

MEDIA RELEASE

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Shocking disregard for safety: AMA Queensland disappointed in watered down e-mobility laws

Queensland doctors are stunned by reports the state government will not implement a ban on under 16s riding e-mobility devices.

Nation-leading laws proposed in the wake of the parliamentary inquiry into e-bikes and e-scooters are set to be knee-capped, allowing 12 to 17-year-olds to ride devices with parental supervision.

AMA Queensland President, Associate Professor Erica Gannon, said walking back the ban felt like a betrayal of children's safety.

"This bill was supposed to save lives," she said.

"This decision puts us right back where we started, with children being injured and killed.

"We're struggling to see what the point of the inquiry was, if there is to be almost no change in the legislation."

Assoc Prof Gannon said doctors were sick of seeing preventable injuries from e-mobility device accidents.

"Emergency department physicians see the damage e-bikes and e-scooters cause and it's no joke," she said.

"My colleagues and I regularly see cuts and bruises, missing teeth, head and facial injuries, and broken bones.

"Tragically some accidents are fatal, which is devastating for the families and communities of the victims, and for hospital staff involved."

AMA Queensland questioned the practicality of making parents responsible for overseeing their children's use of e-mobility devices.

"We need a reality check here. That was the situation before this proposal and kids were still being harmed and killed," Assoc Prof Gannon said.

"Our concern is teenagers will take risks, as teenagers always have done, and those risks could have terrible consequences.

"A straight ban would have kept rules clear, rather than put more pressure, as well as potential punishment, on parents.

"Pressure that should be put on those profiteering from the sale of the devices and those with the power to stop them – and that's the government."

AMA Queensland also strongly rejected the licensing framework in the proposed new legislation.

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“Doctors did not seek licensing rules around e-mobility use, but the government now looks set to put that on our shoulders,” Assoc Prof Gannon said.

“It should not be up to doctors, in particular GPs, to decide who is or isn’t allowed to ride these devices.

“Doctors are already burdened with red tape that they are not best placed to complete.

“They have not been trained to assess if someone who is unfit to hold a licence is fit to ride an e-scooter.

“And it risks harming the trust between doctors and vulnerable patients that is critical for quality health care.

“The government needs to listen to doctors and the families of children harmed and killed, who were the reason these laws were proposed in the first place.”