

ological and tumours have been reported by pathologists (Wagner, 1964; Hargrave, 1964; Hargrave, 1971) ICC panel to the Appendix. The reports were reviewed. Where opinions on a particular material to be taken. The report after the by the non- by these following groups: the pathologist, the supported by the pathology, laparoscopic, the diagnosis

examined and a diagnosis of mesothelioma by the pathologist to be made. The report by the UICC

Where the material, oropsy material

alternative

st, thorax and is that given. Where theopsy report,

reviewed, but interviewed. The report was also by employers. It was made by who may or may not be a pathologist. The final clinical adviser in this took the report received.

is defined as full-time or part-time asbestos-

containing compounds, or where the subject worked in an atmosphere contaminated by asbestos dust.

'Possible', where the job description was too imprecise to be certain, but there was a strong suspicion of exposure to asbestos.

'None', where, after exhaustive enquiry, no occupational exposure could be presumed.

'Unknown', where adequate industrial details were not forthcoming. If possible the duration of exposure was recorded and the length of time before death that exposure ceased. The duration in intermittent exposures is presented as a cumulative figure.

Domestic exposure

Domestic exposure was considered as positive when a history that members of a subject's family had come home visibly contaminated by asbestos was obtained.

Hobby exposure

Hobby exposure was recorded in several householders or smallholders who gave a history of sawing asbestos sheeting for the construction of outhouses, garages, and chicken houses.

Neighbourhood exposure

Neighbourhood exposure was recorded when subjects lived within one mile of an asbestos factory or shipyard using asbestos but had no occupational exposure.

Other evidence of asbestos exposure

Asbestos exposure was presumed in cases showing evidence of asbestosis (either on chest radiograph or at necropsy) and in those in whom asbestos bodies

or fibres had been demonstrated by light microscopy in sputum, lung sections, or fluid expressed from the cut surface of the lung. The reported finding of pleural plaques at operation or necropsy, or evidence of plaques on the chest radiograph, was regarded as suggestive of asbestos exposure.

Results

For the years 1967 and 1968, a total of 413 cases was reported to the mesothelioma register. Of these, 168 were first notified by death certificate as having died in those years and a further 166 were notified in life and died during this period. Seventy-nine subjects notified survived the period of study.

Death certificates were the most important source of notification comprising 53.5% of all notifications in 1967 and 77.8% in 1968. In the absence of death certifications, further notifications were received from cancer bureaux, 45 (26.5%) in 1967 and 33 (13.6%) in 1968. Further groups of cases were reported exclusively by other sources (physicians, surgeons, and pathologists), 31 (18.2%) in 1967 and 18 (7.4%) in 1968. Three other cases otherwise unreported were reported in each year by the Pneumoconiosis Medical Panels. A total of 170 notifications were made in 1967 and 243 in 1968.

Pathological diagnosis

In Table 1 the notifications are shown categorized according to the criteria of diagnosis. The correlation between histological diagnosis and the diagnosis given on the death certificate was weak. Of the 246 cases accepted as 'definite', only 186 were so described on death certificates. On the other hand, of 76 cases 'definitely not mesothelioma' death had been attributed to mesothelioma on the death

TABLE 1
NOTIFICATIONS TO MESOTHELIOMA REGISTER ANALYSED BY DIAGNOSTIC CRITERIA AND SITE OF TUMOUR

	Site of tumour	Diagnostic category ¹				Total
		Definite	Undecided	Insufficient material	Definitely not	
UICC Panel	Pleura	118	14	12	23	167
	Peritoneum	16	4	1	7	28
Other pathologists	Pleura	98	26	32	42	198
	Peritoneum	14	2	0	4	20
Total	Pleura	216	40	44	65	365
	Peritoneum	30	6	1	11	48
All cases		246	46	45	76	413

¹See text for definition