



Witness Name: GRO-B

Statement No: WITN7465001

Exhibits: Nil

Dated: 17.12.22

## 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 26 October 2022.

I, GRO-B will say as follows: -

### Section 1: Introduction

1. My full name is GRO-B, I am known as GRO-B and my date of birth is GRO-B 1982. My address is known to the Inquiry. I am married, my maiden name was GRO-B
2. I wish to speak about my mother's GRO-B: M's infection with Hepatitis C (HCV) as a result of a transfusion in child birth.
3. I confirm that I am not currently legally represented and that I am happy for the Inquiry Team to assist me with my statement.
4. I also confirm that I have had the option to seek anonymity and the Inquiry's statement of approach explained to me. I can confirm that I am requesting anonymity.
5. The Inquiry's criticisms procedure and the 'right of reply' has been explained to me.

## Section 2: How Infected

6. My mother's maiden name was [M] when she married the first time she became [M]. This was her name at the time of the infection. Later she divorced and remarried and was called [M] at the time she passed away.
7. [M] was known as [M]. She born on [GRO-B] 1958 and she passed away on [GRO-B] 2020, making her just 61 when she died.
8. I was [M]'s first child, she had me at the [GRO-D] on [GRO-B] 1982. There was an issue after my birth and [M] had to have a transfusion. I'm not sure exactly when this happened, or how many units she had.
9. I have a sibling who is 8 years younger, there was no issue with their birth and I think they have been tested for HCV but on the Investigators advice I am going to check this. My birth father passed away in [GRO-B] 2022. I will also ask my Stepfather if he has been checked.
10. Mum had a blood test for some reason around 1996 or 7. I think this was part of the 'look-back scheme' having previously had a transfusion.
11. She was called by the [GRO-D] and asked to attend the hospital. There they sat her down with a cup of tea and simply told her she was HCV+ there was no detail.
12. She had to ask them about what to do re others welfare and other relevant issues, like sharing toothbrushes. All they said was there was minimal risk to others. Although I was only 15 or 16 years old I recall her telling the family this.
13. She was told it "was only mild HCV", and was never given any treatment for the HCV. Years later mum told us she had scars on her liver.
14. There were 2 previous operation in mum's life where she could have had a transfusion.
15. When [M] was very young, she had to have part of her kidney removed from serious illness, I'm not sure exact when, where or why this was done, obviously

mum had no recall of this. She would probably have had a transfusion. I think this would have been the early 1960's.

16. Then when mum was 19 (in the late 1970's) she was a student and was attacked by an ex-boyfriend. She was stabbed by him then she was rushed to GRO-D then to Birmingham Hospital but she lost her spleen, as a result of the injury.

17. Other than the transfusions, there are no other risk factors; she wasn't a drinker before she was diagnosed as HCV+, she didn't take non-prescription drugs, she didn't have any tattoos, her ears were pierced but that would have been somewhere reputable.

18. I believe her Death Certificate showed she died of 1. Bowel cancer 2. Liver cancer. I do not have access to it

### **Section 3: Other Infections**

19. As far as I'm aware M never contracted any other infections, than HCV.

### **Section 4: Consent**

20. I don't know that M was ever tested without her knowledge or consent or used for research purposes.

21. I do not believe she was provided with adequate information about her infection or how to deal with it.

### **Section 5: Impact**

22. She was never offered any sort of treatment to get rid of the HCV, all the time since she was first told in 1996/7. It was never dealt with in a proactive way.

23. I don't understand why, when the GRO-D knew she was HCV+, they didn't test the whole family at the time or offer counselling.

24. After she diagnosed with HCV she changed psychologically, she became paranoid, controlling, talked about odd subjects that made people

uncomfortable. The topics and manner were often inappropriate in that she was often aggressive or inappropriately sexual in her choice of topics.

25. Mum suffered from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and this went unsupported and manifested as insecurity, control and abandonment issues.

26. **M** worked as a Government employee for many years without issues and then went through redundancies as a result of her psychological issues. As far as I aware and witnessed redundancy was offered to her after complaints were made against her or she spoke aggressively to colleagues.

27. **M** didn't tell many people only family and very close friends about her HCV but could only talk to those people about it.

28. My mum and dad split up soon after she found out she was HCV+. Both my parents relied on alcohol and continued to do so after the marriage finished. My Dad was depressed. I don't think my dad was tested after mum was diagnosed. Things were bad at that time but mum got worse physiologically through the years after.

29. I still feel the stigma around how psychologically ill she was, it is still with me today.

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

30. In 2018, she was told that she had scars on her liver. From much earlier she should have been given regular liver checks, then the scars/ cancer would have been found much earlier and potentially treated.

31. Around the same time, she was told that she had cancer. The largest mass was believed to be in her bowel but was significant in the liver and also was in her lung.

32. She had an operation, to remove part of her bowel, chemotherapy and radio therapy in relation to the various cancers.

33. She was given counselling in relation to the stabbing (when she was 19) but no counselling or psychological support was made available to her or our family re her HCV or cancer or after her death.

#### **Section 7: Financial Support**

34. I don't think mum ever contacted Skipton Fund but I'm not sure she was even aware of it.

35. I have recently tried to contact the hospitals involved and her GP to try to find out about her treatment but there are problems with me not having a Power of Attorney. This is with my Stepfather and he is not cooperating with me.

36. My mum didn't make a claim or join the Skipton Fund because although what happened to mum about HCV was tragic, the NHS did save her life on 3 occasions and she was not empowered to speak up.

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

37. I feel that the stigma of HCV still exists today around all those affected, how it was spread by blood isn't understood by many people. There is also a huge stigma around poor psychological and physical health and how this affects family relationships.

#### **Statement of Truth**

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

Signed:

GRO-B

Dated 17.12.22