

**British Lung  
Foundation**

# Action Mesothelioma Day 2010 Campaign Guide

# Introduction



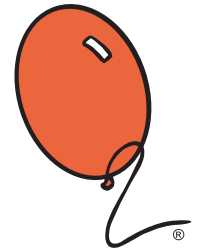
Dear campaigner,

After supporting us for many years now you will know that **Action Mesothelioma Day** is fast approaching and I'm sure many of you will be busy planning events to raise awareness of the asbestos-related chest cancer. In case you needed any inspiration I have compiled a support pack to help you shout from the roof tops about your campaign messages.

The pack has been designed to provide you with any support that you might need and I hope you find the following materials helpful:

- Overview of the campaign
- Handy tips for campaigning
- A template press release to publicise your event
- A template letter to invite local politicians to your event

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## The Action Mesothelioma Day 2010 campaign

### Be Asbestos Aware

The theme of this year's campaign is 'Be Asbestos Aware'. You're probably familiar with the theme as it has been used in previous Action Mesothelioma campaigns and has been extremely successful. Every year for the national campaign we tend to have a focus for the key messages. This year we will be targeting homeowners who do DIY in their own home but may not realise the dangers of asbestos if their property was built pre 1980s.

### Celebrity support

We are pleased to announce that a famous face will be helping us to spread the work about mesothelioma. Craig Phillips, most famously known for winning Celebrity Big Brother 1 and more recently for his handyman role in the popular home show, 60 Minute Makeover, is that face. Sadly, not only does Craig fit the bill with the DIY theme for this year's campaign, he also has a personal connection as his uncle has an asbestos-related lung disease. Craig will act as our celebrity ambassador and will provide top tips on asbestos and how to keep safe.

### Campaigning messages for 'Be Asbestos Aware' 2010

- Do not dismiss asbestos as a problem of the past. Even now, people could still be putting themselves at risk of developing a cruel cancer or other lung disease.
- Be Asbestos Aware, even if you think you know about asbestos, make sure you are aware of all the latest advice by going to the British Lung Foundation's website [www.lunguk.org](http://www.lunguk.org) or their helpline **08458 50 50 20**

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## Key Statistics

There are also the **key statistics** about mesothelioma, which you may find useful for your campaigns. These are detailed below for your convenience:

- Mesothelioma is a malignant cancer which develops between 15 and 60 years after exposure to asbestos in the two-layered membrane surrounding the lungs and lining the inside of the rib cage (pleura).
- Mesothelioma kills one person every five hours in the UK, yet only six per cent of people are aware of the disease.
- The rising number of deaths from the condition is linked to the use of asbestos in the building industry up until the mid 1980s.
- The number of mesothelioma deaths each year in the UK has increased from 153 in 1968 to around 2000 today
- Experts predict that we will face a mesothelioma epidemic between 2011 and 2015 as the death toll rises
- It is estimated that between 2006 and 2020, 30,000 people in the UK will die from mesothelioma, and that 90,000 will have died by 2050

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## Other useful information

### Contacting your local MP

When you email or write to your local politician to ask them to attend your Action Mesothelioma Day event, bear in mind the election that will be taking place on 6th May this year. Your current politician may not be re-elected so you may need to approach your new MP once they are elected. To do this you can use the enclosed template letter as a guide and don't hesitate to phone the Communications Team if you have problems finding their names and addresses.

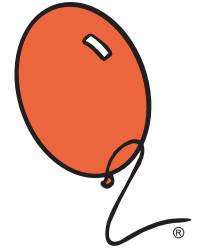
If you are especially keen to get your MP along to your event then it is best to organise it on Action Mesothelioma Day (Friday 2nd July) as this is often the most suitable day for MPs as they tend to be in Parliament from Monday to Thursday.

In terms of a Parliamentary event, it's going to be difficult this year due to the elections, however nationally we are going to organise Early Day Motions and Parliamentary Questions focused on AMD 2010 issues, timed to coincide with the AMD 2010 campaign in all UK Parliaments.

### Other ways to get involved

Here at the BLF we are always grateful for your help and another way you can help spread the word is by becoming a BLF case study. It's always good to get a real angle of a story and someone's personal experience sends out a much stronger message. If you would be interested in becoming a case study and speaking to journalists about how you have been affected by mesothelioma, please contact the Communications team.

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## Further information

If you have any questions regarding Action Mesothelioma Day then please do not hesitate to contact your local Development Officer or the Communications Team in Head Office on **0207688 5565** or email [hayley.richardson@blf-uk.org](mailto:hayley.richardson@blf-uk.org) - we are more than happy to help. I would like to take this opportunity to wish you a successful Action Mesothelioma Day.

With best wishes,

Hayley Richardson, Press and Campaigns Officer

**Action Mesothelioma Day 2010 is supported by**

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# Press Release Template



## **[location] support group airs asbestos concerns**

Lung disease will be brought to the forefront of the health agenda on Friday 2nd July, as the [location] asbestos support group joins forces with the British Lung Foundation to raise awareness of Mesothelioma - an asbestos related cancer on Action Mesothelioma Day.

To support the campaign, members of the [location] asbestos support group will be campaigning for better care and support for those who have been diagnosed with mesothelioma by holding a [event] on [date] at [time] in [location].

Mesothelioma is a terminal chest cancer which develops between 15 and 60 years after exposure to asbestos. The disease kills one person every five hours in the UK, yet only six per cent of people know what the disease is. The rising number of deaths from the condition is linked to the use of asbestos up until the mid 1980s.

The campaign will also address the belief that asbestos is a thing of the past as many people are not aware that they could still be at risk today. The British Lung Foundation's national campaign Be Asbestos Aware will focus heavily on the risks to homeowners who do DIY in their properties, which were built between the 1950s and mid 1980s, and may contain asbestos. Astonishingly, asbestos was even being used in some cement products up until 1999.

[Name of Spokesperson], of [location] asbestos support group says: "Mesothelioma is such a cruel disease and people who are diagnosed often came into contact with asbestos many years ago and didn't realise it posed a threat – the lag time between exposure and diagnosis can be between 15 and 60 years. We are joining forces with the British Lung Foundation's to raise awareness of mesothelioma on Action Mesothelioma Day so that those most at risk can protect themselves from exposure to asbestos and its tragic consequences."

For more information about [location] asbestos support group please contact [name] on [telephone number] or [email]

-Ends-

# Press Release Template



## Notes to Editors

1. [location] asbestos support group joined together with the British Lung Foundation, mesothelioma charities, healthcare professionals and bereaved families who have been affected by the disease in 2006 to form a coalition to campaign on issues that impact people affected by mesothelioma.
2. The campaign centres around Action Mesothelioma Day which is on the 2nd July each year.
3. The British Lung Foundation is the only UK charity working for everyone affected by lung disease. The charity focuses its resources on providing support for people affected by lung disease today; and works in a variety of ways (including funding world-class research) to bring about positive change, to improve treatment, care and support for people affected by lung disease in the future.
4. It provides information via the website [www.lunguk.org](http://www.lunguk.org) and telephone helpline 08458 50 50 20
5. Someone dies every five hours from mesothelioma in the UK.
6. Experts predict that we will face a mesothelioma epidemic between 2011 and 2015 as the death toll rises over the next decade.
7. 30,000 people are thought to have died of mesothelioma already; a further 90,000 are expected to die of the disease by 2050
8. There are 33 % more deaths from mesothelioma than from cervical cancer



# Template Letter to local MP



[Date]

[Name] MP  
House of Commons  
London,  
SW1A 0AA

Invitation to visit [location] Asbestos Support Group to mark Action Mesothelioma Day 2010

Dear [Name]

I am writing to you as one of your constituents and a member of [location] Asbestos Support Group. Asbestos Support Groups work in partnership with the British Lung Foundation to provide information and support to anyone affected by an asbestos-related lung disease.

To mark Action Mesothelioma Day, the British Lung Foundation is launching the Be Asbestos Aware campaign on the 2nd July. Mesothelioma is a malignant cancer which develops between 15 and 60 years exposure to asbestos. It kills one person every five hours in the UK, yet only six per cent of people are aware of the disease.

To inform members of the local community about Mesothelioma, [location] Asbestos Support Group will be holding an [enter event as applicable] in your constituency at [venue] from [start time] to [end time] and we would be delighted if you could join us during the day.

We would welcome the opportunity to meet with you to discuss the campaign and raise awareness of the disease. We will be inviting local media to attend and there will also be an opportunity for you to give a short speech if you would like to do so. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you would like any additional information about Asbestos Support Groups or the British Lung Foundation.

I look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience.

Yours sincerely

[Name]  
[[location] Asbestos Support Group]

[Telephone number]