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Welcome

E ngā mana, e ngā reo, e ngā iwi o ngā hau e whā, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou katoa.

Welcome to the first edition of the New Zealand Injury Prevention Strategy newsletter.

I launched the New Zealand Injury Prevention Strategy in June 2003 and its Implementation Plan later in the year. The Strategy is an expression of the Government's commitment to working with organisations and groups in the wider community to improve the country's injury prevention performance.

We are striving to achieve a safe New Zealand, becoming injury free, and believe that no individual or individual organisation can work in isolation to create this vision. By working together with the combined contribution and commitment of government agencies, non-government organisations, communities and individuals, I believe our vision is attainable.

For a collaborative and co-ordinated approach to injury prevention to be effective, we need to ensure that we communicate with one another, share ideas and actions, best practices and lessons learnt along the way. To this extent the Strategy's Secretariat acts as a conduit of information, collecting and disseminating to a wide audience. This newsletter is one of the forums being used to facilitate the sharing of information.

The newsletter will keep us all informed about the progress we are making toward a safe New Zealand. For my part, I will be keeping a close watch on developments and will work with my colleagues to achieve a positive safety culture and the creation of safe environments for all New Zealanders.

Hon Ruth Dyson
Minister for ACC

Visit us online!

The NZ Injury Prevention Strategy has its own website at www.nzips.govt.nz. Visit the site and you can read the Strategy and Implementation Plan as well as the latest news from the government agencies and non-government organisations involved.

Introducing the Secretariat

The New Zealand Injury Prevention Strategy's implementation is being facilitated by a Secretariat within ACC, comprising Geoff Wilson (Manager), Bhama Rajiv Kumar (Senior Business Analyst) and Megan Bly (Business Analyst).

The Secretariat is responsible for leading and co-ordinating injury prevention work under the Implementation Plan, producing the Strategy's accountability reports and collecting and disseminating information. Our goal is to see the injury prevention community take a more collaborative and co-ordinated approach to injury prevention, to discuss and debate ideas and actions – and to use these ideas to achieve the Strategy's vision of a safe New Zealand, becoming injury free.

Your contributions are welcome.

In the short time the Secretariat has been going, we've been delighted to learn about some excellent injury prevention initiatives throughout the country. We'd like to hear more, so please let us know about any upcoming events you know of or information you think would be useful to others in the injury prevention community.

Finding us is easy: just contact Megan Bly on 04 918 7189 or at megan.bly@acc.co.nz – we'll either add your information to our website at www.nzips.govt.nz or include it in the next edition of this newsletter.

We look forward to hearing from you!

The Secretariat

In this issue

Although the Strategy covers all types of injury, six national 'injury prevention priority areas' have been identified that collectively account for at least 80% of injury deaths and serious injuries in New Zealand.

Specific government agencies are tasked with leading the development or implementation of national strategies for each of these priority areas. In this issue we take a closer look at six of the areas and the work currently underway to address them.

Workplace injuries (including occupational diseases)

Why is this a priority?

In 2002, ACC managed almost 230,000 work-related injury claims*; males accounted for 74% of them. Injury rates from the Work-related Fatal Injury Study (Feyer et al. 1999) suggest that work-related deaths contribute to about 5% of all injury deaths. However, while information on the number of work-related injuries in New Zealand is reasonably comprehensive, much less is known about the extent of illness and death owing to occupational diseases. This makes it difficult to establish the total number of deaths owing to work activity each year.

* According to an annual report on work-related injury statistics for 2001 and 2002, published by Statistics New Zealand.

What's happening?

The Department of Labour is leading the development of a Workplace Health and Safety Strategy with the assistance of an Interagency Group and a Stakeholder Group.

- The Strategy will provide a vision and strategic direction for workplace health and safety in New Zealand. It will provide a framework for the development of more specific plans for implementation.
- A Draft Strategy has been completed and will be discussed at the Stakeholder Group in May. Following this, approval will be sought for release for public consultation.
- It is anticipated that a Draft Strategy will be released for public consultation around October this year.

For more information

- Lead agency: Department of Labour
- www.dol.govt.nz
- www.osh.govt.nz

Motor vehicle crashes

Why is this a priority?

Every year, thousands of people are seriously injured in crashes on New Zealand's roads. These crashes often produce traumatic and long-lasting injuries, with equally long-lasting social and economic consequences - not only in medical and rehabilitation costs and property damage but also in pain and suffering for the victims and their families and friends.

What's happening?

Two documents are guiding road transport safety work in New Zealand: the New Zealand Transport Strategy (the Government's vision for transport) and Road Safety to 2010, which covers the road safety results the Government wants to achieve by 2010. The Road Safety to 2010 strategy's priority areas are:

- engineering safer roads
- reducing speed
- combating drink-driving
- dealing with serious offenders
- encouraging the use of safety belts
- improving pedestrian and cyclist safety
- improving the vehicle fleet
- new and better targeted education initiatives.

Initiatives already underway include:

- Up to Scratch – a voluntary test of people's knowledge of the road code and road safety targeted at the majority of drivers who receive no driver education between obtaining their licence and turning 80
- \$47 million over two years invested in new road safety engineering projects which include a roadside hazard assessment programme to identify and reduce the effects of roadside hazards
- 'Anywhere any time' speed cameras and the removal of speed camera signs and zones
- Safety Management Systems – to ensure road controlling authority decisions about construction, maintenance and management of road networks lead to the achievement of clear safety targets
- The development of strategies for improving the safety of specific road user groups, such as the Pedestrian and Cyclist Safety Framework and a Heavy Vehicle Safety Strategy
- Novice Driver Education – to trial new driver education approaches that enhance the value of the graduated driver licensing system as a progressive preparation of novice drivers for driving independently.

For more information

- Lead agency: Land Transport Safety Authority
- Road Safety to 2010: www.ltsa.govt.nz/strategy-2010
- New Zealand Transport Strategy: www.beehive.govt.nz/nzts

The Strategy – what is it?

Injuries are New Zealand's leading cause of premature death and disability, resulting in about 1600 deaths and 42,000 hospitalisations every year.

The Strategy aims to reduce – and preferably eliminate – statistics like these. It provides government, local government and non-government organisations, communities and individuals with a framework for their injury prevention work.

The Strategy has a vision of 'a safe New Zealand, becoming injury free'. Its broad structure includes a set of 11 principles, two goals (to achieve a positive safety culture and create safe environments), 10 objectives and a wide range of actions designed to meet the objectives.

The Strategy has since been supplemented with the 2004/05 Implementation Plan. This outlines activities that government agencies will take over the 12-month period, in partnership with non-government organisations and community groups, to make the Strategy a reality. Government agencies are required to report to the Secretariat on their achievement of specific work items, and the Secretariat will also collect information, where appropriate, from other involved organisations and groups.

The Minister for ACC will report annually to Parliament on progress against the Implementation Plan. The first report will be available in late 2005.

Suicide and deliberate self-harm

Why is this a priority?

Suicidal behaviour (which ranges from thoughts and ideas to attempts and death) is a preventable, and significant public health issue in New Zealand. It is a major source of morbidity and mortality and a significant contributor to social, economic and health costs. In 2000 suicide and intentional self-inflicted injury made up the greatest proportion of all injury related fatalities. Preventing suicidal behaviour requires coordinated and comprehensive action from a range of government and community sectors, from promoting resiliency to crisis management and support.

What's happening?

- The 1998 New Zealand Youth Suicide Prevention Strategy outlines key interventions needed for preventing youth suicide, both among the general population and among Māori. The Ministry of Social Development is now evaluating the Strategy in two phases, with Phase One already published and Phase Two due to be completed in July 2004.
- The Ministries of Health and Youth Development are developing a national strategy for all age groups, using the experience of the New Zealand Youth Suicide Prevention Strategy and suicide-related research done over the past five years. In 2004 the research will be reviewed and approaches and priorities identified. The strategy should be finished in 2005.

For more information

- Lead agencies: Ministry of Health and Ministry of Youth Development
- www.moh.govt.nz
- www.youthaffairs.govt.nz

Falls

Why is this a priority?

Falls are New Zealand's leading cause of hospitalisation, and one of the top three leading causes of death by injury. They account for injuries among all age groups, from pre-school children to older adults, with significant human and social costs.

What's happening?

ACC is leading the development of a national falls prevention strategy. The strategy's implementation actions will depend on the many and complex risk factors for falls in different age groups.

Programmes already implemented include:

- child safety seminars to educate parents
- playground safety standards
- a recent mass media campaign highlighting slips, trips and falls in the home, and their prevalence, severity and preventive solutions
- For older adults, recognising that falls in this population require a multi-factorial approach to prevention, ACC is piloting a multi-factorial risk assessment and interventions
- Single interventions, both evidence and exercise based, that can be either stand alone or part of a broader multifactorial approach, including:
 - the Otago Exercise Programme, an individually tailored home exercise initiative that addresses strength and balance weaknesses in high-risk adults over 80 years and those with a history of previous falls, and;
 - ACC-contracted, community-based tai chi programmes modified and targeted for older people
- an ACC-piloted programme in which hip protectors are provided to people in rest homes to reduce the likelihood of hip fractures after falls.

Recognising that falls require a multi-factorial approach to prevention, ACC is piloting multi-factorial risk assessments and interventions.

For more information

- Lead agency: ACC, Injury Prevention and Client Services Division
- www.acc.co.nz



Assault

Why is this a priority?

Crimes of personal violence provoke anxiety and fear. Violent crimes can have devastating effects on individuals, families and communities. Repeat violent victimisation by partners and those well known to the victim is common – 10% of those assaulted by their current partner in 2000 had been assaulted five or more times by that partner. Personal violence disproportionately affects the young, those towards the lower end of the socio-economic scale, Māori and Pacific peoples.

What's happening?

Under the Government's Crime Reduction Strategy (CRS):

- the Ministry of Social Development is leading a number of actions to improve the safety and security of children and their families. One of these initiatives, Te Rito – New Zealand Family Violence Prevention Strategy, was developed as a result of a review of family violence prevention in New Zealand. It sets out the Government's key goals and objectives, guiding principles and a five-year implementation plan to maximise progress toward the vision of families/whanau living free from violence.
- the Ministry of Justice is leading the development and implementation of an Action Plan to Reduce Community Violence and Sexual Violence to address the CRS's 'other violence including sexual violence' priority area. It identifies four areas as priorities for government action:
 - attitudes to violence
 - alcohol-related violence
 - violence in public places
 - sexual violence.

For more information

- Lead agencies: Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Social Development
- www.justice.govt.nz
- www.msdc.govt.nz

Drowning and near drowning

Why is this a priority?

On average, 130 New Zealanders drown annually, making drowning a leading cause of unintentional death by injury in this country. There has been a general decreasing trend in the number of drownings. However, New Zealand still has one of the highest rates of drowning in the western world, almost double the drowning rate per head of population of Australia and over four times the drowning rate per head of population of Great Britain.

What's happening

ACC is leading the development of a national drowning and near-drowning prevention strategy.

- A literature review has been commissioned of the risk factors for drowning and near-drowning to develop effective policy options and initiatives. This will inform the development of the Strategy.
- A stocktake of national water safety activity is planned in May 2004.

For more information

- Lead agency: ACC, Injury Prevention and Client Services Division
- www.acc.co.nz