

August 2012

Brain injury victim backs campaign against compensation cuts

Assault victim Mark Miller, who says he was inspired to cling to life in the hope of meeting his unborn daughter, has backed a not-for-profit group's campaign against Government plans to slash compensation payments for victims of crime.

Mark, 27, who was left with a brain injury following a random attack, says he is "fully against" proposals to reduce payments for loss of earnings.

Currently, an injured crime victim who can no longer work, or who has a limited capacity to do so, is awarded a sum to reflect what he would have been able to earn during his lifetime. But the Government wants to limit this to a level of earnings equivalent to statutory sick pay.

"I cannot express enough how much of a bad idea this is," said Mark, who came out of an induced coma to later witness the birth of his daughter, Daisy. "Statutory sick pay cannot cover a person's basic living expenses. People need to be compensated properly."

Mark, who was in hospital for two-and-a-half months after being repeatedly punched, kicked and stamped on by three youths in an alleyway in Swansea in April 2008, now suffers short-term memory loss and has difficulties with his balance.

Earlier this month he was awarded £246,000 by the Government's Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme (CICS). Of that sum, £190,000 was awarded for his loss of potential



earnings as he was unable to complete his degree in management science and now has a very limited capacity to work.

If Mark were to bring his claim following the implementation of the Government's proposals, his solicitor says he would be awarded around £80,000 for loss of earnings - a cut of nearly 60 per cent.

"Although I was attacked more than four years ago, I still have to attend rehabilitation and occupational therapy," said Mark, who is now separated from Daisy's mother.

"I still suffer the effects of my short term memory problem. My balance is still not 100 per cent. And I know I've been through a personality change. This attack has changed my life. People who have been through the same should be compensated properly."

Karl Tonks, president of the Association of Personal Injury Lawyers (APIL) said:

"Policymakers need to understand that to cut compensation payments for victims of crime is to cut their access to justice.

"The Government needs to rethink these proposals and ensure that vulnerable people do not miss out on the redress they need to help get their lives back on track."

-Ends-

Notes for editors:



- To arrange an interview with Mark, or for more information about his story, please contact the APIL press office on 0115 943 5409 or 0115 943 5416
- APIL (Association of Personal Injury Lawyers) is a not-for-profit organisation, whose members are dedicated to campaigning for improvements in the law to help people who are injured or become ill through no fault of their own
- Further information can be found at www.apil.org.uk