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Cost-cutting NI Government ignores needs of injury victims

Injured people in Northern Ireland are being ignored in favour of a regime of 'cheap justice', says a UK-wide campaign group.

"In a bid to cut costs, the needs of the people our justice system is supposed to help are being dismissed," said Martin Hanna, representing the Association of Personal Injury Lawyers (APIL) in Northern Ireland.

An extensive review of access to justice is being undertaken by the Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service (NICTS) after it was announced that the legal aid budget is to be slashed.

Earlier pleas from APIL for money damages cases to remain within the scope of legal aid have been ignored in the latest consultation. Instead, the NICTS recommends that only people who are severely injured through clinical negligence can have access to legal aid.

"This is denying access to justice for many injured victims, purely on the grounds of how their injuries were received," said Martin. "All those who are injured through someone else's negligence should have the opportunity to seek fair redress to help them put their lives back on track".

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Notes to editors:



- For more information please contact the APIL press office on 0115 943 5409 / 0115 943 5416.
- APIL (Association of Personal Injury Lawyers) is a not-for-profit organisation whose members campaign for improvements in the law to help people who are injured or become ill through no fault of their own.
- To see APIL's responses to the Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service's review of access to justice, visit www.apil.org.uk/consultations-and-apil-responses.

Visit the association's website at www.apil.org.uk.