Quad bike action needed to stop recreational injury and death

8 May 2018

All-terrain vehicle (quad bikes) related injuries are placing a significant burden on New Zealand’s health system.

Traditionally used on farms, more and more New Zealanders are using all-terrain vehicles for recreational use.

A retrospective review of trauma registries by Dr Erika Fernandes discovered 54 patients presented to Auckland City Hospital and Starship Children’s Health between January 2012 and December 2017 as a result of quad bike accidents.

The study found 37 per cent of patients who presented to Starship Children’s Health were children under 15 years of age.

Four children were admitted to the Paediatric Intensive Care Unit (ICU) and nine required operative intervention. Two children died as a result of their injuries.

Of the 34 adults who presented to Auckland City Hospital, 26 were male and on average 47 years of age.

Eight patients required ICU admission, 11 needed operative intervention and two adults died as a result of their all-terrain vehicle accident.

Dr Fernandes said all of the paediatric patients and 82 per cent of the adult patients were engaging in recreational activities at the time of injury.

“Traditionally the focus has been on quad bike safety on farms and in rural areas, but clearly more needs to be done in and around urban centres,” Dr Fernandes said.

“Fifty-four injuries and four deaths in just five years in provincial New Zealand as a result of all-terrain vehicles accidents is unacceptable.

“The study also discovered many of the injured children were not wearing a helmet at the time of their accident and riding an adult sized quad bike.

“More needs to be done to educate recreational quad bike users in urban areas about all-terrain vehicle safety.”

Dr Fernandes, will present a poster session presentation on Tuesday 8 May at the upcoming at the Royal Australasian College of Surgeon’s 87th Annual Scientific Congress in Sydney from 7 – 11 May, which will detail the methods, results and conclusion of their studies.

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MEDIA RELEASE

The Royal Australasian College of Surgeon’s 87th Annual Scientific Congress, which is being held in Sydney, brings together some of the top surgical and medical minds from across New Zealand, Australia, and the rest of the world.

For more information about the Annual Scientific Congress please visit: https://asc.surgeons.org/

About the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS)
RACS is the leading advocate for surgical standards, professionalism and surgical education in Australia and New Zealand. The College is a not-for-profit organisation that represents more than 7000 surgeons and 1300 surgical trainees and International Medical Graduates. RACS also supports healthcare and surgical education in the Asia-Pacific region and is a substantial funder of surgical research. There are nine surgical specialties in Australasia being: Cardiothoracic surgery, General surgery, Neurosurgery, Orthopaedic surgery, Otolaryngology Head-and-Neck surgery, Paediatric surgery, Plastic and Reconstructive surgery, Urology and Vascular surgery.

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