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Two year wait goes on for industrial disease victims

Asbestos victims are still dying without legal redress, two years after the Government finished consulting on plans to set up an insurance fund to help them.

The Association of Personal Injury Lawyers (APIL) has long-campaigned for a fund of last resort to compensate workers suffering from industrial diseases and who cannot pursue their former employers' insurers for compensation.

"An insurance fund of last resort is urgent, and it must compensate injured workers properly," said APIL president Karl Tonks. "Often people are exposed at work to something which makes them ill many years later, such as asbestos, and in that time insurance records are sometimes lost or destroyed".

Mesothelioma, an asbestos-related cancer, is of particular concern as it is terminal and life expectancy is short once a diagnosis has been made. Compensation is needed to help sufferers through their final days.

"For those who were exposed to harm many years ago and are now suffering the consequences, it is luck of the draw whether they can find the insurers they need for a claim," Karl explained. "That isn't their fault and they should not be denied justice because of it. Insurers have taken the premiums but by mere circumstance are not serving their responsibility to people some of whom are dying as a consequence of simply turning up for work".



The Labour Government's consultation, *Accessing Compensation*, about setting up a fund of last resort closed in May 2010.

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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.
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