ANONYMOUS
Witness Name: GRO-B
Statement No: WITN7659001
Exhibits: **Nil**
Dated: 02 March 2023

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 01 February 2023.

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

Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is GRO-B My date of birth is GRO-B 1993. I live in Scotland and my full address is known to the Inquiry. I was born in GRO-B and our family lived there until we left the UK and moved to America when I was 6 or 7 years old in 1999. I am the youngest of 3 boys.

2. I moved back to the UK in February 2019 and I lived in London before moving up to Scotland after the Covid-19 lockdown. I currently work in Scotland as a Chef.

3. I intend to speak about my infection with Hepatitis C (HCV). In particular, the nature of my illness, how the illness affected me, the treatment received and the impact it had on me, my family and our lives together.

4. I confirm the Inquiry investigator has explained the Inquiry's Statement of Approach and the anonymity process to me. I wish to remain anonymous for personal reasons.

5. My Mom, GRO-B:M was infected with HCV following a blood transfusion received in the UK and has given a statement to the Inquiry. (GRO-B)

Section 2. How Infected

6. I was infected with Hepatitis C at birth, as a result of a blood transfusion given to my Mom, at Leicester Royal Infirmary, which unbeknown to her was contaminated. She was given the blood transfusion following complications during the birth of my older brother, her second child. My Mom has provided more detail about this in her statement. (GRO-B)

7. I was born in GRO-B at home. My mother is American and my father is British. My mom was a university lecturer in both the UK and America. We left the UK and I remember that we arrived in the US on 4 July 1999. I specifically remember the date, because when we landed there were fireworks going off for Independence Day - so as a child I thought America was pretty cool.

8. I think I was around 11 years old when I found out that I had Hepatitis C after visiting the doctor for a routine check up. They are very thorough in America and they always took blood as a matter of course at each visit. I remember my mom sitting me down and telling me that the doctor had said I had a fatty liver. In America there is an obesity problem, a lot of children have a fatty liver due to high levels of sugar consumption, so

because I looked healthy and I wasn't overweight, the doctor wanted to run some more tests.

9. We went to see a different doctor who was a gastroenterologist where they did some more tests and then we were given the results. I remember my Mom being upset when we were told that I had Hepatitis C and I remember her taking it quite badly, being distraught and me not knowing what the issue was. I felt fine - I was a kid. I don't remember a lot about it to be honest, it was more the case of, "You have this and we will start dealing with it."

10. The doctors told me to avoid fast food, drinking soda, sugary drinks and to not get stressed. When I was older, I was told to avoid alcohol. My Mom and Dad always cooked healthy food so this was not an issue. I swam a lot and was captain of the swim team at one point, I played soccer and led a healthy lifestyle.

11. When I was older when I was about 15 or 16 years old, I was told by the doctor not to share razors and I was warned about the risks involved with sexual activity and the risk of transmission. I was also told to not drink alcohol and not to take drugs. I took it all on board and avoided doing anything high risk. In America they are so thorough, so our high school sex education fully covered the topic and I was fully aware of the risks. They don't hide anything in America.

Section 3. Other Infections

12. I am not aware of having contracted any other infections as a result of contaminated blood. As mentioned, the clinicians are very thorough in America and they carry out blood tests as a matter of routine when you visit the doctors.

Section 4. Consent

13. I don't know if my Mom played a part in getting me being tested for Hepatitis C specifically. However, as far as I remember, my brothers and I went and got our blood tested after my Mom was diagnosed with HCV and my liver results were unusual. Mine came back positive but both my brothers were fine. I don't remember much else other than being upset that my Mom was upset, and thinking something was going on even though I didn't understand what it was.

Section 5. Impact

14. Going back, there are things I avoided as a result of my infection. The drinking age is 21 in America but everyone drinks when they are younger. However, I made the conscious decision not to drink when I was about 17 and I began avoiding situations where my friends would be drinking.

15. I think HCV probably had a long-term effect on my socialising skills, because I had a very irregular experience of not going out and partying whilst I was at college, because the doctors had told me that I shouldn't.

16. I was 18 and trying to fit in with my peer group, and at 18 everyone else was getting really drunk. I wanted to spend time with them but I couldn't make the same decisions as them, because I had to be careful, and I didn't want to talk about why. I didn't tell anyone the reason why I didn't drink because at 18 you just want to fit in, you don't want to be labelled as weird or have people stay away from you because they are afraid.

17. As a result, I spent a lot of time alone; I had a longterm girlfriend at the time and we just spent time together. I had a few friends who didn't find drinking that interesting, so I hung out with them, but it did mean I had a very small circle of friends. I probably had three or four friends. When they went off to university, I stayed at home as I went to a local university, so I kind of avoided the whole college experience of socialising as well as the going out aspect.

18. I remember being unwell when I was about 15. I am not sure what happened but I had fainted. I think this was my first panic attack, I felt unwell and panicked and I thought that I was having a heart attack. I was taken to the Emergency Room (ER) at the hospital where they performed an ECG scan and kept me there for a few hours to monitor me. I was with my girlfriend and a friend at the time. My Mom came to the hospital. The nurse asked me if I had any chronic illnesses and I told them about my Hepatitis. My Mom recalls that the nurse asked where I had got it from, to which my Mom replied, he got it from me. I don't remember any stigma or weirdness as a result of declaring it to the nurse, but my Mom may take a different view.

19. My girlfriend was studying nursing at the time and she was really supportive about me having HCV. She was a long term girlfriend and she didn't treat me any differently when she found out. In fact she was quite interested in HCV because of her studies. Due to our age, I don't think that my other friend really understood what HCV was and never spoke about it again.

20. As mentioned in Section 2, after initially learning of my diagnosis when I was 11, I was advised by the doctor to avoid eating unhealthy things like fast food, drinking soda and sugary drinks. I thought about these things a lot and made conscious decisions to avoid them, because I knew that I should take care of myself. I was listening to my doctors.

21. I started working as a Chef when I was 20 and I became more aware of the risks associated of having a blood disorder. If I was to cut myself, I was incredibly thorough with cleaning, washing my hands, putting a plaster on, putting a glove on, throwing away anything I was working on, sanitising and putting everything in the dishwasher and starting again. But that is just good kitchen hygiene, even if you don't have a blood disorder everyone should be doing this if they cut themselves whilst

cooking. It is proper etiquette; nobody wants a chunk of nail in their food for example.

22. My infection definitely played on my mind continuously, in different ways, but I don't remember ever being actively worried about the disease specifically, because I always had faith in modern medicine and science. Even before beginning my treatment, I was reading about trial treatments. My liver was not damaged, I was not high risk so I thought even if it took 10 years for new treatment to be developed, I would still only be 30. I was not able to have treatment as a child.

23. I don't know why I put off having treatment for so long, I think because I was young, I wanted to forget about it and get on with my life. I was enjoying my twenties and had this thing hanging over my head, and every time I made a decision, I was thinking how it was going to affect me in the long run. When I was 24, I went to the same specialist as my Mom in America to get treatment.

24. When I was younger, I never thought something as mundane as an illness, would kill me. I was under the impression something else would kill me first. I just thought, I am 19 and I am probably going to do something stupid, so why worry about my infection. For example, a friend once bet me 100 dollars to swim to a boat and back in a hurricane, I swam out but trying to get back, I got stuck in a rip tide for 40 minutes, I knew I was good swimmer so I just floated there and eventually swam back in. When you are young, you take lots of risks, and that was my view on life at 19 to 20 years of age. You don't worry about dying of a chronic illness, it seemed like something that happens to old people. Obviously, it is a reality and people do die but my mentality at that age was different.

25. When I was in my early 20s, I underwent some therapy for depression. Maybe parts of it were related to having Hepatitis because I had had to hide things from people and it made me not want to express myself.

Living in Boston, I felt lonely and I got depressed. My parents paid for me to have therapy.

26. When I was 25, I moved to London from America. I wanted a change and I think everyone should live in London at least once while they are young. Boston is small, isolated and old fashioned and there is a lack of diversity. It was a test to myself, I wanted to find out am I mature enough to find a flat, find a job, and take care of myself? My brother lives in London so he helped me out a bit and I started working as a chef and everything fell into place. I worked in London for a year then the Covid lockdown happened. My boss moved to Scotland and asked if I would come and work for him, so I moved to Scotland.

27. It wasn't until I had finished the hepatitis treatment in America and moved to London that I learned to socialise. It was weird being 25 and learning to go out and make friends. I liked London, nobody cared - I could go to the pub and have a glass of water on a night out and nobody cared. One of the reasons I left Boston was that I didn't feel comfortable living the life I was living. I felt I was being judged for making these decisions, I wasn't telling anyone why I was making these decisions because I didn't want to get into it and explain. It made people ask why, but I didn't want to tell them.

28. When I came to the UK everyone was like 'Ok cool, you're just cheaper to go out with'. London was less judgemental and more freeing than Boston.

29. I do think that at the time, HCV affected my lifestyle choices, but I think now that I am a bit more mature, I actually look at these things as a good thing. I still don't drink soda; I love sparkling water and I don't really like fast food. I still don't really drink alcohol much and I haven't been drunk in 6 or 7 years. I just don't like the sensation because I grew up avoiding it. Now I might have the occasional glass of wine or pint of beer if I am out.

30. This has made me live a healthier lifestyle. I exercise a lot, I take care of myself. I try to positively spin everything in my life. If I was to put a positive spin on having a chronic illness, it would be that it has forced me to lead a healthier lifestyle and take care of myself, it is the only body I have and life is short.

31. I feel a bit guilty sometimes because I have read accounts of people that were infected much later in life, and it ruined their lives and people died. A lot of it is horrible and I know how much stress it put on my Mom and others. I feel guilty that I don't feel worse about it, because you read these really sad, moving, horrible accounts of what happened and then I come along and say I had a great childhood, I am not angry at anyone about it - it makes me feel bad. But this is just my outlook, it was a mistake, yes, they should have been more thorough, but I don't think they were trying to hurt anyone. They were trying to get cheap blood and they got it from prisons. It is Capitalism at its finest, it was a move to save money that cost a lot of people a lot of terrible things. It wasn't the first time and it won't be the last. People have been getting screwed over throughout history to save money.

32. It doesn't bring me anything positive to be upset, it could have been worse, my Mom could have died, I could have died. I always think about that, and that I should be more outraged, but my doctor told me at 11 years of age not to live a stressful life and I have carried that with me.

33. When I was 20 years old, I remember my therapist telling me that you have two options in life - if there is nothing you can do, then why are you stressed about it? And if there is something you can do, then do something. I have taken that mentality with me, whether it is with work, relationships or family. I look at it and ask myself, 'can I do anything about it?' If not, I don't stress about it. If there is something I can do to change it, I will try and do something.

34. There is so much in the world to be upset at, or to feel hard done by or you can get on with it and enjoy it. You are only here for a very short time and I don't want to spend it being angry, I want to spend it having a good time. People were angry about Covid restrictions, but I tried to adopt a positive spin. When people were moaning about queuing for food, I felt like I was in a 1920s film in the depression standing in line for my bread!

35. I do feel bad for all the people who have gone through being infected and had an awful time, I imagine it is devastating. Having to die from something preventable is horrible, but it wasn't my experience and I don't think giving a disingenuous opinion of something would be the right thing for me to do, so this is just my perspective on it from my experience.

36. I still don't talk to anyone about my Hepatitis C infection because I don't think it is relevant, other than notifying my employers with regards to health and safety at work and with doctors, because I think people will still stigmatise me even though my treatment was successful. It does feel like I am not being fully honest with people because I don't know how they are going to react and whether they will be 'weirded out'.

37. Being American, my Mom was more open to talking about our feelings, However, my Dad is very British and reserved so I never discussed my hepatitis with him. I am the youngest and always got 'babied' and being infected, maybe made my Mom 'baby' me a bit more and check up on me a bit more. My Mom still does it and we joke about it. She means well, she asks me if I am eating well, I think she worries about me a lot more than my siblings. She showed that, by always making sure I had good, healthy food available and making sure I was taking care of myself and exercising and not living too stressful a life. My parents paid for all my therapy; they were just focused on making sure I was healthy.

38. I can imagine from my Mom's perspective she probably carries guilt, but obviously it isn't her fault, I don't blame anyone, but especially not her - I am sure she carries guilt around for giving hepatitis to me. As a parent

you want to know your kids are going to live a long healthy life. You never want to think your child is 11 and has a chronic illness.

39. With regards to her hepatitis infection, she always told us that she wanted to be alive to see us all graduate from high school, and all she wanted was to give me the best shot at a long life. Her constant nagging about fast food and soda was her way of saying, 'I love you, I care about you, I want you to be healthy'. I imagine she was under loads of stress all the time, having three young sons who are all very individualistic.

40. I don't know how my Dad sees it, I don't speak to him about it as I don't think it is necessary, it goes back to the 'need to know' basis. I am very close with my Dad, I love my Dad and he obviously cares about it. He probably takes the same approach as me, that I had treatment and now I am fine. I don't feel the need to talk to him about it, there isn't anything interesting to say.

41. My brothers never mentioned my hepatitis growing up and certainly never teased me about it.

42. In my head there is a lot of stigma but nobody I have ever told has had an adverse reaction to me telling them. They are always just like, 'Oh ok, that is interesting, thank you for letting me know, I will keep that in mind.'

43. I feel people in general are becoming more open, maybe in the next few years I will get more comfortable about it, but for the time being the people who need to know, know. If you don't need to know, I am not going to tell you. I don't want to risk people treating me differently.

44. I think Mom had to inform our dentist and I still inform my dentists here in the UK. I explain it to them, the way that it was explained to me, which was that there is no risk of transmission, but if they do a certain blood test it would come up with this marker that says I had it. My dentist is

fine, he is a lovely dude, whom I go to every 6 months for a hygienist appointment.

45. The GP is aware that I had hepatitis because it is on my form. The last time I saw her was a couple of months ago, just for a routine check-up. She asked me generally whether I was aware of the Infected Blood Inquiry whether I had looked into the Infected Blood Inquiry and she wrote it down for me to look up later. It wasn't something that you really heard about, and you would have to be looking for it to find any information.

46. I still make sure I eat healthy meals, play sports, I go to the gym and lead a healthy life. I think putting any kind of unnecessary stress on your organs is not going to be great for anyone.

47. Doctors also told me never to take paracetamol because it is processed directly through your liver, I did adhere to that until after my treatment but I rarely take paracetamol or any kind of medications. Even in a healthy person paracetamol can destroy your liver.

48. In America, growing up as a child we would occasionally have fast food as a treat. My parents had a big garden with lots of fresh vegetables and they both cooked well so I had a balanced diet. On the odd ocassion when I was about 17 we would sneak from school and go to Taco Bell. You can't live your life in extremes.

49. There were situations of peer pressure to drink alcohol, but I always said no, going forward after that, I just avoided those situations instead of dealing with the peer pressure. It was just easier. I would like to think the choices I made, had a positive impact on how I turned out and the lack of damage to liver and the good state of my health now.

50. I don't make the choices because of the Hepatitis anymore; I make the choices for my overall health. I still want to take care of my liver but my overall choices aren't solely for that anymore.

51. As mentioned above, I do think my infection forced me to learn social skills later in life. I only speak to two people from my childhood, it probably has something to do with not feeling that close to them because I didn't want to go out when I was growing up there. There is a core circle from school that are now getting married to the people who grew up in our town. I opted out of getting to know them because they were going out, partying, and I went my own way. I don't think that is a bad thing, I wouldn't want that life anyway. It has led me to lead more of a life that is self-sufficient. I have never felt like I needed lots of friends or close relationships. I am quite happy by myself and I travel a lot by myself.

52. I think I got good at avoiding telling people things. It is a learned behaviour, I learned to lie to these people about why I don't drink. I would make excuses and say things like, 'no I have this thing in the morning'. I got very good at deflecting. I try not to anymore, but I feel like maybe I do sometimes deflect questions that I don't want to answer. I do it subconsciously; I avoid talking about difficult situations because in my childhood I was forced to avoid difficult situations in order to avoid stigma.

53. Maybe a small factor of my depression was having to hide the HCV, and subconsciously not being able to fully express myself to people. But I also felt like an outsider when we moved to America. It was for the best and I appreciate that we did it, but my older brothers and I didn't decide to leave our stuff and our friends in England. I think being an outsider, and not being able to talk about stuff openly, made me feel isolated and lonely. I didn't feel like I belonged there and I didn't feel like I could talk openly with people.

54. As soon as I moved back to the UK it was great, it allowed me the freedom to start afresh. Nobody knew anything about me, I could get rid of anything I held on to in America and start a new life. I still deal with depressive thoughts but it is more manageable now.

55. I find that the work life balance in the UK is better, and the lack of support in America for all things such as healthcare isn't that great. Life can be difficult in the UK, but you feel there is more of a safety net. In America you are a trip down the stairs away from being homeless. If you fall at work, you just get fired.

56. I wouldn't want to go back and live in Boston again. It is a piece of my life that I lived and left behind and I don't think about it too much. The same way I think about my hepatitis, it is a chunk of my life that happened and I let it go. I look at my life in chunks, I view them and say 'ok that happened'. How you view the next chunk doesn't have to be influenced by the previous chunk.

57. My current life is incredible, I live a lovely life and I have a good friendship group. I try not to let my past influence my present, because I don't think it is healthy.

Section 6. Treatment/Care/Support

58. Although I was infected in the UK at birth, my diagnosis took place in America. I was a kid when I was diagnosed so I couldn't go to an adult specialist, everything was dealt with by child specialists in America. Following my initial diagnosis there was no treatment available to me as a child because I was so young at that time.

59. As mentioned, I started going to this doctor in America, who was a gastroenterologist with an interest in liver diseases and he did more tests to confirm what was causing the inflammation of my liver. They never made it out to be that serious, I think because I was a child. They didn't

want to keep me out of the loop, but also, they didn't want to alarm an 11 year old, by telling them that they might die in a few years.

60. It wasn't like they needed to tell me to stop drinking or have less stress because I was a child. I was enjoying my childhood. I exercised a lot, I played soccer, I was on the swim team and I did cross country running, so it was never that big of a concern. The Doctor said to just keep taking care of yourself. They essentially just kept an eye on it, and that was it for quite a long time.

61. When I was 16 or 17 years old, I began getting more information out of the doctor in America. They told me the outlook on it at that time and said as I got older there were things I should try to avoid, that I shouldn't have the traditional go out, massive party at the end of high school and the beginning of college experience.

62. By the time I was 18 or 19, I was still with the same doctor in America. I kept getting routine blood tests done every six months just to check on the numbers of everything and the numbers were always the same. They were elevated but not in a way to cause immediate concern. I was young and nonchalant because what else could I do? Stressing isn't going to help - I am not a doctor or a scientist so I can't really do anything about it.

63. A few years later when I was 20 or 21 years old they had started these trials for treatment in America. I thought at that point I am still healthy, by the time I am 24 or 25 there will probably be a treatment. I still made a conscious decision to do certain things in my life to protect my health, but I wasn't worried about it long term.

64. I think when I was 21 or 22 my Mom had gone on a trial drug for her Hepatitis C infection in America, and it had been successful. I think she had to take loads of pills and injections, she suffered nausea, it was a

big thing and a miserable experience. I remember her injecting herself and her feeling nauseous.

65. My mom and I talked about me having the treatment and she said the same thing as my doctor, that the treatment wasn't very nice. She told me to speak to my doctor and she spoke to her doctor about me. I think he gave her similar advice which she passed on to me. He said that it would get progressively better as the treatments improved and so the advice was to hold out, if it was safe to do so because I wasn't in dire need, my liver wasn't failing, there was no trace of damage. The doctor's advice was that if I waited a few years the treatments would get more efficient and simplified.

66. I have this horrible thing where I put things off. I had worked really hard to try and put having treatment off. I had flown to England for a year when I was 23, and 8 months later I just thought, 'what am I doing? I am covered on my parents' health insurance, go and get treatment'.

67. I thought about getting the treatment done in the UK, but the good thing about America is that the health care is efficient. I love the NHS and appreciate how hard they work and how difficult it is for them to get anything done, but you read about 2 year waiting lists. I thought the likelihood was that I might have to wait at least a year after seeking treatment. I understand it, but that is a long time. In America, if you need something you go to the hospital, and six days later you get it done.

68. When I was 24 I went to the same specialist as my Mom. The specialist asked why I had put it off for so long, she made light of it and said, "Why have you waited so long, we have treated everyone else." I didn't really know - it is weird to put off something that will kill you if you don't treat it. I think it was because I was young and wanted to forget about it and pretend it wasn't there. I was enjoying my twenties and had this thing hanging over my head and every time I made a decision, I was thinking about how it was going to affect me in the long run.

69. I had quite a simple treatment, one pill a day for 3 months with almost no side effects. I couldn't drink alcohol during that period and I had to stay away from fatty foods and high stress environments. It was the same stuff they had told me my whole life. I really had to stay away from these things to give the treatment the best chance of working.

70. The treatment finished and six months later they did some more tests. I had a fibroscan of my liver and they told me my viral count was nothing and undetectable. The treatment was successful and there was no long term damage they could see to my liver.

71. It was weird, this thing I had been told for so many years, that I should do this and avoid that, then it was, 'have a nice life', and you are on your way. The whole experience to me is a bit surreal, since I was 11 years old and avoiding all these things, to one day a woman shaking your hand and saying enjoy the rest of your life.

72. I had some psychological therapy when I first came to Scotland. I think I was overwhelmed living alone for the first time and suddenly in charge of every aspect of my life. I focused on coping behaviours around all these new experiences. I think it is healthy just to talk to someone, it is cathartic to express yourself, and therapists give an unbiased opinion on your life. I believe that my bouts of anxiety are linked to my childhood experiences as a result of being infected with HCV.

73. I still deal with the impact of having some form of depression. When I was in London, I underwent some talk therapy through the NHS which is basically cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT). Since I moved to the UK, I have never been at the point that I was at in my early 20s. Now it is just a refresher of coping mechanisms.

74. It is funny, I spoke earlier that I don't speak openly about hepatitis, but I don't mind speaking to anyone about depression. Depression is destigmatized, people are open about it now. You speak with a lot of people in their early 20s and they are so open, it is so refreshing.

75. I hope in the future everything is destigmatized, as it has been with regards to the stigma around HIV by people being able to be on PrEP. It helped take away the stigma, now people are used to it, they understand it.

76. People hold onto the idea that HCV is what drug users get and people get labelled. I think there is still a bit of that around, which I would like to see change. People just don't get it.

77. I still get my blood tested once a year to be sure, but it is always the same.

78. I got lucky in the sense that I was so young when I was diagnosed so I wasn't doing a lot of the things that could have made it worse or that don't help your liver in general. I wasn't drinking or smoking or eating unhealthy food - I was living a young stress-free healthy lifestyle. I think that my healthy lifestyle helped manage my condition.

79. I do think healthcare should be free and paid through taxes, but as expensive as private healthcare is, it is efficient. It was a conscious decision to go back to America for treatment, I went on medication a week after my call to the Doctor and three months later I was done.

80. Although we had health insurance, the treatment still cost my parents a good chunk of money. I think the treatment itself was around sixty thousand dollars for the whole course of treatment. That is a down payment on a massive house, it is ridiculous money. I think insurance covered maybe 70% of it, so it must have cost my parents somewhere between fifteen to twenty thousand dollars. I think they would have had

to sacrifice holidays and whatever else they needed to sacrifice, but it is still money taken from them that they should not have had to pay for as it was not my mother's or my fault that we contracted hepatitis.

81. From the age of 17 I was uncomfortable with taking any money from my parents. I always felt bad because we didn't grow up with lots of money and they have worked so hard. I knew they would say yes to paying for treatment, my Mom really wanted me to get it done, she just wanted me to be cured. But you still think, that amount of money, it's a year of college, eight or nine nice holidays, repairs to the house, a new front porch, it's a lot of money to ask someone to give up to help you.

82. In the UK I would have had to wait for treatment and I would have gone on a waiting list. I have nothing bad to say about the NHS, they are doing their best. This is just the realities of a healthcare system paid for through the taxpayer, you end up with waiting lists.

83. I got a blood test last time I went to see the doctor in Scotland, my next one is due in about 18 months. I think it is important just to double check. I have no fear that anything bad will happen but I think it is important to keep an eye on your health. I wear sunscreen, if I see moles on my skin I get them looked at, I self-check myself for testicular cancer - you can play an active role in your own health. You hear all these things about people leaving things too late, I think it is smart to take an active role in your health.

84. I will probably ask for a liver fibroscan when I see my doctor for my check up, just to see how it is getting on and to double check.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

85. I have not applied for any financial assistance, but I have been made aware of the process for the England Infected Blood Support Scheme

(EIBSS) and will make an application. My Mom is in the process of making an application.

Section 8. Other Issues

86. Whoever made the decision to take blood from prisoners or wherever they got their blood from, they are probably old enough to be retired or maybe even dead now. They probably were not in their 20s when it happened and the decisions were made and it was probably someone in their 50s or 60s because doctors are generally older. Maybe he or she never thought about the future ramifications or just didn't care or didn't know about them.

87. I think it is a bit strange asking a government, or asking a 'thing' - a non-human entity to apologise. It is no specific person's fault; you can't ask the NHS to apologise. The current Director of the NHS probably had nothing to do with it. It is like asking a child to apologise for something their parents did. I think what we can ask for is for the governing bodies and decision makers to be more careful and learn from their mistakes. I don't want an apology because it won't be genuine, it won't come from the person who made the decision.

88. In a way, you need to let go and never let it happen again. I hope if anything comes out of it, it is the thoroughness of checks of anything in future, whether it is trials for vaccines or drugs, to make sure they are reviewed and scanned for potential problems. In kitchens we have a step-by-step HACCP process to make sure what we do is safe. I would just hope they review their safety controls in future.

89. I still love the NHS, I am happy to pay for the NHS and I think everyone should have access to free health care. I think it is incredible. The fact that if you are sick, you get help. It is a fundamental Human Right and you should not have to pay privately for it.

90. I wanted to give a statement and I mostly gave it for my Mom. I want her to know it isn't her fault, because I think my Mom must blame herself, and she shouldn't. If by giving my statement I can remind her, that it's ok, it's not your fault, you don't have to hold onto this, you don't have to carry this burden or the weight of this, or any bad feelings of anything. As long as she feels this way, I am happy to do it.

91. We've gotten through it; we are both fine. Let's just enjoy our time.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed GRO-B

Dated 02/05/2025