IMPACT Launch – Press Release

**Devon Air Ambulance announces official launch of IMPACT Centre to tackle road injury**

A research and innovation centre whose aim is to reduce road deaths and serious injuries will be officially launched next month (Wednesday 25 June) at an event that brings together experts in road safety, research and emergency care.

IMPACT is the Centre for Post-Collision Research, Innovation and Translation, which started its work in September 2024. This event will mark its formal launch in Devon, bringing together the research and insights that have been developed so far and looking at how it can be used to reduce road collisions and the resulting injuries and fatalities.

Devon has one of the highest rates of serious road injury in England when adjusted for population. Every year, Devon Air Ambulance (DAA) responds to around 200 serious road traffic collisions, and more than half of the trauma patients it attends are injured on the roads. Devon also has the highest rate of medical events at the wheel in the country and is among the worst areas for road injury involving children and young people.

IMPACT was founded by Devon Air Ambulance, harnessing the charity's clinical and research experience and commitment to innovation. It is entirely grant-funded, meaning that any public donations to Devon Air Ambulance continue to support its frontline operations.

Professor Tim Nutbeam, lead for IMPACT at Devon Air Ambulance said: ‘While road injury is a global issue, the need for action is deeply local. IMPACT was created because we know more can be done to prevent serious injury and to give every patient the best possible chance after a collision.’

Globally, road traffic injury is the leading cause of death for people aged five to 30. Yet it often goes underfunded and under-researched compared to other health priorities.

 ‘IMPACT is helping to change that narrative,’ said Professor Nutbeam, ‘starting right here in the South West.’

Since beginning work in late 2024, IMPACT has been nominated for national awards, delivered leading research and collaborates closely with Vision Zero South West, the Road Safety Trust, and international partners to drive change.

IMPACT’s mission is to generate new knowledge, develop practical solutions, and translate research into better care, both locally and internationally.

‘We’re building a Centre of Excellence in post-collision care, rooted in Devon but with global reach,’ said Prof Nutbeam. ‘The work we do here will influence practice not just in the South West, but around the world.’

The launch event will bring together local partners in road collision work, researchers, emergency services, and members of the community to celebrate IMPACT’s work and set out the next phase of its development.

Greg Allen, CEO at Devon Air Ambulance, said: “This is a Devon-grown initiative with international impact. But at its heart, IMPACT is about saving lives on our own roads.

 “This event aims to promote collaboration and support from organisations and individuals who share our vision of safer roads and better outcomes for everyone affected by road trauma.”