

# ANONYMOUS

Witness Name:

GRO-B

Statement No: WITN7549001

Exhibits:0

Dated: December 2022

## INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF

GRO-B

I, GRO-B will say as follows: -

### Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is GRO-B I was born on GRO-B I live at GRO-B  
GRO-B
2. My occupation is GRO-B
3. I have been married to GRO-B years. My son GRO-B  
GRO-B is aged GRO-B having been born in GRO-B Our daughter, GRO-B was born  
on GRO-B and died on GRO-B aged GRO-B and GRO-B  
Our GRO-B are now aged GRO-B having been born in GRO-B
4. I make this statement in connection with our daughter, D who  
was born on GRO-B and died aged GRO-B on GRO-B  
GRO-B having contracted Hepatitis C Virus (HCV/Hep C) via a

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contaminated blood transfusion during [GRO-B]  
[GRO-B]

5. My husband has also provided a witness statement to the Inquiry under [GRO-B]
6. This witness statement has been prepared without the benefit of access to my daughter's full medical records.

## Section 2. How Affected

7. [GRO-B] She was in ITU for some time then sent home fit and well. We returned to [GRO-B] I believe [GRO-B] [GRO-B] to be told she needed a [GRO-B] We were once again discharged to [GRO-B]  
[GRO-B]
8. [D] was given Hep C contaminated blood, whilst receiving a [GRO-B] on [GRO-B] at the age of [GRO-B]  
[GRO-B] We were unaware that [D] had been given contaminated blood at the [GRO-B]
9. I am not sure when; it may have been up to 6 months or a year later, [GRO-B]  
[GRO-B] informed me that [D] had been given Hep C from contaminated blood. She was very upset as were we (my husband and myself). Moreover, I do believe that [GRO-B] told me as soon as she was aware.
10. We were told that we would need to be very careful that [D] did not infect anyone, that she couldn't share drinks, food etc and that this would have implications when she was older and in a relationship. Dr [GRO-B]

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GRO-B told me that they would continue to monitor D throughout her life, and that the infection would affect her liver.

11. No risk was explained to us about blood given to our daughter; we were unaware of any risk of infection regarding blood products.

12. D was full of character and, in general, a happy child; we were and are a very close family. However, at that time GRO-B HIV was prevalent and as a couple we were terrified that others might find out and judge her and that she would be judged through ignorance of Hep C and be excluded by her peers. This put an enormous strain on us and on our marriage.

13. Due to this fact, my husband and I made the decision not to tell our daughter about the Hep C until we felt it was age appropriate as she had enough to deal with already and was desperate to be like the others. Unfortunately, before one of her GRO-B we were asked to see the dentist as her GRO-B

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The dentist proceeded to ask me out loud how long she had had the Hepatitis C for? I was mortified as our daughter heard this and on the way home, I had to explain things to her. This obviously came as a shock to her; she was older than her years in maturity but the fact that she heard it in this way broke my heart. I cried for a week and was extremely upset for some time as we needed to explain that she needed to keep this to herself; it was also made more traumatic as she died 1 month later so in my view, she never needed to know especially in that way from a dentist who possessed zero empathy.

14. Times were different in GRO-B we didn't feel we could question anything as we implicitly trusted Dr GRO-B and the staff that cared for our daughter. We felt that it was not them who had left us down; they had given our daughter GRO-B. Conversely, the blood service and the powers that be were at fault. They had decided the blood did not need to be tested or gave permission

for it to be brought in from other countries and they were to blame for giving our daughter a death sentence.

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

15. I am unaware as to whether  was infected with any other viruses following receipt of the contaminated blood transfusion.

### **Section 4. Consent**

16.  was tested for HCV without our knowledge or consent. We were not provided with any information regarding the fact that testing had even been carried out.

### **Section 5. Impact of the Infection**

17. When our daughter found out from the dentist about the Hep c which forced me to explain what had happened to her, she was extremely upset. This news made her different from others and she was terrified they would find out so we made a pledge not to tell anyone and that we would manage it privately as a family.
18. During her life she had all sorts of infections and nearly died a few times. It is not known by us whether the Hep C was a precursor to how bad these infections were which could have affected the course of her recovery. She had dental issues, sweet and musty breath, dry skin and nail issues. We believe she had circulation issues as her hands and feet were always cold and she bruised easily.
19. We were unaware of any treatment she was given for the Hep C, and we were unaware that any treatment even existed.
20. The impact of HCV on our daughter's life was enormous to us as parents, as we felt that we had to hide her condition and therefore to ensure that we

protected others we told them that they had to protect [D] from infection. Therefore, if [D] was at school or at a social event when she was a bit older, we told others that if she cut herself, they must wear gloves to protect [D] from infection and to inform us immediately so we could assist them. This was a constant worry!

21. Once our daughter found out about this condition it affected her in that she felt different from others and worried that they would find out and that she would lose friends.

22. We tried to have as normal a life as possible; we had accepted the [GRO-B] [GRO-B] and [D] was doing well regarding her [GRO-B] apart from infections and illness in between the good parts. She needed very little [GRO-B] [GRO-B] as the [GRO-B] We believe the Hep C gave her complications with infections in the fact that she was unable to fight against them as well as she may have able to if she had not had Hep C.

23. In [GRO-B] I had a breakdown in which I became very ill and needed to go to counselling for 10 months, initially it was thought this was because the death of my [GRO-B] but in fact instead of an initial 6 weeks of counselling I needed 10 months support, as I was fearful of something happening to my husband and worried, I would be left to cope with [D] health etc alone. At the time I didn't realise the constant strain of her illness and being so fearful of the Hep C in that others may find out and she might be judged in an unkind way.

24. This situation regarding [D] health affected my husband enormously as he is very protective family man. I believe he felt helpless in this awful situation; he was distressed to see me upset which therefore undoubtedly put a strain on our marriage as we felt unable to talk about it to each other for fear of upsetting the other.

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25. My eldest son turned to drugs [GRO-B] The [GRO-B] had to fit in with hospital visits which meant that they were taken to family members late at night if we were going to the hospital due to illness etc. When our daughter died, we were all mortified, and my husband became very insular. We were unable to talk to each other not wanting to cause more upset. The boys were heartbroken, a huge part of our family was missing. My husband couldn't to talk to anyone including myself and shut himself away from everyone for some time.
26. Completing this paperwork has been extremely upsetting bringing this awful situation of secrets and shame to the surface. My husband and I have been talking for the first time about the Hep C and how we felt and blaming ourselves etc for not knowing more; both feeling responsible. In [GRO-B] it was different; time you didn't question people in authority you just took it for granted that they knew best. [GRO-B] and its staff were wonderful, and this Hep C was no fault of theirs! I was alone with our daughter when she died in [GRO-B] [GRO-B] [GRO-B] I did not know anyone at this hospital; it all happened very quickly, and no support was given after her death.
27. [D] missed a great deal of schooling but was a very clever girl and we tried to help her as much as possible at home; she always like to learn new things; however, it did upset her missing so much school and feeling left out once she returned to school also being picked on from school peers and at times parents which caused us a lot of stress and upset.
28. I was unable to work due to hospital appointments and never knowing when [D] may be ill with an infection etc, I always needed to be on hand in case! Financially times were very hard my husband had to work 6 sometimes 7 days a week. The [GRO-B] broke during the [GRO-B] and [D] was very ill throughout Christmas just lying on the sofa. We didn't know if she would be ok. Every time she was ill, we didn't know if this would be the end, this affected me, my husband and my eldest son as we were constantly on edge not being able

to share the burden we were carrying with close friends or even family members.

29. The [GRO-B] have been really badly affected by [D] death. They were aged [GRO-B] when [D] died and were absolutely mortified by her death. [D] used to really mother the [GRO-B] and they missed her so much. It was also a big thing for them that [GRO-B] [GRO-B] They were cushioned in primary school but once they got to secondary school, they were badly bullied due to the fact that their sister was dead.

30. They are now [GRO-B] and even today we all get together and celebrate her birthday. They also go to her [GRO-B] and take her flowers. They are also very upset with their older brother, whose drug habit acted as a further stressor to the family. My oldest son had to go through everything with us so experienced things firsthand. I believe that turning to drugs following [D] death was his way of coping with the loss of his little sister. [GRO-B]  
[GRO-B] None of my children knew that [D] had Hep C and if we ever got any compensation, I would ensure that it went to the [GRO-B] but I don't know what I would say about where the money came from though.

#### Section 6. Treatment/care/support

31. As far as I am aware, [D] never received any treatment for her HCV. We did not even know that this was an option.

32. We were never offered any counselling from the hospital, GP or any other provider in consequence of [D] infection or subsequent death. I feel that if this had been offered in the early stages then it would have been an enormous help to us as we muddled along not being able to talk to anyone about it or to each other. We felt very alone with this burden; always concerned of the outcome and of others finding out about it and moreover, the impact that this would have on [GRO-B].

**Section 7. Financial Assistance**

33. We were never offered any financial assistance from the Trusts and Funds set up to distribute payments. We were unaware that financial assistance was available.

**Section 8. Other Issues**

34. I would like the Inquiry to ensure that measures are put into place to ensure that what happened can never happen again. D should not have had to go through what she did and have her life cruelly cut short. She should still be with us today. It is hard seeing her friends grown up and having children of their own, it really hits home with how things should have been for our wonderful daughter D. It is particularly hard when GRO-B and I attend weddings; he struggles as he realises he is never now going to have the chance to walk his only daughter down the aisle like other fathers.

**Anonymity**

35. 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

5/12/22