More help needed

ROAD SAFETY

BY ASHLEY DOLT

PEOPLE living in regional communities that have been
affected by road trauma are lacking the same support of
those in metropolitan areas.

Statistics from the Road Safety Commission show
regional communities are more likely to be affected by
road trauma, however, there is limited counselling and
support services available in regional communities.

Road Trauma Support WA community outreach coor-
dinator, Gage Riverstake, said that even though their service is
not ideal, those affected in regional communities can
access free counselling over the phone or via videoconfer-
ence.

She said Road Trauma Support WA is the only service
that helps and provides emotional support from those
affected by road trauma and is sup-
ported by the Road Safety
Commission and WA Police.

She said the service has
two full-time counsellors, limiting their ability to con-
duct face-to-face meetings
with clients.

“We’re aware that there is
a demand for support in re-

gional areas,” she said.

Road Trauma Support WA
was founded in November 2013 and provides coun-
selling for people who have
been involved in a crash,
road teams and their fam-
ilies, but anyone who may be
affected, such as those
who caused the trauma and
emergency responders.

Ms Riverstake said tight-
knit rural communities are
especially affected road
trauma and she hopes Road
Trauma Support WA is able
to expand to provide more

free-in-face support.
She said the Road-
safety Commission and
Road Trauma Trust were important in keeping the service free.
It’s a free service and it has
to be that way to make it ac-
cessible for people,” she said.

“People need to put their
physical health before men-
tal health, so we need to
make sure this service is
as accessible as possible.”

Road Safety Minister
Michelle Roberts said sup-
porting those affected by
road trauma was an impor-
tant issue.

“With support from Road
Trauma Support WA does to support
Western Australians impact-
ed by road trauma is impor-
tant,” she said.

As it stands, counselling
for both individuals and
groups in metropolitan areas
is provided remotely, either
by telephone or through vid-
oo conferencing.

“I am in discussion with
the Road Safety Commis-
sioner about how we could
expand the service to the
future and provide better
support to those in region-
al WA.”