

# ANONYMOUS

Witness Name: **GRO-B**

Statement No.: WITN7541001

Exhibits: Nil

Dated: 30 November 2022

## 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 5 November 2018.

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

### Section 1: Introduction

1. My name is **GRO-B** My date of birth is **GRO-B**, and my address is **GRO-B** In this statement I intend to speak about my infection with Hepatitis C. In particular, the nature of my illness, how the illness affected me, the treatment received and the impact it had on me.

**Section 2: How Infected**

2. I underwent various surgeries between the ages 10 and 12 that required general anaesthetic. I had an appendectomy, surgery for an undescended testicle and surgery for removal of a growth on my testicle. When I was 16, I underwent growth hormone treatment that required fully transfusing my blood, adding growth hormones and then transfusing the blood back into my body. I am not sure whether it was an autologous transfusion, meaning that the transfused blood was my own, or whether it was an allogeneic transfusion, meaning that it was other people's blood that was transfused into my body. I was aged 16 when this happened. All of these surgeries were performed at the GRO-B GRO-B in Edinburgh.
3. I do not know what information was provided to myself or my parents prior to these surgeries. I do not know whether risks were discussed. My parents recall the surgeries occurring but do not recall specific details. I do not know whether my parents were informed of the risks of blood transfusions or advised that I had been given one at the time. My medical records pertaining to these surgeries have been destroyed.
4. I had the hormonal therapy because my mother was concerned that I was not growing at the correct rate for my age. I understand from my medical records that this was around July 1989. I understand that there must have been some discussion about the risks of this treatment, but I do not believe that this was laid out clearly. I saw other children who had undergone the same treatment on the television in the mid-1990s, and they had lost their hair and were dying.
5. I discovered my infection in 2015 when I was in the hospital after an accident. I fell off a building in London and broke a lot of bones. I had titanium put in my spine, foot, and pelvis. I was eventually put into a medically induced coma because I had respiratory failure after surgeries. This was because of the delayed impact of the

## ANONYMOUS

fall. They must have tested me for everything at this stage, and it was discovered that I had Hepatitis C.

6. I was diagnosed at the Royal London Hospital in Whitechapel. I was furious because I knew that I could not have contracted Hepatitis C in any way other than through a blood transfusion. A doctor in the hospital advised me of my infection. I do not believe that adequate information was provided, I did not find out any more information about it until after I had recovered from my fall. I recall being asked whether I took drugs and I explained that I was terrified of needles and had never taken intravenous drugs. I was then asked about my sex-life. I felt like the hospital was trying to blame something I had done to contract the disease.
7. I sought more information when I was back home in GRO-B. I visited the GRO-B in GRO-B. I was put on an experimental treatment and met with a blood support worker. I understand that the treatment that I was on caused the death of a few people. Of 20 people that I knew to be on treatment, I was the only one to stay out of the hospital. I was initially told that there were no side effects, but my blood support worker corrected this. He was very unhappy that I had been told there were no side effects. My blood support worker helped me through treatment. The treatment that I was on was called Zepatier and I took this for 12 weeks.
8. I do believe that the information about my infection could have been provided sooner. I wanted to get rid of the Hepatitis C, so I approached my GP once I had recovered from my fall. My GP did not approach me.
9. I do not think that I was made aware of the risks of cross-infection at the time of my diagnosis. My sister has a friend who is a top ICU nurse and she informed me of these risks.

**Section 3: Other Infections**

10. I do not believe that I have received any infections other than Hepatitis C as a result of being given infected blood.

**Section 4: Other Infections**

11. I do not believe that I have been tested without my knowledge, without my consent, or without being given adequate or full information, with the exception of my initial Hepatitis C test when I was diagnosed.

12. I do not believe that I have been treated without my knowledge, without my consent or without being given adequate or full information.

13. I do not believe that I have been treated or tested for the purposes of research.

**Section 5: Impact**

14. I was mentally impacted by having Hepatitis C, particularly around the diagnosis. I was furious. I was very concerned that I would die younger and if I had not been able to be cured of my Hepatitis C, I believe that I would have tried to commit suicide.

15. I was not physically impacted by having Hepatitis C. I have a larger than usual liver that was previously scarred, but the scarring is now gone. Most of my physical impacts were caused by the treatment.

16. I was not advised of how bad an effect the treatment for the Hepatitis C treatment could have on me. It was like being on Chemotherapy. I do appreciate that the treatment did kill the Hepatitis C, but it also nearly killed me, and did kill a few others. I am not sure whether information about my treatment was being used for research purposes. I do, however, understand that the treatment was very new at the time. I was also advised that a week of this treatment cost £40,000.

## ANONYMOUS

17. The treatment made me sick; I could not eat, sleep, or get out of bed. It was horrific. I found it very difficult to function while I was on treatment. My body weight reduced to 6 stone. Prior to this, I weighed 11 stone. I could not function or go out. I was significantly depressed, and I was suicidal at times. I knew that I had to keep going with the treatment, because I had to cure my infection, but I was not in a good state at all. I recall thinking that it would be easier to kill myself than to continue with this treatment.
18. I did not face any obstacles when accessing treatment for my Hepatitis C, however, there was a delay in a decision being made about which treatment I would be using. I was eventually prescribed Zepatier.
19. I am unsure whether there were other treatments that ought to have been made available to me but were not. I believe that the Doctor discussed a number of different treatments with me and then suggested that I took Zepatier. The course of treatment was successful, but the side effects were severe.
20. I believe that my infection has had an impact on my medical and dental care. I had to tell every medical professional that I had Hepatitis C, and I believe that I was treated differently because of it. In general, I felt that they were a lot more cautious around me than they had been previously. One of my dentists treated me badly because he thought that I was a drug addict due to my list of medication.
21. My private life was impacted because of my infection because I couldn't have a relationship of any kind. My family were concerned about the Hepatitis C killing me, and I was unable to have any real social life as I was worried that people may find out that I had Hepatitis C. Only my close family knew about my infection in the first instance, but after I started treatment, I did also tell some close friends.
22. I did not suffer significantly from the stigma surrounding Hepatitis C. I kept my infection to myself, with the exception of those mentioned above.

## ANONYMOUS

23. My family were very concerned that I would die from Hepatitis C. Mainly, I understand, because it is a condition that impacts your liver and I enjoy drinking beer.

24. I was paranoid that people would find out about my infection, and I was unable to have a relationship of any kind.

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

25. I have not been offered counselling or psychological care or support due to becoming infected with Hepatitis C, although I was supported by my blood support worker throughout my treatment.

### **Section 7: Financial Assistance**

26. I have never received financial assistance as a result of becoming infected with Hepatitis C, although I have now applied for the Scottish Infected Blood Support Scheme.

### **Section 8: Other Issues**

27. I wish to remain anonymous throughout this Inquiry.

# ANONYMOUS

## Statement of Truth

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

Signed

\_\_\_\_\_  
**GRO-B**\_\_\_\_\_

Dated

\_\_\_\_\_