

Putting a Human Face on Malignant Mesothelioma

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Agency: **The Law Offices of James Sokolove**

Online Forum Gives Victims and Families the Opportunity to Be Heard—and to Heal

For most people familiar with the term “mesothelioma”, hearing the word conjures thoughts of courtroom battles, news headlines and hefty cash settlements. But for those directly affected by the illness—one that causes as many as 3,000 deaths each year in the U.S.—mesothelioma has a decidedly human face.

“I lost my wonderful wife of 34 years to mesothelioma in March of 2000. She had just reached her 53rd birthday three days before she passed away. I pray that no one has to go through this ordeal alone.”

These sentiments were expressed by someone known only as “papajim586” on the discussion board at the Mesothelioma Resource Center (www.mesorc.com), a new website launched by the Law Offices of James Sokolove. The site’s discussion forum provides a community in which those impacted by mesothelioma can exchange experiences, pay tribute to loved ones, and give and receive emotional comfort.

In a section of the forum called “Personal Stories and Remembrances”, a woman who calls herself “Patsy” describes the anguish of watching her father’s health deteriorate as he struggled with mesothelioma: “... After the diagnosis, he was moved to a hospital bed and his appetite diminished. He put up such a courageous battle ... we know that he is in a better place ...but some days I am so mad that he was taken from us.”

Social worker Mellissa Hayon, LICSW, is the voice of hope behind the Mesothelioma Resource Center, providing individualized support to victims and their loved ones. “Many of these people feel isolated and alone,” says Hayon. “Some have never heard of mesothelioma and don’t know where to start. Often, my main role is to listen and help the victim or family move in the right direction.”

Hayon feels that talking with others in a similar situation can help lighten the burden of mesothelioma. She hopes that visitors to the Mesothelioma Resource Center will take advantage of not only the discussion forum, but also the site’s wealth of information on mesothelioma treatments and coping with the disease.

“By looking at a client as a person—not just a legal case—I believe we at LOJS are able to help them achieve a better quality of life, despite the challenges they face with this devastating diagnosis.”

Those interested in joining the discussion about mesothelioma and learning more about the disease can do so by visiting www.mesorc.com.

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