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Dr. Bert Lauwers, Deputy Chief Coroner-Investigations
Office of the Chief Coroner
26 Grenville Street
Toronto ON M7A 2G7
Occo.inquiries@ontario.ca

Dear Dr. Lauwers,

RE: CORONER REVIEW OF PEDESTRIAN DEATHS

I am writing to you on behalf of Norfolk Pathways for People. We are a community coalition working to promote pathways for safe walking and cycling in Norfolk County for health, recreation and active transportation.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide comments to you in advance of your review of pedestrian deaths in Ontario during the last year. Nationwide, almost 70% of Canadians reported walking during their leisure timeⁱ and 82% of Canadians want to walk moreⁱⁱ. Walking and running are critical to address the continued rise in chronic diseases, cancer, and mental health issues that put a huge financial strain on our health care system.

Your recommendations will provide important insight on how to increase safety for walkers of all ages. We would like to see you expand your scope to include all non-fatal injuries and mirror the review period of the cycling review. We think that this will provide a more in-depth and thorough picture of the underlying causes.

When conducting your review please consider the elements listed below. We believe these elements are important considerations when looking at the specific details of each case and when making your recommendations.

1. The environment where people walk varies. Different solutions will be needed in various environments – urban, rural, trails and pathways. It is important to devote special attention to the different elements of the built environment, needed to decrease pedestrian injuries and deaths in all settings.

2. The role of policy and regulatory mechanisms that shape active transportation and its safety are critical. It is equally critical that these policies are properly funded so that recommendations that come out of a review such as yours will be reflected in changes on the ground for the safety of citizens across the province. To that end we encourage you to make recommendations that include minimum targets for a specific percentage of road and transportation budgets being spent on pedestrian infrastructure. Norfolk County is a predominantly rural community with few paved shoulders for pedestrians. Recommendations from your report could go a long way in creating infrastructure to support rural active transportation.
3. Education of drivers, cyclists and pedestrians is vital and their needs should be incorporated into driver training programs and at appropriate developmental ages in schools. When the behaviour of road users is predictable, crashes and injuries will decrease.

In her recent report, *Health, Not Health Care – Changing the Conversation*, Ontario’s Chief Medical Officer of Health, Dr. Arlene King, points out that good health comes from a variety of factors and influences, 75 per cent of which are not related to the health care delivery system. She calls for healthy public policy whereby a health lens is applied to every policy in this province, every program that is carried out and every service delivered.ⁱⁱⁱ

We hope that the recommendations from your review will lead to that health lens being applied to future policy developments at all levels of government.

Sincerely,

Joyce Flexman
Chair, Norfolk Pathways for People

ⁱ Canadian Community Health Survey, 2009

ⁱⁱ Go for Green 1998 survey

ⁱⁱⁱ Health, Not Health Care – Changing the Conversation, 2010 Annual Report of the Chief Medical Officer of Health.



Health Action is funded by the Ministry of Health Promotion and supported by the Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit. Health Action partners with 30 individuals and organizations, and promotes integration, communication and support environments that encourage people in our communities to live healthy lives.