

MEDIA ALERT

Do helmets actually increase health risks for adult bike riders?

Guest speaker Professor Chris Rissel from Sydney University will discuss the pros and cons of bike helmets for adults at the Public Health Association of Australia's (PHAA) Sax Oration 2011. The ACT Branch of PHAA presents the Sax Oration each year in honour of the late Dr Sidney Sax to promote discussion on issues of importance in public health in Australia.

Where: Ann Harding Conference Centre in Building 24, University of Canberra (University Drive South, Bruce)

a map is available on the PHAA website at:

<http://www.phaa.net.au/documents/CampusMapAnnHardingConferenceCentreBuilding.pdf>

When: Wednesday 22 June 2011

Time: 5:45pm

"This year's Sax Oration topic, '**Legislation for public health: the good, bad and unexpected consequences of bicycle helmet legislation for cycling safety and promotion**', is particularly relevant given the current dual policy emphasis on promoting physical activity to combat obesity, and promoting cycling as an environmentally-friendly mode of transport," said Dr Ian White, PHAA ACT Branch President.

"Half of Australia's population is overweight and insufficiently active, contributing to our obesity epidemic, diabetes and other chronic diseases. Cycling is an enjoyable form of exercise and also an environmentally-friendly, relatively cheap and sustainable form of transport. However, all forms of transport carry a degree of risk. Australia's controversial bicycle helmet legislation will be discussed in the context of broader public health approaches to health promotion and injury prevention," explained Professor Rissel.

Chris Rissel is a Professor of Public Health with the Prevention Research Collaboration at Sydney University's School of Public Health. He is one of the authors of the national report '*Cycling: Getting Australia Moving - Barriers, facilitators and interventions to get more Australians physically active through cycling*' and has just completed a three-year grant to promote increased use of cycle paths in south-west Sydney.

For further information/comment:

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*The ACT Branch of the Public Health Association of Australia's **Sax Oration 2011** is being hosted by the Centre for Research and Action in Public Health at the University of Canberra.*