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Dear Ms Wickett

Department of Transport response to the Coroner Recommendation: Finding into Death Without Inquest - Walentyna Huczyk COR 2019 003779

Thank you for the email dated 15<sup>th</sup> December from the Coroners Prevention regarding Coroner Jacqui Hawkins' Department of Transport response to the Coroner Recommendation: Finding into Death Without Inquest - Walentyna Huczyk COR 2019 003779. Your correspondence has been referred to me for response as the matter falls within my portfolio of responsibilities. On behalf of the Department of Transport, I offer sincere condolences to Ms Walentyna Huczyk's family and friends.

**The recommendation to the Department of Transport (the Department) relates to the implementation of a "targeted public awareness campaign to highlight the risks associated with motorised mobility scooters as a potential traffic hazard".**

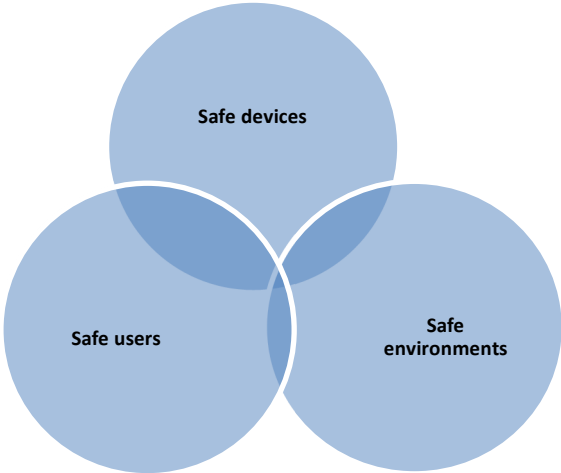
The Department supports the intent of the recommendation. Consistent with this intent, the Department recently implemented an alternative program of activities which was delivered throughout 2019 – 2021. This included a comprehensive strategic project in three phases designed to support safety for motorised mobility device (MMD) users and the wider community including interventions designed to raise awareness of key risks. The project included targeted communication and implementation activities which followed the preceding development and public release of a range of MMD resources, including those referred to in paragraph 29 of the Coroners finding (namely the consumer guide and GP fact sheet).

MMDs include both electric scooters and electric wheelchairs. Users may have very limited, if any, walking ability and sometimes they have other medical conditions which preclude them from driving. MMDs are therapeutic devices and are an important aid to daily living supporting mobility independence for many individuals.

Road Safety Victoria (RSV), as part of the Department, established a Stakeholder Reference Group in 2019 to guide the MMD project work. Invitees included staff from Council on the Ageing, Department of Health, Occupational Therapy Australia, Municipal Association of Victoria, Victoria Police, the Assistive Technology Suppliers Association, various funding organisations (i.e., the TAC) as well as people with a lived experience of disability. The project was informed by a literature review

and extensive stakeholder consultation as well as a gap analysis. This analysis pointed to three key domains – safe devices, safe users, and safe environments. Findings also identified potential touchpoints and intervention opportunities for MMD users in the process of accessing and utilising the devices (see Figure 1).

**Figure 1. The domains and supporting stakeholders for safe use of motorised mobility devices**



<b>Health professionals (OTs, GPs, others)</b>	<b>Funders</b>	<b>Suppliers &amp; industry bodies</b>	<b>Municipal councils</b>
<b>Disability and seniors advocacy groups</b>	<b>Public transport operators</b>	<b>Licensing authorities</b>	<b>Law enforcement</b>

A wide range of stakeholders were consulted during Stakeholder Reference Group meetings as well as through additional small group meetings, interviews, surveys, and website reviews. These findings complemented key issues emerging from the literature review and identified:

- a need for information, education, and tools to support consistent clinical practice in terms of user assessment, device prescription, user education and review, including the consideration of the changing capacity of users.
- a need for improved safety information for consumers,
- improved access to such information via health professionals, MMD suppliers, funders, insurers and disability / older persons advocacy groups, councils, and transport operators, and
- promotion of resources via a targeted process to maximise reach to relevant stakeholders.

The project achieved strong stakeholder engagement across all relevant groups, which enabled the development and implementation of high-quality resources to support consumer awareness and education and to improve the capacity of health professionals to support the needs of MMD users and their carers/families. Key project outcomes are summarised in Table 1 below.

**Table 1 – Motorised Mobility Device road safety project – key outputs and implementation activities**

PROJECT PHASE & PURPOSE	ACTIVITIES / RESOURCES	OUTCOME / IMPLEMENTATION
<p><b>PHASE 1</b></p> <p><b>Discovery</b></p> <p>To determine non-regulatory opportunities to support MMD user and community safety</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stakeholder Reference group activities and other targeted consultation</li> <li>• Literature Review – investigating MMD acquisition, training, use and impacts on road safety</li> <li>• Survey of Occupational Therapists</li> <li>• Survey of Municipal Councils</li> <li>• Mapping of Municipal Council websites</li> <li>• Mapping of supplier websites</li> <li>• Stakeholder survey re existing VicRoads resource</li> </ul>	<p>Reports corresponding with the main activities including consensus decisions re key risks, approaches, and interventions to support effective prioritisation and project resource utilisation.</p> <p>Project Plan detailing planned activities for Phase 2</p>
<p><b>PHASE 2</b></p> <p><b>Intervention</b></p> <p>To develop and implement targeted and high priority interventions for consumers and health professionals to support MMD and community safety</p>	<p><b>Consumer resources (available at <a href="https://vicroads.vic.gov.au/safety-and-road-rules/pedestrian-safety/motorised-mobility-devices">vicroads.vic.gov.au/safety-and-road-rules/pedestrian-safety/motorised-mobility-devices</a>)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revised VicRoads website content</li> <li>• Guide for Choosing and Using Mobility Scooters &amp; Powered Wheelchairs</li> <li>• Fact Sheet #1 – Is a motorised mobility device right for you</li> <li>• Fact Sheet #2 - Choosing the right device</li> <li>• Fact Sheet #3 – Occupational therapist assessment for use of a mobility scooter or powered wheelchair</li> <li>• Fact Sheet #4 – safe use of your motorised mobility device</li> <li>• Fact Sheet #5 – Using your motorised mobility device on public transport</li> <li>• Fact sheet for GP practices</li> <li>• Community education package</li> </ul>	<p><b>Implementation / communication plan included</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engagement with health professional and consumer networks (including SWEP, TAC, transport operators, MMD suppliers)</li> <li>• General consumer communication through channels such as disability organisations and via Seniors Online, e.g. <a href="https://www.seniorsonline.vic.gov.au/News-Opinions/Latest-News/Keeping-you-safe-and-mobile?j=17280&amp;sfmc_sub=23872761&amp;l=200_HTML&amp;u=337849&amp;mid=514011159&amp;jb=318">https://www.seniorsonline.vic.gov.au/News-Opinions/Latest-News/Keeping-you-safe-and-mobile?j=17280&amp;sfmc_sub=23872761&amp;l=200_HTML&amp;u=337849&amp;mid=514011159&amp;jb=318</a></li> <li>• General health professional communication e.g. Primary Health Networks, professional organisations</li> <li>• Resource sharing via DOT groups relating to older road user /medical fitness to drive road safety, older road user reference and medical fitness to drive stakeholder groups</li> </ul>

PROJECT PHASE & PURPOSE	ACTIVITIES / RESOURCES	OUTCOME / IMPLEMENTATION
	<p><b>Occupational therapist resources available at:</b>  <a href="https://otaus.com.au/practice-support/areas-of-practice/motorised-mobility-devices">https://otaus.com.au/practice-support/areas-of-practice/motorised-mobility-devices</a>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Occupational Therapy Australia (OTA) web page dedicated to MMD resources for OTs</li> <li>• Comprehensive OT resource – MMDs – a resource for occupational therapists</li> <li>• Request for information - GP letter template</li> <li>• Request for Information / OT Assessment Referral Template</li> <li>• Fact Sheet for GP Practices – Occupational therapist assessment for use of a mobility scooter or powered wheelchair</li> <li>• OT Assessment - GP Report Template</li> <li>• Discharge letter template – client unsuitable for MMD use</li> <li>• Discharge letter template – client suitable for MMD use</li> <li>• Summary of Clinical Guidelines and Standardised MMD Assessment and Training Tools</li> </ul>	<p><b>Implementation / communication plan including:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engagement with major stakeholders to implement through their health professional networks (including SWEP, TAC)</li> <li>• Promotion through OTA communications</li> <li>• Webinar attended by over 300 occupational therapists (conducted in Phase 3)</li> <li>• Promotion via Department of Transport Occupational Therapy Driving Assessor database e-newsletter</li> <li>• Oral presentation on MMDs and road safety delivered to ~ 100 attendees (OTs, members of the public, suppliers) at the Assistive Technology Expo, Melbourne Showgrounds, May 2021</li> </ul>
<p><b>PHASE 3</b></p> <p><b>Intervention</b></p> <p>To develop and implement interventions for municipal councils and community road safety groups</p>	<p><b>Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) Council resources</b>  <a href="https://www.mav.asn.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0020/28145/VicRoads-Motorised-Mobility-Devices-A-Resource-Guide-April-2021.pdf">https://www.mav.asn.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0020/28145/VicRoads-Motorised-Mobility-Devices-A-Resource-Guide-April-2021.pdf</a>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guide for Municipal Councils</li> <li>• Motorised Mobility Device (MMD) community road safety presentation</li> </ul>	<p><b>Implementation / communication plan including:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inclusion in MAV communications to Councils</li> <li>• Training workshop provided for Municipal council Disability and Aged Care providers in 2020</li> <li>• Training for DOT Community Programs staff to deliver the MMD presentation</li> </ul>

In addition to the above, Department staff delivered an oral paper describing the project work and resources to the national road safety community via the Australasian Road Safety on-line Conference held in September 2021.

The Department is also facilitating ongoing implementation of MMD resources by providing funding for eligible community groups to deliver MMD road safety presentations via the Community Grant Scheme <https://www.vicroads.vic.gov.au/safety-and-road-rules/road-safety-programs/vicroads-community-road-safety-grants-program>

If you require further information, please contact Dr Marilyn Di Stefano, Senior Policy and Programs Officer, Road Safety Victoria on telephone (03) 9854 2627, email [marilyn.distefano@roads.vic.gov.au](mailto:marilyn.distefano@roads.vic.gov.au)

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Carl Muller', written over a horizontal line.

Carl Muller  
Head of Road Safety Victoria

Date: 18/01/2022