

**21 February, 2006**

**ABI accused of “washing its hands” of plaques victims**

The Association of British Insurers (ABI) has been accused of washing its hands of pleural plaques victims, following its refusal to support moves to put plaques cases on hold until appeals have been heard in the House of Lords.

Lawyers are calling for a waiver of limitation laws, so that cases already in progress do not run out of time before the appeals are heard. Similarly, cases which are not yet in progress will also be free from the usual time constraints placed on personal injury claims.

Denise Kitchener, chief executive of the Association of Personal Injury Lawyers (APIL) said she was extremely disappointed the ABI had refused to support this move, particularly when there seemed to be some willingness within the industry to ease the uncertainty plaques victims are now dealing with.

“The ABI has made it clear that it will not be encouraging its members to show goodwill and offer limitation waivers,” she said. “We were told that it was up to individual insurers to ‘make their own commercial decisions.’”

“Such goodwill could be a lifeline for many plaques sufferers,” said Kitchener, “and I am extremely disappointed that the ABI has refused to provide some leadership on such a straightforward matter.”

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Note to editors:

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