my mother was quiet and calm - I think she was trying to remain strong for the sake of the family. Recalling this event is difficult for me emotionally. I remember feeling helpless and angry that the diagnosis had come so late and that my mother would not have the opportunity to fight the cancer.

13. Following the cancer diagnosis, I visited my Parents' house regularly to see my mother. My mother's health deteriorated rapidly. My mother suffered jaundice and then she was in a lot of pain despite being on morphine tablets prescribed by her GP. During my visits, my mother told

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me that she was upset that she did not have the chance to fight the cancer. On one occasion, my mother was lying in bed in a lot of pain and she told me that the pain was so bad that she thought she could not go on. It was very upsetting to see my mother suffer in this way. Shortly after this, on GRO-B 2007, we were able to get my mother a bed in the local hospice. GRO-B My mother remained in the hospice until she died with me and my father at her bedside.

14. My mother's death certificate records that she died of liver cancer on GRO-B GRO-B 2007.

### Section 3. Other Infections

15. I do not know whether my mother contracted any other infection.

### Section 4. Consent

16. I do not know whether my mother was ever told about the risks associated with receiving a blood transfusion.

### Section 5. Impact

17. I questioned my father about my mother's cancer diagnosis as I wanted to understand how the cancer had become so advanced and why my mother had not experienced symptoms earlier. My father told me the consultant had given the cancer diagnosis and he had also stated that my mother had HCV. I was not familiar with HCV so I carried out some basic research and discovered that there was a chance that my mother could have passed on the HCV to me. I was worried about the risk of being infected with HCV so I made an appointment with my local GP surgery. GRO-B I believe that I saw the GP, Dr GRO-B shortly after my mother's death. I explained that I wanted a HCV test as my mother had been infected and I told her about the cancer. Dr GRO-B said that she was sorry to hear that news

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and she arranged for me to have the test. The test came back clear. I told my sister to get a HCV test but I am not aware that she ever did.

18. HCV caused my mother pain and suffering and her premature death. I was not able to spend the time I had hoped with my mother and I would have loved to have been able to share so many of the key events in my life with her such as family celebrations, my work promotions and the birth of my son and daughter. My first child was born two years after my mother died. When my father came to visit me in the maternity ward, he held my son and said "Your mother should be here" and indeed she should have been as she would have been very happy to meet her first grandchild. My children have missed out on knowing their 'Nanny' **GRO-B** who I am sure would have adored them. I often visit my mother's grave with my daughter and it is heart breaking when my daughter asks me what Nanny was like.

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

19. I have not received any counselling or psychological support in consequence of what happened.

20. As far as I am aware, my mother was not offered counselling or psychological support, but as I have mentioned above **GRO-B** **GRO-B** offered some support to my mother.

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

21. No financial assistance was given to my mother following her diagnosis. I have also not received any financial assistance as my mother's daughter.

**Section 8. Other Issues**

22. As a solicitor, I value honesty, justice and accountability. I truly hope the Inquiry can deal with all matters set out in its Terms of Reference and to meet its responsibilities in identifying the individual, organisational and systemic failings that have led to the suffering and/or death of all those who were given infected blood/blood products.

23. I also want to know if there was a cover-up regarding the infected blood as I do wonder whether my mother would be still with us today if we were told earlier about the HCV. If the Inquiry finds that there have been failings then I would hope that the Inquiry Chair also recognises the wider group that has been affected, such as families, and that they are compensated for their loss and suffering.

**Statement of Truth**

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

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

GRO-B

Dated \_\_\_\_\_

27 / 10 / 2022