

ANONYMOUS

Witness Name: **GRO-B**

Statement No. WITN7528001

Dated: 29th November 2022

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF **GRO-B**

I provide this statement in response to a request under Rule 9 of the Inquiry Rules 2006 dated 30th November 2022. I adopt the paragraph numbering in the Rule 9 request for ease of reference.

I, **GRO-B** will say as follows:-

1. Introduction

1. My name is **GRO-B**. My date of birth is **GRO-B** **GRO-B** and my address is known to the Inquiry.

2. I am a **GRO-B** and have **GRO-B** children. I work as a self-employed **GRO-B**

3. I make this statement on behalf of my father, **GRO-B:F** who became infected with hepatitis and died on the **GRO-B** through liver failure.

2. How Affected

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1. My dad was the father of [GRO-B] children and an [GRO-B] by trade. He was the pillar of our family. He was the one to go to, to fix everything. He also had a very creative side to his personality and loved art and singing.
2. My dad was a self-taught artist and would often teach us as children how to paint. He enjoyed painting in his garage, it was his way of relaxing.
3. Dad would show his creative side by making toys at Christmas. I recall that he made a dolls house and a toy garage amongst other things.
4. One Christmas, Dad was asked to make a 'Christmas creation' for a window display at a local shop. I recall that he made a lovely creation with working elves. He was clever in that way.
5. Dad loved to sing and was always singing as he went about his business. He had a good voice, not unlike Mario Lanza. On one occasion he appeared on the programme [GRO-B] The family as a whole, loved to sing.
6. I had a very close relationship with Dad. We were both creative and had a mutual interest in making things and taking things apart to repair them or sometimes just to see how they worked. We spent many hours together. Sometimes at night when neither of us could sleep Dad would teach me how to do things like make fishing weights or mend a broken radio.
7. When Dad was in his [GRO-B] I remember that he was rushed into the [GRO-B] Hospital with a burst appendix. As the appendix had burst, Dad had to undergo an operation to clean his organs and during that operation, he had a blood transfusion. I recall that he was ill for quite some time after this operation.

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8. A few months after the appendix operation, Dad seemed to develop a problem which caused him to constantly burp. He underwent many tests over many months to find out what was causing this. Eventually it was discovered that he had a problem with his aorta function. This resulted in him having to undergo further surgery. I understand this was a massive operation and that Dad received further transfusion(s) on this occasion.
9. The wound left by the appendix operation caused Dad some problems as it would not heal properly. His doctors later found that a surgical wire had been left inside him and had to be removed. Dad then had to undergo yet another surgery to remove the wire and the abscess and infection caused by this.
10. I cannot remember around what date, but sometime later (a couple of years) Dad began to vomit blood and had to undergo another operation for bands to be tied to his oesophagus to stop him coughing up blood.
11. A couple of years after that, Dad became unwell again. His GP, Dr. GRO-B at the GRO-B Surgery, GRO-B carried out blood tests and subsequently referred Dad to the GRO-B Hospital. At the GRO-B Hospital more tests were carried out and Dad was informed by his doctors that he had a virus in his blood which had caused him to be infected with hepatitis.
12. Dad wasn't informed at this stage that the hepatitis was attacking his liver and was ignorant to this fact. I'm unsure as to whether he was told what type of hepatitis.
13. I am unable to be specific on dates as we do not have access to my dad's medical records. My solicitors Watkins & Gunn made a recent request for the records on our behalf but the hospital has since confirmed that the records have been destroyed.

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14. When Dad came out of hospital and knew of his diagnosis, he was a changed man. Whereas before he was a caring, loving man who loved to cuddle his children, he now became distant from us.

15. Dad explained to Mum and the family that he had some form of AIDS and that we could no longer kiss, cuddle or touch him. I know from that date on, sadly Mum and Dad did not have intimate relations.

16. I believe that there was a distinct lack of understanding on Dad's part about his diagnosis and that this should have been clearly explained to him by the doctors at the GRO-B Hospital.

17. I don't know what information or advice was given to my Dad by the doctors about the risks of being exposed to infection but I know that my Dad would have trusted his doctors to give him the correct information and would have abided by whatever they told him.

18. My Dad also suffered with diabetes and my sister GRO-B would often help him with his injections. I remember on one occasion when GRO-B was helping him, she pricked her finger. Dad was petrified that he might have infected GRO-B and insisted that she get herself tested.

19. I don't know what information was provided to my dad about his infection and who provided that information, but I know that my dad talked a lot to his GP, Dr GRO-B at the GRO-B Surgery. He is retired now but he was an amazing doctor and I know that Dad thought a lot of him and trusted him.

20. I consider that information should have been provided to my dad about his infection as the doctors had the facilities to check these things. I believe that due diligence should be observed as mistakes were made and someone has to account for these.

3. Other Infections

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1. I am not aware that my dad contracted any other infection apart from hepatitis as a result of being given infected blood.

4. Consent

1. I am unable to comment on whether my dad was treated without his knowledge, consent or without being given adequate or full information or for research purposes.

5. Impact

1. I believe that my dad's diagnosis of hepatitis affected his mental health massively. It was as though he suddenly realised that 'his number was up'. It was so unfair for a man who loved his wife and family deeply to have to live a life without being able to show his affection by hugging, kissing and touching them and being intimate with his wife. Instead, he was a dad who had to keep his distance from his family. On reflection, I recall that he would stand away from us and place himself in the corner of the room.
2. As I have already explained earlier in my statement, he became a changed man, frustrated by not being able to do the things he used to do when he was well such as his beloved painting. He socialised on very few occasions, preferring to spend time at home.
3. As a consequence of the hepatitis infection my dad's liver failed. I asked the doctors whether there was a chance that he could have a liver transplant, but I was told that this was not possible as he was too ill by this time.
4. To my knowledge, at no time did Dad ever receive treatment for the hepatitis infection. We tried as a family to help him. He didn't want to die. He was only GRO-84 years old.

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5. Whether there are any treatments which I consider ought to have been made available to my dad are concerned, I can only say that as a lay person and not having the knowledge to maybe suggest or ask for particular treatments I believe that the medical professionals should have been able to diagnose my dad's hepatitis sooner and provide him with treatment to kill the infection.
6. I know that my father would have informed his dentist about his hepatitis infection, but I am not aware of whether this affected him receiving treatment.
7. My dad's hepatitis infection made an impact on my parents' private life and their marriage in that once my dad was informed of his diagnosis, he would not let anyone, including my mother touch him. From that time, sadly, they did not kiss, hug or have intimate relations.
8. My sister GRO-B lived with them at the time of my dad's diagnosis, and she witnessed the anger and frustration of my dad when he was unable to do the things he used to do.
9. We were all worried about him as he wasn't himself anymore. He would have some good days but also bad days and frequent depressed days. I was living away from home at this time but would visit Mum and Dad often.
10. I miss my dad every day and I get upset when I think of what he went through and why he died so young. He was an amazing, talented person.
11. It saddens me that my dad is not there for his grandchildren. He would have been such an amazing influence on them. We talk about him often to keep his name alive, and Mum keeps a framed picture of him in her lounge where his grandchildren can see him. They sometimes

bring gifts and place them in front of the picture. He is still very much with us.

12. I think Dad would be really proud of his family, and of me becoming an **GRO-B** and my sister also taking up art. I think he would also be proud of our children who are all making their way in the world and becoming successful in their own lives.

13. I worry about my mum since Dad passed away. She now suffers with depression and anxiety. I feel that she has given up on life. Dad has left a very big hole in her life as well as ours. She now lives in sheltered housing after moving out of the family home and receives assistance from carers four times a day. She cannot walk and has to use a wheelchair to get around. I believe that Mum would not have gone downhill so fast if Dad was still around. They would have still been quite active.

14. I don't believe that Dad experienced any stigma relating to his infection with hepatitis. He made a point of telling family and friends.

6. **Treatment/Care/Support**

1. I believe that when my dad was diagnosed with hepatitis, he should have received more care and support from medical staff. I do not believe that he was given sufficient information about hepatitis and the risks of infection. The only person that appeared to support my dad, was his GP, Dr **GRO-B** who would have regular chats with Dad.

2. To my knowledge, at no time was Dad offered counselling or psychological support and neither were I nor any other members of our family. The only people that Dad spoke to about his diagnosis were Dr. **GRO-B** (GP) and Dr. **GRO-B** his Consultant at the **GRO-B** **GRO-B** Hospital.

7. **Financial Assistance**

1. My dad did not receive any financial assistance from any Trusts or Funds as he was never made aware that he could apply for financial assistance. It was only after his death that my mum found out that she could apply for this after hearing about it on the TV.
2. As I now have Power of Attorney for Mum, I am now assisting her with the application process to EIBSS.

8. **Other Issues**

1. In this section, I would just like the Inquiry to know how much I miss my dad.
2. I hope the Inquiry will assist in sorting something out for the future of others and ensure that things are put in place so that other people can once again, have confidence in the NHS.
3. I hope that going forward, the NHS will take more care with what they are doing so as to avoid making further 'big' mistakes.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed

GRO-B

Dated

29/11/2022

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