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NEW ZEALAND ESTIMATES OF THE TOTAL SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC COST OF INJURIES

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Background The New Zealand Injury Prevention Strategy (NZIPS) identifies six priority areas—assault, drowning, falls, motor vehicle traffic crashes, suicide/selfharm and work-related injury. Conservative and consistent cost estimates are required to monitor Strategy outcomes over time.

Objective To estimate the total economic and social cost of injury, by priority area, for the years 2007 to 2010.

Methods The Accident Compensation Corporation (ACC) covers all injury in New Zealand. Treatment and rehabilitation costs and lost economic contribution from non-fatal injury are based on ACC expenditure data. Human costs are estimated using the value of a preventable fatality (willingness to pay), years of life lost, and disability adjusted life year ratios.

Results The total cost of injury in New Zealand is NZ\$10.2 billion. This comprises of \$1.3 billion of treatment and rehabilitation costs, \$1.9 billion of lost economic contribution and \$7.1 billion of human costs (includes the cost of pain and suffering). Motor vehicle traffic crashes have the highest total cost, followed by suicide, then falls.

Significance/Contribution to the Field This research provides a consistent set of cost estimates across the six government priority areas. It will be used to monitor progress against the New Zealand Injury Prevention Strategy and to inform injury prevention cost benefit analyses.