



AUSTRALIAN INJURY PREVENTION NETWORK

The Hon Nicola Roxon MP
Minister for Health and Ageing
MG 50
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

10 November 2010

Dear Ms Roxon

The Australian Injury Prevention Network notes that The Australian Government has introduced to parliament a bill to create the Australian National Preventive Health Agency (ANPHA). Its purpose is to support the Australian Health Ministers' Conference and Council of Australian Governments (COAG) in creating a framework for a national approach to preventive health.

Injury is the leading cause of death and disability for Australians aged less than 45 years and a major cause of death and disability in older people. This results in a tremendous burden on both the community and health services.

Whilst we acknowledge that the Australian Government is addressing injury in a range of areas, particularly falls, there is currently no Australian Government agency with any dedicated authority over injury prevention. This means that there is no coordinated approach to injury at a national level, no coordinated leadership, and importantly no continued oversight of capacity or capability in the workforce. This will inevitably lead to a serious decline in policy makers with any understanding of the complexities of injury prevention and a further lessening of coordinated priority setting.

Further, absence of any lead agency in the Australian Government means that there is no oversight of state based activities. Injury prevention is a complex field that requires a multi-sectoral response. Effective injury control and prevention therefore requires the coordination of a range of agencies, including health departments, road authorities, consumer protection organisations, local government, legislators and researchers, amongst others.

Injury is preventable. We have previously written to you about the reestablishment of a national agency to oversee injury and to allocate Ministerial responsibility for such. If established,

the Australian National Preventive Health Agency appears a perfect body to have this role. We therefore urge you to identify injury as a key priority for the agency's activities.

I enclose a list of recommendations from the AIPN and Public Health Association Injury Special interest group. These are endorsed by the AIPN, and injury researchers and practitioners from a range of settings. I urge you to carefully consider these recommendations and take action. I would be pleased to meet with you to discuss these recommendations further.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'R Ivers', is centered on the page.

Associate Professor Rebecca Ivers

President, Australian Injury Prevention Network

AIPN Secretariat
PO Box 21211
Little Lonsdale Street,
Melbourne VIC 8011