

# ANONYMOUS

Witness Name: GRO-B

Statement No: WITN7578001

Exhibits: 0

Dated: November 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 and I live at GRO-B  
GRO-B.
2. My father, GRO-B:F (born GRO-B), was infected with the Hepatitis C Virus (HCV) through a contaminated blood transfusion. He died after developing liver cancer and renal cancer on GRO-B (aged 76).
3. This witness statement has been prepared without the benefit of access to my father's full medical records.

**Section 2. How Affected**

4. My father (Dad) had a blood transfusion when he had a head injury sometime in the 1969 at a hospital [GRO-B] where he lived at the time, but I know that it has since closed. I remember that Dad tried to obtain his medical records from that hospital without success because when he made enquiries, he found out that it was no longer there.
5. I think that Dad knew that he had been infected with (Non-A, Non-B) Hepatitis (it was something I was vaguely aware of throughout my life), but I do not know what information he was given (if any) to help him understand and/or manage the virus. I do not think that he was given very much information about it at all. He didn't fully understand or appreciate the gravity of the infection for very many years. He was unwell for quite some time, but it wasn't until 2007 when he saw a newly qualified GP [GRO-B], who noticed that Dad's eyes were yellow, before anything was done for him. Dad was then immediately sent for liver tests. He was informed that he had Chronic Hepatitis C with a Genotype of 23.
6. Dad had HCV clearing treatment over several months in 2008. On 4th December 2008 Dad was seen at the hospital liver clinic and told that he was HCV negative. The damage to Dad's health to include his liver had already been done.

**Section 3. Other Infections**

7. I do not think that Dad was infected with anything other than HCV.

**Section 4. Consent**

8. Dad was given the blood transfusion in an emergency because of a head injury. He wasn't informed of the risk of infection. No explanation was given to him in relation to the infection. He linked it back to the transfusion himself when it became apparent that the HCV infection had caused him years of poor health. He was quite sure that the transfusion had caused him to be infected with HCV.

### Section 5. Impact

9. Dad had a lot to contend with. He had a troubled upbringing. He was adopted and he had a difficult relationship with his adoptive parents. Dad would have loved to have known his birth parents. He spent the best part of his life searching for them. He moved to GRO-B where he met my Mum. I have two sisters, quite a bit older than me.
10. Dad worked as a builder. He didn't then talk in depth about his health, but he suffered with fatigue and muscle aches for as long as I can remember, and it worsened over time. I was about 10 years old and so it must have been some time in the mid-1990s when Dad retired from building work to do something a lot less manual and physically taxing. He went to GRO-B University and obtained a degree in Electrical Engineering. My parents struggled financially during that period of time as did they when Dad had HCV clearing treatment and when he had to give up his work as an electrical engineer through his ill health. He then sold used computers from home for about 4 years just to make some money.
11. Dad struggled with aches and pains and with lethargy and chronic fatigue for many years. He took pain killers to get past the pain. Dad came across GRO-B at what was a routine check up at his surgery. As a newly qualified GP he was apparently genned up on Hepatitis and liver disease. He noticed that Dad's eyes were yellow

and sent him for tests and treatment. Dad didn't know anything about the possibility of treatment beforehand.

12. Dad was given antiviral therapy in the form of PEGylated Interferon and Ribavirin.

The treatment was awful and akin to chemotherapy treatment. Dad had to inject the Interferon into his tummy. Dad became nauseas and he had a huge weight loss. He lost a lot of hair. I remember that it went very thin. Dad spent a lot more time on his own, sleeping. He really struggled mentally. He was very depressed and suffered with violent mood swings. My parents had more arguments than previously. The treatment definitely took its toll on their marriage. My Mum had more than one heart attack before she died in 2016. She worked on a full-time basis as a hairdresser right up until her death.

13. Dad suffered a lot after Mum died, particularly with his aches and pains. He took

Naproxen and Codeine on a daily basis. He struggled on his own, getting around the family home. His legs were weak, and he had a few falls. He moved in with me and my family after selling the house in July 2021. He had plans to buy and live in a flat in GRO-B for over the over 50s, but his health deteriorated, and he never made it. Dad complained of constipation and stomach pain he lost a huge amount of weight in a very short space of time. I was on the end of the phone following up on or chasing GP appointments, hospital appointments and/or Dad's MRI and CT scans. The scans revealed that Dad was suffering with cancer of the renal system, and they couldn't offer him any treatment.

14. Dad paid the ultimate price for being infected with HCV through no fault of his own.

My two children (8 and 5 years old) adored him. They loved that he had come to live with us. He was a fun grandad and I feel so sad for them. Dad was never reunited with his birth parents having searched for them all his life, but he did get to meet two (younger half) sisters on his mother's side. His untimely death meant his relationship with them was short lived. Dad discovered his birth father was an American soldier based in the UK during the war. He wanted to go over to the

USA and visit his father's grave, but that opportunity was taken from him. Not long before Dad's death we learned that he had a daughter in Australia who had searched for him all her life. Her own mother had formerly refused to tell her who her father was. She was born in the very same orphanage at which my father was born. When she found him, my (new half) sister made arrangements to fly to the UK to meet him. Dad's deterioration was very quick. Sadly, she arrived here one week after he died. I feel so sad and sorry for her, for my father and for all the life opportunities now forever lost to him.

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

15. Dad wasn't offered any counselling as far as I know.

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

16. Dad had no help from the Trusts and Funds. I know that at times he had to rely on benefits.

#### **Anonymity, disclosure and redaction**

17. I wish to remain anonymous, and I understand that this redacted Statement will be published by the Inquiry.

**Statement of Truth**

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

Signed..... **GRO-B**

Dated.....22/12/2022.....