



**June 2015**

**Regional newspapers**

Sir,

The impact of asbestos on a worker's health usually does not come to light until many years after exposure, at which time the employer's insurance details have sometimes been lost or destroyed, making it impossible for victims to pursue compensation. People dying of the fatal asbestos-related lung cancer mesothelioma can now turn to a payment scheme in this event, which provides redress to help make them comfortable in their final months. This development from the Government last year came after several years of campaigning by many victims' groups, including the Association of Personal Injury Lawyers, of which I am president. We think it is the least a person should be entitled to when handed a death sentence simply for turning up for work many years before.

But the many workers suffering, and dying, from asbestos-related cancers and industrial diseases other than mesothelioma are excluded from the scheme. This new Government can, and should, start making positive change by extending the scheme to help those people who find themselves in a horrifying situation because an employer failed to protect them.

The insurers who fund the scheme are the same insurers who have profited from the collection of premiums over many decades, and who continue to be subsidised by people suffering from illnesses and diseases other than mesothelioma.



The relief for victims of mesothelioma and their families is a good start, but more needs to be done.

Jonathan Wheeler

President

Association of Personal Injury Lawyers (APIL)