

## State of the Art - Tuesday 2 Oct

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### CAUTION! PARADIGM SHIFT AHEAD: 'ADOLESCENT MOBILITY HEALTH'

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**Background** Adolescents belong to an age group warranting special transport and mobility research and programmes. From a road safety perspective, they carry the largest crash and morbidity/mortality risk of any age group. This has led to considerable research and safety programmes, but these efforts have plateaued in many countries and remain fixed within a road safety perspective. From a broader perspective, little has been done about the many non-traffic health risks related to teen driving (increased drug and alcohol use, anti-social behaviour, sexually transmitted infections, inactivity and obesity). From a sustainable transport perspective, a contemporary imperative, teens are where the transition from non-driver to driver takes place; an opportune time for interventions to minimise environmental harms.

**Methods** We introduce a new paradigm termed 'mobility health' to bridge the siloed domains of safety, adolescent health and sustainable mobility management. The advantages include:

- A school focus makes them an easy population to identify and offers on-going integration into curricula.
- Giving youth the freedom to choose their mobility options

with knowledge of the benefits and drawbacks of alternatives.

- Provides settings where peers, teachers and parents can play important roles so it becomes more than an individual choice.
- Healthy mobility habits learned at this age may be engrained for life, making it a smarter investment.

**Recommendation** We advocate changing the current narrow paradigm of adolescent road safety to a cross-level/cross-disciplinary, more potent, timely and healthy vision of less driving through mobility modal shift from cars to active and public transport.