

# Mick Antoniw AM

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Mark Drakeford AM  
Chair, Health and Social Care Committee  
National Assembly for Wales  
Cardiff  
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15 February 2013

Dear Mark

## **Recovery of Medical Costs for Asbestos Diseases (Wales) Bill**

Thank you for your letter of 11 February 2013, and for sight of the letter from the DWP Compensation Recovery Unit (CRU) about my Bill.

As I mentioned in my oral evidence, I have not been in direct contact with the CRU, as this is a matter more appropriately dealt with by the Minister as part of inter-governmental arrangements.

However, I understand from the Minister that her officials have had an initial meeting with the CRU (as mentioned in Mr Clark's letter), and that they are in the process of arranging a further meeting to discuss the requirements in more detail. As indicated by the Minister, the timing of these discussions is important, as the more detailed requirements provided by the Minister's officials to the CRU will need to take account of the Committee's views and recommendations arising from its Stage 1 work.

I hope the outcome of these discussions will be positive, and I note that the letter from the CRU states that they "do not anticipate that any of the issues would be insurmountable", subject to achieving the necessary clearances and resolving any capacity issues.

I would like to point out that, although the CRU is the preferred option for administering the scheme, especially given the existing relationship with the Welsh Government, the Explanatory Memorandum does set out two

alternative options involving either a dedicated unit in the Welsh Government assuming a coordinating role in the same way as the CRU, or for the notification of claims to go directly to the Local Health Board with primary responsibility for providing care. In my view, either option would enable the recovery of medical costs to be used for the benefit of asbestos victims and their families.

A copy of this letter goes to the Minister for Health and Social Services.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mick Antoniw', with a horizontal line underneath it.

Mick Antoniw AM