



Action Mesothelioma Day raises awareness of this fatal asbestos cancer.

Asbestos is the single greatest cause of work-related deaths in the UK, and a damning indictment of corporate negligence.

More than 2,500 people are diagnosed with mesothelioma every year in the UK.

On Action Mesothelioma Day (04 July 2014), Thompsons Solicitors remembers the thousands of people who have lost their lives to the disease.

We are proud to act on behalf of, and campaign to support, families affected by asbestos exposure across the UK.

To find out more about Thompsons Solicitors' support for Action Mesothelioma Day, visit our campaign page, www.thompsons.law.co.uk/meso

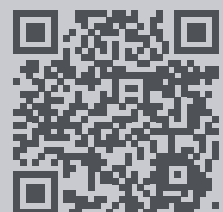
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To visit our campaign page, scan this QR code:



'Behind closed doors' deal between the government and insurers revealed

Following a Justice Select Committee hearing in May 2014, it was brought to light that a 'behind closed doors' deal had been struck between the government and the Association of British Insurers (ABI) to agree legal reforms that would benefit insurers potentially to the detriment of mesothelioma victims.

The 'heads of agreement' document between the ABI and the government outlined the scope of the deal which saw the government and the multimillion pound insurance industry collude to impose legal costs on mesothelioma sufferers.

When the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act (LASPO) was introduced on 01 April 2013, Parliament exempted mesothelioma claims from the Act's requirement that claimants pay legal costs, and mandated government to conduct a review into the likely effect of LASPO on mesothelioma claimants.

In December 2013, The Ministry of Justice announced its decision to remove the LASPO exemption from mesothelioma claims from July 2014, and in March 2014 published a cost benefit analysis seeking to justify that decision.

At a Justice Select Committee evidence session, Ian McFall, head of asbestos litigation at Thompsons, said he believed that a deal had been done between the government and the insurance industry that in return for insurers funding the Mesothelioma Act 2014 untraced insurance scheme, the government would introduce legal reforms, which included removing the LASPO exemption, delivering substantial, long-term savings to the insurance industry.

He argued that the proposals were presented as measures that would speed up the compensation claims process, but that the real agenda and the actual outcome was significant financial savings to the insurance industry through reducing the transaction costs of mesothelioma claims.

The 'heads of agreement' document has since been published in the public domain and clearly outlines the terms of the deal done between the government and the ABI.

Visit our campaign page, www.thompsons.law.co.uk/meso, to read the 'heads of agreement' document.

Lisa's father Billy was being treated in hospital, after suffering a fall and injuring his rib, when doctors noticed fluid on his lung. They attempted to drain it, but he suffered excruciating pain. After further investigation, Billy was eventually referred to a mesothelioma consultant, who asked when he had been diagnosed with the disease. Lisa's uncle had previously died of mesothelioma, but, until that point, her father had not been diagnosed. He became very ill and passed away, aged only 64.

Thompsons helped Lisa to trace the two heavy goods vehicle companies responsible for exposing her father to asbestos dust, and secure compensation.

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Our solicitor was so sincere and supportive. She always kept me informed, even though it was hard for me to talk about Dad after he died.

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Lisa Moss, daughter of Billy,
Thompsons' mesothelioma client



Thousands of industrial disease victims benefit following a challenge to government bureaucracy

In May 2014 with the backing of Unite the Union, Thompsons Solicitors won a Judicial Review against Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC), meaning that UK coroners will be able to request the work history of a person suspected to have died from industrial disease, without the need to apply to the High Court.

The Judicial Review arose from an inquest conducted by the Senior Coroner in Liverpool into the death of Unite member and asbestosis sufferer, Mr. Carmichael. The Coroner served a formal notice on HMRC requesting disclosure of Mr. Carmichael's work history, which HMRC refused to produce even though it had been HMRC practice for many years to disclose work histories on receipt of a signed consent form from the Personal Representative of a deceased.

The Carmichael family, backed by Unite, was represented in the Judicial Review as an 'interested party' and Thompsons' legal arguments were accepted by the Court, which decided that the Coroner's notice required HMRC to produce a work history for the inquest.

Ian McFall, head of asbestos litigation at Thompsons, said: "HMRC's policy on disclosure created an impasse which made it nigh on impossible to investigate many fatal occupational disease cases. The problem will not ultimately be cured until the Deregulation Bill becomes law but the Court's decision in this case is welcome as it will assist Coroners across the country to deal more efficiently with inquests at a time which is acutely distressing for the families of those who have died from industrial disease."

Emmerdale storyline boosts mesothelioma awareness

Weekly ITV soap, Emmerdale has put the asbestos-related cancer into the limelight after revealing that one of its characters is suffering from the disease.

While traditionally associated with older men who were exposed to asbestos decades previously, the terminal condition is affecting Donna Windsor, a relatively young woman.

Helen Tomlin, head of the Regional Asbestos Team at Thompsons in Leeds, believes this is an important opportunity to raise awareness of mesothelioma:

"An average Emmerdale episode attracts between six to eight million viewers, and, while it remains to be seen how this challenging storyline will be presented, it is welcome that it will be brought to the fore in mainstream television, giving a major awareness boost to this relatively unknown form of cancer."

Peter started his working life as an apprentice joiner, cutting sheets of asbestos to send out to sites. Working without protection, Peter was exposed to asbestos at a low level for 10 years. He was diagnosed with mesothelioma 50 years later.

Thompsons helped Peter to secure compensation, providing security for him and his wife.



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The painstakingly careful preparation got me a good settlement. Without that it would have been a very different outcome.”

Peter Thompson,
Thompsons' mesothelioma client

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When my husband, Harry, was diagnosed with mesothelioma neither of us could believe it. Harry died just 4 months after the diagnosis. It was devastating. But before he died we discussed the idea of pursuing compensation. I have nothing but praise for the Thompsons lawyer who handled Harry's claim. They were very thorough and detailed in all their research. Thompsons also made a complicated process so much easier to deal with and explained everything every step of the way. To be honest, I was staggered by the settlement – it was 3 times what I was expecting. It can't bring Harry back. But Harry would be glad to know my future is secured and I have given some of the money to a fund researching into finding a cure for mesothelioma.

Mrs Worth, wife of Harry, Thompsons' mesothelioma client

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About Thompsons

At Thompsons Solicitors, we have a dedicated team of experts who deal exclusively with compensation claims for asbestos related diseases.

Thompsons has unrivalled experience in this complex area of law. We brought the first ever successful case for asbestos disease in the UK in the House of Lords and have been involved in ground breaking asbestos compensation cases ever since.

We have dealt with thousands of claims and achieved substantial levels of compensation for our mesothelioma clients, and done so with empathy and compassion. Our formidable reputation means we will fight hard for the maximum compensation in the shortest possible time for both individuals and their families.

We are proud of the fact that we only ever act for individuals – never for employers and never for the insurance industry.

If you would like more information about advice and support groups for those affected by mesothelioma, please visit our campaign page.

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Get in touch

If you, or someone you know, may be suffering from an asbestos related illness, please complete this form to receive a call back from an expert solicitor, or call us on 0800 0 224 224.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone number: _____

Mobile number: _____

Email address: _____

Please tick the box if you would like a copy of our free guide to making an asbestos compensation claim: Yes No

