

Witness Name: GRO-B

Statement No: WITN7508001

Exhibits: WITN7508002-9

Dated: November 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 1986, and I live at GRO-B I live with my Dad, GRO-B and step Mum, Mrs GRO-B
2. My Dad was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease about five years ago and cannot remember being married to my Mum GRO-B: M anymore.
3. I have Asperger's Syndrome, ADHD and a learning disability and I take Ritalin to help me. See **Exhibit WITN7508002**.
4. My late adopted mother (who I will refer to as 'Mum'), M (born on GRO-B 1956) was infected with Hepatitis C Virus (HCV). She died on

**GRO-B** 1993. Her cause of death was listed as Fulminant Hepatic Necrosis, see **Exhibit WITN7508003**.

5. This witness statement has been written without the benefit of access to my late adopted mother's medical records.

## **Section 2. How Affected**

6. I know from my adoption papers that my Mum became ill when she was 24, in 1980. Some months later, she was diagnosed with Hepatitis. At first, she was treated with steroids and other tablets but after a few months she experienced continual bleeding. In 1984 she had to go to hospital to have a liver by-pass and to have her spleen removed. She was strongly advised not to try to get pregnant which was why they wanted to adopt me, see **Exhibit WITN7508004**.

7. I do not know how my Mum was infected with Hepatitis. However, Dr **GRO-B** and Dr **GRO-B** from **GRO-B** Medical Practice informed us that she contracted Hepatitis as a direct result of infected blood products. I believe that she received the contaminated product at City Hospital in Birmingham.

8. I remember that my Nan used to say that 'the hospital killed her'. I am unable to ask her or my Dad what she meant by this as my Dad's dementia means that he cannot remember anything about what happened to my Mum.

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

9. I do not know if my Mum received any other infections.

### **Section 4. Consent**

10. I do not know if my Mum was treated or tested without her consent.

### **Section 5. Impact**

11. When I think back to the time when my Mum was unwell, it is all a bit of a blur. I was only six when my Mum died so it is difficult for me to remember. My Autism also makes it hard for me to articulate my feelings.

12. My Mum's Hepatitis meant that she was advised not to have her own children which was very distressing for her to come to terms with. Not only this but her illness meant that they had been rejected previously by an adoption agency, GRO-B without any visit, see **Exhibit WITN7508005**. Thus, my Mum's Hepatitis meant that she initially struggled to become a mother.

13. Before my Mum became unwell, she used to be very active. She attended a weekly keep fit class and loved swimming in the summer with my Dad, see **Exhibit WITN7508006**. She also enjoyed drives in the country and visiting friends and relatives. But as her illness progressed, this part of her life diminished.

14. The biggest strain on my parents' marriage was Mum's illness and the prospect of childlessness. However, they strengthened and supported each other through difficult times and stuck by the philosophy of 'what will be will be', see **Exhibit WITN7508006**. I am very upset for my Dad as he lost his 'rock'.

15. I refer to my friend **GRO-B** who says that it is impossible to discern how my Mum's death impacted me due to my complex diagnoses and inability to articulate my feelings, see **Exhibit WITN7508007**. My Educational Statement notes that the emotional distress of Mum's death meant that I had several incidents of wetting and soiling myself in the year that she died, see **Exhibit WITN7508008**. The death of my Mum was destabilising for me as a child and my schoolteachers felt it had caused me a lot of emotional upheaval, see **Exhibit WITN7508009**.

16. I still miss my Mum and I visit her grave every year with flowers. I tell her what I am doing with my life and I hope that she is proud of me. I felt very sad for my Nan as I know she missed my Mum terribly. I don't think my Nan ever got over Mum's death, even though she lived to be nearly 100.

17. In 1993 Mum used to visit school regularly to support me in class. I lost this educational support when she died and had to be referred to the Psychological Service for additional academic and emotional support (**Exhibit WITN7508008**). As my friend **GRO-B** notes in her statement, Mum's intervention in my life was very important for me growing up with complex needs and losing her support was detrimental for me (**Exhibit WITN7508007**).

18. Mum's death also caused a financial strain on the family. My Mum used to handle the finances, see **Exhibit WITN7508009**, so after she died my Dad had to take on this role. Dad also lost his business as he had to give up work to look after me.

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

19. When Mum was first unwell, she was treated with steroids and other tablets, see **Exhibit WITN7508004**. I am unaware of any counselling which she may have received.

20. I was referred for bereavement counselling, but these sessions gave me nightmares and it was decided that they should be stopped.

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

21. We have never received any financial assistance. I think my Dad and my Nan were so busy looking after me that they just never got around to it. However, I do remember my Nan telling me when I was a bit older that the Doctors had told her that she should, but she never did.

#### **Section 8. Other Issues**

22. I do not have any other issues that I would like to raise.

**Anonymity, disclosure and redaction**

23. I wish to apply for anonymity

**Statement of Truth**

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

Signed.....

GRO-B

Dated.....

29.11.22