



Witness Name **GRO-B**
 Statement **WITN7497001**
 Exhibits **Nil**
 Dated:

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

WRITTEN WITNESS STATEMENT OF **GRO-B**

I provide this statement in response to a request under Rule 9 of The Inquiry Rules 2006, dated 4 November 2022.

GRO-B will say as follows:-

Section 1 Introduction

1. My full name is **GRO-B** and I was born on **GRO-B** 1940 and I am 82. I have a daughter called **GRO-B** who is present with me today. I have a son who lives in Jamaica and three other children who live in the UK. My brother had a ruptured appendix due to this he had lost a lot of blood which involved him having a blood transfusion. The blood was infected with the HIV virus. He sadly passed away from Aids in the USA. My address is known to the Inquiry.
2. **GRO-B**
GRO-B When they were going to move I put in my redundancy notice and was made redundant then retired when I was in my 50s. This was not on medical grounds.
3. I intend to speak about how I became infected with hepatitis C (HCV) following a blood transfusion in childbirth in 1969. In particular how I came to

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be infected, the nature of this illness in so much as how it affected me, the treatment I received and its impact upon my life and my family.

4. I confirm that I am not currently legally represented and that I am happy for the Inquiry Team to assist me with my statement.
5. 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.
6. The inquiries criticisms procedure and the 'right of reply' has been explained to me.

Section 2 How Infected

7. I had had 4 previous children without any issues, but when I had my son in 1969 at GRO-B I had a haemorrhage and needed to have a blood transfusion. I think I was given 2 bags of blood.
8. The GRO-B closed a long while ago, this building has been converted into flats. My records would have gone to Hackney Hospital, Hackney Hospital closed and my records would have gone on to Homerton Hospital.
9. Around 2007 I had a routine blood test due to having blood pressure issues. The first test showed something unusual which they could not identify. My GP sent me back to have a second blood test. When the result came back it showed I had HCV. My doctor said "how did you get that", he then said "pray to God." I was referred to Whipps Cross Hospital for treatment.
10. Apart from the blood transfusion I had a GRO-B I have had no other transfusions, I have no tattoos, I had got my ears pierced as a teenager in a legitimate place and took no intravenous drugs. I therefore associate my blood transfusion as the cause of my HCV.

Section 3 Other Infections

11. So far as I am aware I have no other infections apart from HCV as a result of the transfusion I was given at this stage.

Section 4 Consent

12. I consented to have blood tests for HCV and it was explained why my blood was being tested.
13. I did not consent to a blood transfusion. After giving birth I remember the sheets feeling wet. I got out of bed and the patient next to me said that I was bleeding, it was like someone had turned on a tap. The patient next to my bed pressed her buzzer and the doctor rushed in. I was rushed to the operation theatre, so there was no time to sign a consent form.

Section 5 Impact

14. When I was around 35 or 40 my retina detached in my right eye and I had to have 4 operations. This led to me losing sight in my right eye. I had developed cirrhosis in my liver.
15. During 2008 whilst on my first treatment of Interferon and Ribavirin I could not eat and lost a lot of weight, my hair fell out and I was sick.
16. During 2015 when I was on my second treatment I also had side effects of nausea and I felt sick and vomited however I had less side effects with the second drug compared to the first one.
17. Despite my HCV being untraceable due to treatment, I still have cirrhosis of the liver and my daughter GRO-B says that my memory has worsened due to me taking medication to treat HCV. My daughter noticed every time I had to take strong medication for pain such as morphine due to the operations I had my memory was declining. My body has not been the same since.

18. I was ashamed and embarrassed to have had HCV which impacted my life. I went for acupuncture with my daughter. The therapist asked various questions, one of them was about HCV. My daughter said that I did have it but I no longer have it due to being successfully treated. I felt so embarrassed that I did not go back for further treatment. On another occasion I was having an operation on the bottom of my left foot. My daughter and my neighbour were with me. One of the doctors said "I see you had HCV", I was so ashamed I denied having HCV.
19. I have only told my children and cousin that I had HCV and I have had no issues with them knowing I had HCV. I kept it private from everyone else.
20. I felt I would stress my children out if I talked about my HCV and all the issues I was going through.
21. I was able to travel while I had HCV and it did not stop me from travelling to Jamaica. However whilst having treatment for HCV I was not able to travel due to me feeling so unwell.
22. I had already retired when I took the HCV treatment therefore it had no impact on my career however it has impacted the quality of my life as I have to be monitored for cirrhosis of the liver which I hope will not worsen.

Section 6 Treatment / Care / Support

23. Following my diagnosis of HCV in 2007 I had a liver biopsy at Whipps Cross Hospital. They provided no explanation of what HCV was, they did not provide me with leaflets and they did not explain how I should be careful around other people. The hospital also did not tell me to inform my dentist that I had HCV.
24. In 2008 I was treated at Whipps Cross Hospital with Ribavirin and Pegylated Interferon which required me to take an injection and also tablets. I took the treatment for 6 to 9 months however it did not work and I was told by the

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Whipps Cross Hospital clinic that my liver was getting infected and I had cirrhosis.

25. Later in 2015 I had another scan at Whipps Cross hospital and I was told that there was a new drug however not everyone could be on it due to its expense. I was put on it due to my liver being infected and told it would get rid of my HCV. During the treatment I visited the hospital every 2 weeks then when I was told the treatment was working I visited the hospital every 4 weeks. I was treated with Viekirax, Exviera and Ribavirin.
26. About 3 years after I was first diagnosed with HCV and had two different treatments, my HCV was untraceable. I now visit Whipps Cross Hospital for a check-up every 6 months where I have a scan and a blood test then I am told that my liver has not got any worse when they call me about my results. Before Covid 19 I used to attend Whipps Cross Hospital to get my results but now they phone me.
27. When I go to Whipps Cross Hospital I am treated with respect however I was never offered counselling when I was diagnosed with HCV and I should have been offered counselling to help support what I was going through.
28. Whipps Cross Hospital does the best they can for me and I am not on drugs for the cirrhosis. However I was never informed by the hospital about the Hepatitis C Trust, England Infected Blood Support Scheme or the Skipton Fund. My daughter GRO-B requested my medical records from Homerton Hospital. Their response was that their retention for mother and child is 25 years, so they have no records of me having a blood transfusion in 1969.
29. I have applied to my GP for my medical records and I am waiting to find out whether they hold them or not.

Section 7 Financial Assistance

30. [GRO-B] found out that I could make a claim for compensation from LBC Radio station. They did not say the amount people could make a claim for. My daughter [GRO-B] contacted the Hepatitis C Trust and they said that I was eligible to make a claim from the English Infected Blood Support Scheme. I have made a claim and the application form is currently with my Doctor for him to answer the relevant questions that pertain to him.

31. I never received support from the Skipton Fund or the MacFarlane Trust as I was unaware they existed.

Section 8 Other Issues

32. My daughter [GRO-B] says the amount of people who got damaged by the NHS contaminated blood scandal is horrendous.

Statement Of Truth

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

Signed:

[GRO-B] _____

Dated:

~~9/10/2023~~ 9/11/20/2023
9/11/2023