

**November 2011**

**NOTTINGHAM MUM BACKS CAMPAIGN AGAINST JUSTICE REFORMS**

A Nottingham mum, whose son developed cerebral palsy after he was starved of oxygen at birth, has backed a not-for-profit group's campaign against proposals to cut legal aid and restrict 'no-win, no-fee'.

Trisha Towle, 60, the mother of 26-year-old Aaron Tring, is supporting the Association of Personal Injury Lawyers (APIL) in its fight against proposals in the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Bill, which is being debated in the House of Commons this week (31 October to 2 November).

Trisha, from Bilborough, said: "Without legal aid, we would not have been able to bring Aaron's claim. Although I have worked all of my life, I would not have otherwise been able to afford it.

"Cutting legal aid and restricting 'no-win, no-fee' is ludicrous. It is absolute madness. There are too many people out there with things that have gone wrong who, like Aaron, should be given the chance to pursue justice.

"I wanted to find out if what happened to Aaron could have been avoided. It is important that mistakes are always learned from. It is about making sure that if someone has done something wrong, that they are properly held to account.



“Aaron has to have two carers with him 24 hours a day, but because we were able to bring his claim, we have the peace of mind that his complicated needs will now be met for the rest of his life.”

The Queen’s Medical Centre in Nottingham acknowledged the errors that occurred during Aaron’s birth. At the High Court in London in June this year, a judge approved a multi-million pound compensation settlement for his case.

Aaron’s solicitor Malcolm Goff, a member of APIL and a partner at Barratts solicitors in Nottingham, said that because Aaron’s case was complex it would have been very difficult to offer him a ‘no-win, no-fee’ arrangement in the absence of legal aid.

APIL president David Bott said: “Cutting legal aid for medical injuries at the same time as restricting ‘no-win, no-fee’ is a savage blow for people like Aaron, whose lives may have been shattered by their injuries.

“I have real concern that these reforms, if implemented, will deny access to justice for some victims whose cases are complicated. How can that ever be considered fair by a just and moral society?”

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Notes to editors:

- APIL (Association of Personal Injury Lawyers) is a not-for-profit organisation, whose members are dedicated to campaigning for improvements in the law to help people who are injured or become ill through no fault of their own.

- To interview Trisha Towle and David Bott please contact Chris Birkle, press and communications officer, t: 0115 943 5409, e: [chris.birkle@apil.org.uk](mailto:chris.birkle@apil.org.uk), or Jane Hartwell, press and communications officer, t: 0115 943 5416, e: [jane.hartwell@apil.org.uk](mailto:jane.hartwell@apil.org.uk).
- Visit the association's website at [www.apil.org.uk](http://www.apil.org.uk).

### **Aaron's story**

Aaron Tring, 26, from Bilborough in Nottingham, was starved of oxygen at birth in March 1985. As a result he suffers from cerebral palsy and is severely disabled. Aaron's parents say they were always assured that nothing could have been done to prevent his severe disability.

However, following investigations by his legal team, medical experts agreed that there were delays when he was born and that if he had been born a few minutes earlier his brain damage would have been prevented.

The complications of Aaron's case arose because initial expert reports were conflicting and the cost of funding further reports and investigations, to confirm that Aaron's case was meritorious, was too much for Aaron's legal team to take on under a 'no-win, no-fee' agreement.

Legal aid was the only option if Aaron's case were to be brought, says his solicitor. Under the Government's proposed reforms to restrict 'no-win, no-fee' and cut to legal aid for clinical negligence cases, Mr Goff says Aaron would have been denied access to justice.