



ROYAL AUSTRALASIAN COLLEGE OF SURGEONS

MEDIA RELEASE

Alcohol related injury the focus of Trauma Week

Wednesday 17 November, 2010

Alcohol related injury is the focus of this year's Trauma Week, being held at the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons' Melbourne headquarters.

Surgeons from around Australia and New Zealand will be joined by clinical psychologists, police, paramedics, road safety experts and representatives of community groups to identify ways in which the incidence and effects of alcohol related trauma can be minimised.

The College's Trauma Committee will convene a workshop tomorrow in which participants will first assess the dimension of the challenge faced. Presentations will include analyses of data from New South Wales and Darwin, highlighting the surgical workload related to injury associated with alcohol consumption.

Later presentations will examine the challenges confronting those working in the emergency departments of our hospitals. Dr Jacob Ollapallil, a trauma surgeon at Alice Springs Hospital, will discuss the effects of alcohol sales restrictions on the incidence of injury managed at the hospital.

A policing perspective will be offered by NSW Police Commissioner Andrew Scipione.

Professor Shanthi Ameratunga from the Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences at the University of Auckland will talk of the New Zealand experience.

The workshop will also discuss such issues as alcohol advertising and alcohol and sport.

The crux of the workshop is consideration of policies and strategies to minimise alcohol related injury.

Deputy Chair of the College's Trauma Committee, Dr John Crozier, said the number and diversity of participants will ensure the workshop addresses the big picture.

"The College has for decades played a central role in the campaign against road trauma – we now want to play a similar role in the fight against a type of trauma which is eminently preventable," Dr Crozier said.

"Alcohol related injury can be horrific. Frequently involving our young people, most of it is preventable. The College is keen to work in partnership to reduce this harm."

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