

Strategies For Road Traffic Injury Prevention

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Trauma is a leading cause of morbidity and mortality.¹ In developing countries with increasing population, urbanization, and lack of implementation of rules and regulations, burden of trauma is on rise.² Public health measures to address this issue are nowhere to be seen. Many research articles are available on pattern of trauma in local context; however learning from these findings is not implemented in its letter and spirit. On the other hand improvement is seen in care of trauma victims both at pre hospital level and in-hospital management. Advanced Trauma Life Support (ATLS), a world recognized course, is available in Pakistan a College of Physicians & Surgeons Pakistan (CPSP). EMS are also trained according to philosophy of ATLS course. This provides better communication and care for trauma victims at the scene of accident and during transfer to definitive care facility.

Trimodal death pattern described decades ago emphasized the need of preventive measures in order to minimize morbidity and mortality after accidents.³ Many countries have devised and implemented number of preventive measures. In order to understand the pattern of trauma data collection at national level is mandatory. Currently in Pakistan no trauma related registry exists. Available information is mostly hospital based that lacks many important aspects related to trauma epidemiology.

In a review article on subject of road traffic injury from middle and low income countries it was noted that emphasis of half of the studies was on legislation, speed limit implementation, awareness regarding injuries and educational strategies, infrastructure improvement like road improvement, enforcement of road traffic related laws and community involvement.⁴ In Pakistan traffic related laws exist but its implementation is an issue. Enforcement of driving in dedicated lanes for motorbikes, compulsory use of safety helmet and heavy traffic movement timings in urban areas etc are never enforced. Motorcyclists are most frequently injured during

traffic accidents and large number of them are young adults. Disability and death in this younger age is deplorable.

Pedestrians are included in road user groups. They also sustain serious and fatal injuries and pose serious threat to motor vehicle occupants as well.⁵ They must be educated as to how to use roads. Road must be crossed at designated points. Road planning must take into account needs of pedestrians. Overhead bridges, pelican crossings, presence of traffic wardens and facilitation along with awareness programs at schools and colleges, use electronic media can go a long way in preventing road traffic injuries.

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