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0297 MOTORCYCLE INJURIES ACROSS THE USA, 2001–2008: INJURY COMPARISONS AND PROJECTIONS

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Background In 2008, motor vehicle occupant deaths in the USA declined to their lowest level in the last three decades, while motorcyclist deaths increased to an all time high, more than doubling in the last 10 years.

Objectives To estimate the number of emergency department (ED)-treated non-fatal motorcyclist injuries in the USA between 2001 and 2008, describe important characteristics of these injuries, compare rates of non-fatal to fatal injury, and project the number of ED-treated motorcyclist injuries that may be observed in 2010 and 2020.

Methods Data were obtained from the National Electronic Injury Surveillance System-All Injury Program for the years

2001 through 2008. Injuries were categorised by body part primarily affected, primary diagnoses, and ED discharge disposition. Weighted estimates and rates were calculated, and linear regression was used to estimate the number of future motorcycle injuries.

Results Between 2001 and 2008, an estimated 1 221 690 persons were treated in a USA ED for a non-fatal motorcycle injury. The highest injury and death rates occurred in the 20–24-year-old age group. Motorcycle death rates increased 50% from 1.29 per 100 000 persons in 2001 to 1.94 per 100 000 persons in 2008. ED-treated non-fatal motorcyclist injuries also displayed an increasing trend, and preliminary projections indicate these injuries may nearly double again from 170 000 to 320 000 annual injuries between 2008 and 2020 given current trends.

Discussion Reversing the increasing trend of motorcyclist injury, death and cost across the USA will take a concerted effort among traffic safety and public health practitioners, the medical community and policymakers.

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