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Letters

Will we all continue to ignore deaths and injuries from road traffic crashes?

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Ian Roberts, professor of epidemiology and public health (ian.roberts@lshtm.ac.uk)

Public Health Intervention Research Unit, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, University of London, London WC1B 3DP

EDITOR—In Editor's choice of 5 May the editor noted that AIDS is now a regular feature in the *BMJ*, and asks what health issues are missing that may later come to dominate the journal in 20 years' time.¹ One potential candidate is road traffic crashes. By 2020 road traffic crashes are estimated to move from ninth to third in the world disease burden ranking, as measured in disability adjusted life years, and will be in second place in developing countries.²

But, although road traffic crashes are a potential candidate in terms of disease burden, whether the *BMJ* will feature research relevant to this problem is far from assured. In comparison with the burden of disability, funding for research on road traffic crashes (prevention and treatment) is less than for almost any other cause of human misery.³ Traffic crashes predominantly affect poor people. The million deaths and the 10 million permanent disabilities resulting from road traffic crashes are largely seen as the collateral damage in our car based transportation system. Who is setting the agenda on this issue?

References

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