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IAEM issues advice on safe use of the *Fliker*TM scooter

Injuries in children associated with 'fad'-type recreational pursuits e.g. trampolining, rollerblading and *Heelys*TM are well described. The latest fad, the *Fliker*TM scooter, is a three-wheeled, lightweight and portable foot-propelled scooter that has recently found great popularity amongst children. It is advertised as being "great for transportation, fitness, and fun". Its manufacturer's instructions advocate parental supervision, the use of safety equipment (helmet, wrist protectors, elbow & kneepads and proper footwear) and discourage the use of the *Fliker*TM downhill on steep hills, slippery/uneven surfaces and on crowded walkways/streets. Much of this safety advice about parental supervision broadly parallels recommendations given to parents on the purchase of other popular sporting and leisure devices such as trampolines and *Heelys*TM.

Irish Emergency Departments (EDs) have seen a number of attendances of children with injuries associated with *Fliker*TM scooter use. A recent study of *Fliker*TM associated attendances, conducted in the ED at Our Lady's Children's Hospital, Crumlin identified a wide spectrum of injuries, many of which required hospital admission and specialised care. Upper limb injuries and fractures in particular, were the commonest injuries described. Other injuries included lower limb fractures, head injuries (some of which required transfer to a Neurosurgical Centre), dental trauma and genital injury. Unfortunately, the vast majority of patients were not wearing any protective safety equipment at the time the injury was sustained.

The Irish Association for Emergency Medicine would like to remind parents and children of the importance of following the manufacturer's safety instructions when using the *Fliker*TM scooter. This enjoyable recreational pursuit should continue to be enjoyed and the simple addition of a cycle helmet and wrist protectors will offer good protection against the most easily avoided injuries.

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