

ANONYMOUS



Witness Name:

GRO-B

Statement No: WITN7366001

Exhibits: Nil

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 14 October 2022.

I, GRO-B will say as follows: -

Section 1: Introduction

1. My full name is GRO-B and my date of birth is GRO-B 1995. My address is known to the Inquiry. I work as a Social Worker in Lancashire I work as a social worker within health and social care dealing with people to enable timely discharge and prevent avoidable admissions to hospital.
2. I wish to speak about my late father's infection with Hepatitis C (HCV) as a result of a transfusion he had during a knee operation around 1984/5. He passed away in 2008.
3. I confirm that I am not currently legally represented and that I am happy for the Inquiry Team to assist me with my statement.
4. I also confirm that I have had the option to seek anonymity and the Inquiry's statement of approach explained to me. I can confirm that I am requesting anonymity.
5. The inquiries criticisms procedure and the 'right of reply' has been explained to me.

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6. My mother **GRO-B** has been with me during the interview in preparation for this statement. My mother and father were divorced before he died but remained close.
7. They met in 1991 or 2 and married in **GRO-B** but divorced in 2001. As often happens things were not good at first but everything improved between them a few years later. They had joint responsibility for raising me and my siblings and shared our care.
8. I have 4 brothers, 2 older and 2 younger than me.

Section 2: How Infected

9. My father's name was **GRO-B: F** he was born on **GRO-B** 1964 and he died on **GRO-B** 2008. Making him just 43 years old when he passed away.
10. He was in good health and sporty before he had to have knee surgery in 1984 or 5, as a result of an injury during a football match. This was on his cruciate ligament and surrounding cartilage, he joked that it was the same operation as the famous footballer Paul Gascoigne.
11. This surgery took place at the Birch Hill Hospital in Wardle, Rochdale (part of the Pennine Health Trust) in about 1984 or 5. During this operation he needed to have a blood transfusion.
12. He was told he had been given a transfusion after the operation.
13. Less than a year before he died, **F** became progressively more ill. He was always cold, pale, tired and he had problems with his gums. His GP sent him for various tests but nothing untoward was found. Therefore there was no explanation.
14. Over time his liver deteriorated and fluid started to build up in his body and abdomen, he was again sent for further tests. He was told that he was HCV+ on Mother's Day 2008 (which was the 2nd of March that year). He also had many hospital day case appointments for draining of fluid, when he wasn't in an in-patient in hospital

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15. They tried to drain the excessive fluid that had built up but his organs were failing. He caught MRSA in hospital.
16. It was planned that he should have a liver transplant in Leeds General Infirmary but he was too unwell, then he caught MRSA. He didn't receive any treatment to try to cure the HCV.
17. He was transferred to the Manchester Royal Infirmary and put into an induced coma and then on to life support. He never regained consciousness and died on GRO-B 2008 (just GRO-B days after he was admitted). It was explained to us by hospital staff that HCV was a 20 year killer. F died about 24 years after the transfusion.
18. Due to the speed of his death an inquest was held on GRO-B 2008 and was ruled as 'Misadventure'.
19. I have been asked about other risk factors. He had had a tattoo, which was very small on his hip/ stomach area, also he had an ear pierced. These were done at a reputable place's in Rochdale.

Section 3: Other Infections

20. As far as I'm aware F did not contract any other infections, than HCV.

Section 4: Consent

21. I don't know if he was been tested without his knowledge, consent or used for research purposes.

Section 5: Impact

22. For a long time when he was becoming ill, the medical staff could not work out what was wrong with F which very difficult for the family.
23. Whilst was in the various hospitals for his treatment (listed above) F was repeatedly ask if he was an alcoholic or took intravenous drugs and then various derogatory comments were made even though he always (truthfully) told them no.

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24. As young children, we had to be told our father was going to die and then had to live with all the consequences that entailed, when he did.
25. We were 'protected' and not allowed to visit him often in hospital. We didn't get told what was happening.
26. My eldest brother has 2 children, who do not have a Grandfather, and he will miss seeing them grow up, which is wrong.
27. My Step-mother **GRO-B** was younger than my dad, it was very hard for her because initially she had to care for him, he was always cold and tired, and so they couldn't go out, she had no social life. Also he suffered with his teeth and gums, which caused him to have bad breath. Then he was in various hospitals towards the end and she had to visit before he died.
28. My 2 younger siblings, lived with them during this time, which very hard for them and her.
29. I was only 13 when **F** died, so this was very difficult to deal with. My schooling suffered and I had to take a lot of time off. I had a lot of flashbacks about him and disassociation. It was very difficult to deal with the stress. My memory of **F** is him being bloated, with yellow tubes coming out of him.
30. Even to this day there is a stigma associated with HCV, if I was to say to people that my dad died of HCV, people will still mention drugs or alcohol, so I don't tell them now. No one understands he got it during a transfusion.
31. **F** always worked in the motor trade. Eventually had his own business leasing cars. The business suffered as he worked for himself and when he was ill he couldn't work.
32. He had life insurance but they refused to pay out, apparently he was asked on one form about having a blood tests and he mistakenly missed it off. This made things very hard for **GRO-B** and the family. There was a mortgage on

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the house and finance on the business. She had to sell the business and the house.

33. The strange thing is my brother later brought the family house (not initially from **GRO-B**). It is very strange still going back to his old family house where I had my own bedroom.

34. My Grandmother (**F**'s mother) struggles still with his death.

Section 6: Treatment/Care/Support

35. No counselling or psychological support was made available to **F** or our family, this may have helped us to understand.

Section 7: Financial Support

36. **F** and **GRO-B** (they weren't married but I call her my Step-mother), did an application to the Skipton Fund while he was still alive, but this was refused due to lack of evidence of the transfusion apparently.

37. I understand that the inquiry has the Skipton Fund application directly from the records of the Fund.

38. I have been in contacted with the HCV Trust and the English Infected Blood Support Scheme. I need to fill in a form, they've given me info and advice on what and how to proceed.

Section 8: Other Issues

39. I haven't made this statement in relation to money. I would like an explanation of why this happened and there should be some 'ownership' by those responsible.

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Statement of Truth

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

Signed

GRO-B

Dated 19.12.22