

Support Available to Western Australians & the Media After a Road Crash

Injury Matters is reminding the Western Australian community that free support is available to anyone affected by road trauma after the significant number of road crashes and fatalities have been reported in the media in recent months.

Sadly, this year there have been 116 fatalities on Western Australian roads, with fatal crashes in the metropolitan area already far surpassing previous years.

Injury Matters-run, Road Trauma Support WA is a state-wide service assisting anyone affected by road trauma, regardless of when the incident occurred or what level of involvement the person had, direct or indirect.

Injury Matters' General Manager - Recovery Support, Christine Smith said, "Being directly involved in, first on scene or witness to a road crash can have a traumatic and lasting impact. This extends to family, friends, schoolmates and our emergency service personnel."

People impacted by road trauma often experience common reactions. These may include constantly thinking about the event, fear of driving, forgetfulness, worrying about family/friends, shock, sadness, guilt, anxiety, or anger. Physical reactions may include trembling, sweating, fatigue, or sleep issues.

Helpful fact sheets and guides are available at www.rtswa.org.au.

"While uncomfortable, these reactions are common and take time to resolve. If symptoms are ongoing or worsen 4-6 weeks after the event, it is best to seek professional supports, like Road Trauma Support WA," said Ms Smith.

Injury Matters recognises that stories about road crashes can adversely impact those previously affected by another trauma. Due to these potential harms, it is vital that media reports portray road traffic incidents accurately to reduce the impact of road trauma on the WA community.

To this end, Injury Matters, launched the '[Reporting Road Traffic Incidents: A resource for the media and road safety sector](#)' – a dedicated resource to support you in your role.

This resource highlights the importance of the media's influence on public perception and health regarding road trauma and safety, aiming to educate our current and future media professionals on reporting on these incidents in a safe, informed, and evidence-based manner.

We believe it is a collective responsibility of all road safety stakeholders and those involved in the media sector to be ethical in reporting, and we hope that by providing you with this resource you will be supported to create informative yet safer news for Western Australians.

If you or someone you know has been affected by road trauma, contact Road Trauma Support WA on 1300 004 814 or visit www.rtswa.org.au.

For anyone needing immediate support, please call LifeLine on 13 11 14.

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For further information or interview, please contact Rachel Meade, General Manager – Research & Advocacy on 08 6166 7688 or communications@injurymatters.org.au

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