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WALES BURDEN OF INJURY STUDY

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Background Injuries are still a significant cause of morbidity and mortality in high-income countries. However the true burden of injuries is difficult to determine and largely unmeasured. Quantifying the extent of the issue is an important step in informing policy makers responsible for prevention and control.

Aims/Objectives/Purpose To quantify the extent of the burden and societal cost of injuries in Wales.

Methods The Wales Burden of Injury (WBOI) study utilised the methodology developed by the UK Burden of Injuries project and contributions from by the Global Burden of Diseases Injury Expert Group. Data from emergency department attendances, hospital admissions and outpatient contacts for injuries were stratified by gender, age, local authority, health board area, socio-economic status, cause and intent categories. Years lived with disability (YLDs) and years of life lost (YLLs) were used to calculate disability adjusted life years (DALYs) from injuries.

Results/Outcomes Population rates per 100 000 in 2009 were: 14 812 for emergency department injury attendances; 1394 for hospital admissions and 26 391 for outpatient contacts. These cases resulted in 43 706 YLDs, 6958 YLLs and 50 664 DALYs. Using a health service funding threshold of £30 000 per DALY produced an intangible societal cost of £1.52 billion for injuries occurring that year.

Significance/Contribution to the Field The WBOI study has improved measurement of the societal impact of injuries. The results and a compendium of effective interventions will be presented to central and local government and health service managers later this year and used to inform appropriate prevention and control policies.