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LONG-TERM HEALTH CONSEQUENCES OF ROAD TRAFFIC INJURIES: A REPRESENTATIVE COHORT STUDY IN THAILAND

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Objectives To determine the proportion of road traffic injury crash victims with long-term health consequences and the severity thereof.

Methods The Sirindorn National Medical Rehabilitation Center performed a follow-up study on disability due to road traffic injury around Thailand. Following admission for a road traffic injury, persons considered at risk of permanent disability were followed up for 6 to 18 months. Six domains of functional ability were mapped into a six-domain, three-level version of the EuroQol (EQ-5D+) and translated into Global Burden of Disease disability weights for different categories of injury using an existing regression equation between EQ-5D+ scores and disability weights.

Findings Overall 1.7% of the 24 354 non-fatal injury cases resulted in long-term disability. A total of 302 persons had long-term disability qualifying for a pension and 197 had sufficient information on six domains of functioning to allow a severity assessment. The highest disability weights were for intracranial injury (0.57, 95% uncertainty interval 0.51 to 0.62), followed by spinal cord lesion (0.55, 95% uncertainty interval 0.41 to 0.64).

Conclusion This is the first study in an unselected sample of traffic injury victims in a developing country to provide estimates of the extent and severity of long-term disability. The results will contribute to improving the evidence base for calculating the non-fatal health consequences of road traffic injuries in Thailand and beyond.