

Health and Social Care Committee
Recovery of Medical Costs for Asbestos Diseases (Wales) Bill
RMCA20 – Individual Response

I am speaking as a Carer and therefore from a carer's perspective. Please note my experience may not fall in the chronological order as requested above.

A Bill once it is finally sanctioned becomes law therefore one would expect a disciplined and responsible approach in abiding by the requirements as laid down, if that is not adhered to, perhaps by malpractice, negligence or simply ignoring the Health and Safety of employees they should be held responsible.

I had to care as next of kin for nearly one year for an illness I had no knowledge of; the history of mesothelioma and its aggressive nature, until I was landed with the caring role. This disease is invasive, aggressive, it burrows into normal cells like woodworms in new damp timber. Mesothelioma robs its victim of dignity, self-esteem, sleep, loss of appetite, and finally chokes its victim to death and in its path to destruction invades as many internal organs within its pathway. The term "Silent Killer" is appropriately named.

Every employer who knowingly import, use or mismanage or fail to appropriately train and prepare their employees to recognise the said product in the course of their engagement with such company are responsible and should be made to pay to the NHS the cost of care for such individual regardless of whether that individual obtained compensation as a result of his disability.

The Action mesothelioma Charter offers strict guidelines which should be followed by employers (A) to identify all asbestos in their properties and organise its safe removal.

To see a loved one suffer the consequences of Mesothelioma and its debilitating symptoms is a painful process." Who cares for the Carers" therefore the cost should also relate within the Bill to appropriate payment to the Carer for the emotional physical and psychological damage.

The Bill should contain a Global ban on the import within the UK and a ban on the mining of Asbestos in countries that have trade connections with the United Kingdom. Unless there is a total ban on the Asbestos trade the damaging effects of the disease will continue to rise.

Costs recovered should go towards further research into methods for improving quality and longevity and of course the training of specialist nursing and medical staff and an efficient Home Care Service for victims.

From a carers observation the earlier a diagnosis is confirmed the earlier treatment can be started. There have been cases of considerably late confirmed

diagnosis where trials are not given the opportunity to see results and quality of life disappears in the shadows sadly these observations are usually seen at first hand by the carer.

I support the Bill and wish that its introduction is with haste!