Injury prevention: maturation of the field

Roderick J McClure

One of the privileges of being the editor of Injury Prevention is the opportunity to read 600 or so prepublication reports of the latest research in the injury prevention field—each year, year in year out. After some years of doing this, I have developed a sense that the field of modern injury prevention has matured. Rather than trace our development, what I will do here is use the manuscripts published in this issue to show the extent to which the field is now comfortable in its own skin.

There are 14 manuscripts published in this issue. Collectively, they reveal injury prevention to be a profession no longer questioning its identity, just confidently going about important programmes of work in concert with the world of which it is part. The manuscripts in this issue have not been especially selected and collated. They are simply the next in the list of unpublished manuscripts ranked by acceptance date. They create a coherent narrative of interwoven themes.

Jagnoor and colleagues present an analysis focusing on the enabling factors and barriers to scaling up sustainable drowning reduction interventions at the community and national levels. Bhaumik and colleagues address this same issue of outcome evaluation of a systemic intervention. The result is elegant science.

The narrative emerging from these papers is a coherent one, with a strong plot line and a simple focus. This issue describes a rich body of work amassing the full range of evidence needed to make the biggest possible improvements in injury-related harm, for the equitable benefit of all. Which brings me to this issue’s State of the Art Review. We may not be able to change the past. We may not be able to predict the future. But it is our responsibility to learn from what we already know, and apply it, so we can help make the future the best it can possibly be. Read this State of the Art Review to learn what our knowledge of public health can tell us about what we can do to maximise the potential of autonomous vehicles.

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