

ANONYMOUS

Witness Name: **GRO-B**
Statement No: WITN3040001
Dated: 2nd August 2019

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 17th April 2019. 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. How Affected

1. My father **GRO-B: F** has haemophilia. He is a moderate haemophiliac 20% and has haemophilia B.
2. My father is from a family of haemophiliacs. My **GRO-B** and cousins have haemophilia. I also have a son that suffers with haemophilia. Therefore I know many of the doctors and nurses at the Haemophilia Centre at **GRO-B**
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3. I recall that **GRO-B** was my father's Consultant Haematologist. My father has told me the majority of his treatment for his haemophilia was based at **GRO-B**
4. I know that when my father was younger he had some teeth removed at **GRO-B**. During that procedure, my father was given Factor IX. My father told me this was around 1979.
5. My father was informed he had previously contracted hepatitis A, B and C just over a year ago. He had an appointment with his Consultant Rheumatologist at **GRO-B** who told him that he had been exposed to hepatitis A, B and C. This originated from the fact my father was due to start a new drug for his rheumatoid arthritis. This is a condition my father has suffered with for many years. The Consultant told my father that he would not be able to start using the drug as the hepatitis B virus was still showing up in his blood results and the hepatitis B virus was still in his system. The Consultant said the tablets were not recommended for people who had issues surrounding their liver.
6. As a mild haemophiliac my father rarely required treatment. Therefore as a family we have been able to pin point the period around which he contracted hepatitis A, B and C. We believe he was given contaminated products in 1979. My father also recalls that this was the first time Factor products were administered to him rather than his usual Cryoprecipitate
7. I was in a state of shock, as were my father and mother. We could not believe what the Consultant had told my father.
8. Following on from this shocking news, myself, mother and father all sat down and discussed what we were going to do moving forward.
9. It was decided that my father was going to book an appointment with a doctor at the Haemophilia Centre in **GRO-B**. He wanted answers and rightly so.

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10. My father had an appointment at the Haemophilia Centre in GRO-B around a year ago with a doctor we had not met before. My father attends the Haemophilia Centre for annual appointments and noted that he had not seen this young doctor.
11. My father went for his appointment at the Haemophilia Centre and the doctor could not provide him with any answers. Specifically, my father wanted to know how and when he had contracted hepatitis A, B and C. The doctor said he did not know this information. In fact the doctor that day could not provide my father with any answers, all of his questions were unanswered and remain unanswered.
12. I recall my father being very stressed after the appointment at the haemophilia centre. He had been given this devastating, life changing news and was none the wiser as to how all of this had happened. Not only was my father stressed emotionally but also psychologically as he knew the repercussions of a virus like hepatitis were life changing.
13. My father became worried and depressed after finding out this information. My father also stopped drinking since his diagnosis.

3. Other infections

1. As discussed earlier in my statement, my father suffers from rheumatoid arthritis. He is unable to take the drug that is usually prescribed to sufferers due to the fact he has hepatitis A, B and C laying dormant in his body.

4. Consent

1. My father has never been told he has been tested for hepatitis C. However my father was told around a year ago that the hepatitis C had cleared. It is now

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clear from viewing my father's medical records that the hepatitis just keeps coming and going. It keeps rearing its head and then disappearing.

2. It is very strange that this was only picked up over a year ago. I say this as my father has his bloods taken every five weeks or so, therefore you would expect for it to have been picked up a lot earlier.
3. I know my father had noticed when he had his blood taken there is a sticker on the blood vials which state the words 'At Risk'. This happened when he was having his blood tested at the GP surgery. The fact this was said on the vials shows that medical professionals knew there was something wrong with my father. Further inconvenience was caused when the phlebotomist at the GP Surgery then refused to take my father's bloods. This meant my father had to drive to GRO-B to get his bloods taken.
4. My father asked his Consultant Haematologist what the sticker meant and he simply denied any knowledge of this sticker.

5. **Impact**

1. Understandably my father suffers with terrible stress. My father tries to be strong but I know he struggles.
2. My father's sleeping has been awful since finding out that this virus has been in his body for many years without his knowledge. He doesn't know how to talk about it and really finds the situation frustrating. I know it has been quite difficult for my mother as my father will often have a low mood.
3. My father often expresses worry that his grandchildren who are haemophiliacs are going to suffer the same fate as him. For instance, he worries that they too will be Guinea Pigs. My father firmly believes he has been treated like a Guinea Pig and tested on.

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4. My father rarely goes out anymore, he is constantly worried about what people will think of his situation.
5. The impact has been devastating. My GRO-B also has hepatitis C as a result of receiving contaminated blood products. My father now says "don't take the blood over at the hospital as you don't know what's in the blood".
6. I find that my father's situation weighs heavy on my mind and I can very much relate to it as my son and nephews are haemophiliacs. I always worry that this could also happen to them.
7. I always worry the affect the hepatitis is having on my father's liver when it shows up again. I also worry that if the hepatitis rears its head again, the affect that has on the people closest to my father. For instance, my mother could have been infected with the virus. It's horrible even thinking about it.
8. I do not understand why if my father is considered a clearer, the virus keep showing up on his blood count.

6. Treatment/Care Support

1. I recall that when my father was younger he was treated in GRO-B
GRO-B by GRO-B
2. I know that my father was then treated at a Haemophilia Clinic in GRO-B
Hospital GRO-B before he began receiving treatment at GRO-B Hospital
GRO-B
3. I firmly believe that a lot of medical professionals do not know how to treat haemophiliacs. I find it absolutely disgraceful that people weren't informed of what was going on all along. It has taken a Public Inquiry to expose the true extent of this.

7. Financial Assistance

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1. I personally haven't received any financial assistance.
2. I know my father has applied twice for financial assistance and has been turned down on both occasions. The reason he was turned down was due to the fact he is considered as a hepatitis C clearer.
3. My GRO-B also cleared the hepatitis C and he has received payments from the Skipton Fund.
4. I think the financial system needs to be changed. My father's medical records show that he has had hepatitis A, hepatitis B and hepatitis C at certain points of his life. He didn't ask to have these viruses, they are there as a result of contaminated blood.

8. Other Issues

1. I just want the truth and an explanation as to why this has been hidden from so many people.
2. I worry myself sick about whether my own son could end up in the same situation, as he is a haemophiliac and factor products are often used to treat him.
3. What my father is going through is heart breaking. Haemophilia is something people have to live with. It is awful that haemophiliacs have had to deal with the worry of being infected with these deadly viruses. It is a complete injustice.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed..

GRO-B

Dated.....

2nd

August

2019