

Statement in support of universal motorcycle helmet law

[by the Pennsylvania Trauma Systems Foundation]

The following statement in support of a universal motorcycle helmet law was developed by the Research Committee of the Pennsylvania Trauma Systems Foundation. It was approved by the Board of Directors at its December 2007 meeting.

Total care of the trauma patient includes endorsement of measures designed to prevent injuries. Regarding the use of motorcycle helmets, the Pennsylvania Trauma Systems Foundation recognizes that:

- The number of patients that have been involved in a motorcycle traffic accident seen at Pennsylvania trauma centers has increased 52.3% since 2003.
- Helmet use by these Pennsylvania patients has decreased from 70.9% in 2003 to 53.8% in 2006.
- When universal helmet use laws are enacted, helmet use increases and fatalities and serious injuries decrease.
- When universal helmet use laws are repealed, helmet use decreases and injuries and associated costs increase.
- The average inpatient care costs for motorcyclists who sustain a brain injury are more than twice the costs incurred by hospitalized motorcyclists without brain injury.
- A large portion of the economic burden of motorcycle crashes is borne by the public.
- In states with universal helmet use laws, helmet use is close to 100 percent.

Therefore, the Pennsylvania Trauma Systems Foundation supports efforts to enact and sustain universal helmet laws for motorcycle riders.

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Data provided by the Pennsylvania Trauma Outcome Study 2003-2006.
