

ANONYMOUS

Witness Name: **GRO-B**

Statement No: WITN7530001

Dated: 9th December 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** and my address is known to the Inquiry.
2. I am currently **GRO-B** and have **GRO-B** children, **GRO-B** and **GRO-B** I used to work as an **GRO-B** in a local **GRO-B** but now **GRO-B** and **GRO-B** full time.
3. I intend to discuss my father, **GRO-B: F** and his infection with hepatitis C, and how it has impacted on me and our family before and after he died. His death certificate records that he died of cirrhosis of the liver (non-alcohol related) and ischemic heart failure on the **GRO-B**

2. How Infected

1. My dad was the father of [GRO-B] children [GRO-B] is (known as [GRO-B]) who is the eldest aged [GRO-B] [GRO-B] who is [GRO-B] [GRO-B] who is [GRO-B] [GRO-B] who is [GRO-B] and myself at [GRO-B]. We all grew up in the same house together, at [GRO-B] [GRO-B] which up until two years ago, is where my mum still lived. If my dad was alive today, he would have had thirteen grandchildren and twelve great grandchildren.

2. My dad was an [GRO-B] and later became a [GRO-B] at the local [GRO-B] [GRO-B]. He was very proud of working at the only [GRO-B] in [GRO-B] and took his job very seriously. When the [GRO-B] closed in the mid to late [GRO-B] my father stayed on for a short while to oversee the work needed for the [GRO-B] to be safely closed without any environmental impact and was part of the team who made the [GRO-B] safe before it was capped. I believe that he received a small amount of redundancy payment which allowed my parents to purchase the family home.

3. The closure of the [GRO-B] had a big impact on my dad, and he used his many creative talents to provide a stable income for his family. He had a number of jobs over the next few years, ranging from having a [GRO-B] to setting up a [GRO-B]. He worked from a little unit on the [GRO-B] [GRO-B].

4. I cannot be precise, as I was a child at the time, but I have stated what I believe to be true and have since corroborated my recollection with my mum and my siblings.

5. It was in the mid [GRO-B] that my dad was admitted to the then [GRO-B] Hospital in [GRO-B] with a burst appendix. I am not sure what the operation involved, but I believe he was given a blood transfusion.

6. When he came out of hospital, he just wasn't himself, but we all put it down to his operation. I recall him telling me that when he was given the blood, he felt that his body was tingling all over and he knew that something wasn't right.

ANONYMOUS

7. I cannot recall how long it would have been after the appendix operation, but my dad then had a massive heart attack. I am not 100% sure but I believe there was mention of a triple bypass operation. I am unable to confirm the date of this however, as the family do not have access to my dad's medical records. My solicitors Watkins & Gunn have now requested these on our behalf.
8. I believe that he would have also been given a further blood transfusion on this occasion, as I would be surprised if that wasn't the case, for such a big, complicated and dangerous procedure.
9. As my dad was unable to work, he refused to claim any benefits, he said he was too proud to take any money from the State. He even re-mortgaged our home to pay suppliers and the wages for a relative who worked for him at the time. As a result of a very limited income, my mum had to work as a GRO-B at the local GRO-B

3. Other Infections.

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

4. Consent

1. I do not have any knowledge as to whether my dad was treated or tested without his knowledge, consent without being given adequate or full information or for research.

5. Impact

1. When my dad was eventually discharged from hospital after his heart operation, he was never the same again. There always seemed to be

ANONYMOUS

something wrong with him. He was constantly back and forth his doctor. He had a close relationship with his GP, Dr **GRO-B** at the **GRO-B** in **GRO-B** who I believe he confided in.

2. My dad was extremely talented in many areas, he was a self-taught **GRO-B**. He enjoyed fishing and was a great singer with a wonderful voice. My overriding memory of him was that he was always fixing things in the garage. Every time he was in the garage I was like his shadow, always there at his side. He could never sit still. He taught me, as he did with my other siblings, how to paint, fix radios and make fishing weights. If it could be taken apart, my dad could fix it. He would spend hours until he either repaired the item or if it was unrepairable, he would make something out of the spare parts. He even made a **GRO-B** for a local shop, with flashing lights and moving **GRO-B** objects.
3. I can recall my dad, myself and my mum would always dress up early each Christmas day, my dad would be Santa, and my mum and I would be the elves. We would drive around to all the members of our family, who by that time, had moved out and started families of their own and deliver their presents, stopping for a quick cup of tea and a mince pie before moving on. It was such a lovely memorable childhood filled with so many cherished memories of my dad.
4. My dad had a passion for fishing and although still very young, I would sit all night with him and his friends at the beach either crabbing or fishing. He used to wrap me up in a warm blanket and give me hot drinks.
5. I recall my parents went to **GRO-B** one year and stayed with a relative who owned a place over there. They both loved it so much that once they retired, they planned to move to a nice warm sunny place to enjoy their later years. My dad even took up **GRO-B** lessons. This dream was not only taken away from my dad but from all of us, especially my mum. She worked hard all her life, raised **GRO-B** children had to look after my dad and suffered herself with serious health conditions. A new life in **GRO-B** would have been perfect for them.

ANONYMOUS

6. Over the next couple of years my dad was diagnosed with diabetes and had to self-inject with insulin. I learnt how to do this and would regularly inject my dad as he preferred someone else to do it. I recall that one day, I pricked my finger. My dad got really scared, he told me to wash it and put antiseptic on it quickly. I played it down, but I hadn't seen him panic like this before.
7. My dad was a real "cuddler", but he started to become a bit distant and didn't like touching or being touched by anyone, which really hurt me as it was so out of character for him.
8. I don't know how it came about, but I recall a standing joke amongst the family that my dad had been prescribed a "pump" to help with his intimacy with Mum. Even though my dad was quite open about it, thinking back, it must have been difficult for them.
9. As a family we knew that something was wrong, and in the end, we confronted Dad with it. He reluctantly told us that he was given bad blood. He must have had a conversation with Dr **GRO-B** or the hospital about it to have been given this diagnosis. When probed, he didn't elaborate on this.
10. At that time there was a media campaign on the AIDS virus and Dad had put himself as being in that bracket and being labelled as someone who had been promiscuous in sexual relations or drug abuse. I don't believe he was given any psychological support on how to manage his condition.
11. I used to take my dad to the hospital and can recall seeing that his file had a large yellow sticker on the front of his records. It seemed that he was treated differently by the nursing and medical staff. At the time, I felt as though we were second class citizens. They appeared a bit stand offish. What I have since learned from the Infected Blood Inquiry, is that the yellow sticker was a marker for "caution".
12. When growing up we would all go to **GRO-B** for our summer holidays, but when my dad's health deteriorated that stopped. It was as though everything we did in the past just faded away. As he knew that he wasn't well, he just gradually gave up on doing the things he was so passionate about. Towards

ANONYMOUS

the last few years of his life, he rarely went out, which was heart breaking to witness. He basically gave up and his depression got worse.

13. During the time my dad was ill, I married and moved out, but I came back to look after my dad because my mum was diagnosed with cancer. She put her treatment on hold to care for my dad and subsequently neglected her own health.

14. My mum is very frail and has recently moved into a sheltered housing flat complex. She must have a carer as she has very limited mobility and is suffering with cancer of the spine.

15. I recall that just before my dad died, he had to sleep in the living room. He would have frequent visits from Dr **GRO-B** who would administer Morphine to him for the pain. Every morning my mum would come down and look in his room to see if he was still alive. Once she had checked on him, she would say to me "he's still with us".

16. On the day he died, I slept all night in the same bed as him until the next day. I promised him that he wouldn't be alone when he died. I know my brother **GRO-B** and sister **GRO-B** went to the undertakers to be with him until he was embalmed and his body was then brought home where he lay, before being buried.

17. I got married in **GRO-B** and have a **GRO-B** and a **GRO-B**. However, I recently separated from my husband, having been in an **GRO-B** relationship for many years.

18. My husband would help me to physically move my dad as he was strong. The only reason I didn't leave my husband after my dad died was because I felt so much guilt that my husband had helped me a lot with my dad. I felt as though I was being disrespectful to the memory of my dad's life to leave him, **GRO-B**

GRO-B

GRO-B

ANONYMOUS

19. My **GRO-B** was born just before Dad died. I recall that I took him to see my dad but when I tried to lay my **GRO-B** on his chest, my dad's reaction was quite hostile. He said something like "get him off me, I have bad blood". This will stay with me for the rest of my life as my dad was the most caring gentle person you could ever meet and as a result of this horrible infection he changed completely.
20. Not only have I been robbed of a wonderful dad, so have my **GRO-B** and **GRO-B**. My children have been robbed of a wonderful grandfather and my mum has been massively impacted too.
21. The year my dad died I graduated as a **GRO-B** and although my wonderful mum was at my graduation and in the photographs, there was a void. My dad would have been so proud of me.
22. I asked for a Hepatitis test 10 years ago which thankfully came back negative, but I have a number of medical issues and I am still having **GRO-B** problems where the diagnosis is unknown. Now that we are aware of the cover up and systematic failures within the medical profession around contaminated blood and the way they treated my dad, I am now sceptical of my own medical condition.
23. As a family we have tried many times to obtain medical records for my father but the reply we always get back, is that there are none and they have been destroyed. My Solicitors Watkins & Gunn are making attempts to see if any can be found.
24. As I was the youngest in the family, my memories of my dad's medical conditions including hospital and GP visits are extremely vague, but I have tried to give as best an account of my own personal memories.

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 he was given sufficient information about Hepatitis and the risk of infection.

7. Financial Assistance

1. My dad did not receive any financial assistance from any of the Trusts or Funds as he was never made aware that he could apply for any financial assistance.

8. Other Issues

1. My biggest concern is how long this has gone on for and is still going on. As a family, we deserve answers for what has happened to my dad, and we deserve justice for what he and our family were put through.

ANONYMOUS

Statement of Truth

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

Signed.

GRO-B

Dated 17/11/2022