

Driving and Health Clinic, Specialist Driving Assessments

Driving a motor vehicle is a complex task and requires many different skills such as:

- Coordinating the use of hands / arms / feet
- Planning and making quick decisions
- Having adequate vision to observe and take in the road and other vehicles
- Making judgements about the position of vehicles and manoeuvring
- Having quick reactions
- Being up to date with knowledge of current traffic laws and rules

Some of these skills may be affected following injury or illness raising concerns regarding a person's ability to return to safe driving.

In many cases, Driving Assessment and Driving Rehabilitation assists people with mild, moderate and significant disabilities to regain their independence and return to driving.

Driving Assessment also helps to identify when driver safety and public safety is compromised.

The Process of Driving Assessment

A Driving Assessment commences with an off-road screening assessment. This consists of medical assessment of the conditions that may impact on driving plus a screening of the physical, cognitive and visual components required.

You will be seen by a Rehabilitation Physician and an Occupational Therapist trained in Driver Assessment. The total assessment time is approximately 90 minutes.

Rehabilitation Physician

The Rehabilitation Physician discusses your medical history, medications and side effects, driving history, current drivers' licence status and driving goals. Testing of vision, physical and sensory skills for impact on driving is completed.

Occupational Therapist

The Occupational Therapist completes several driving-related activities focussed on thinking strategies, visual scanning and awareness, speed of planning and execution of tasks, and application of basic road law. This provides information about likely on-road driving ability.

At conclusion of both assessments, the Rehabilitation Physician reviews how a medical condition may affect safe driving. The Rehabilitation Physician may recommend one or more of the following:

- Return to driving with no further action
- Return to driving with specific restrictions (i.e. limited radius of home, daylight hours only)
- Complete a practical driving test of competency with the Department of Transport
Complete an on-road driving assessment with an Occupational Therapist to determine the exact nature of any problems or deficits of on ability to drive, and the potential for a driving rehabilitation program or use of vehicle modifications
- Wait for further recovery or improvement to occur
- Cancellation of licence

What is an Occupational Therapist On-Road Assessment?

The on-road assessment is conducted in a Driving Instructor's vehicle equipped with a dual brake control.

The Driving Instructor sits in the front passenger seat and provides directions of travel. The Occupational Therapist sits in the rear passenger seat. The assessment is structured by the Occupational Therapist to allow practice of particular skills.

The Occupational Therapist may recommend one or more of the following:

- Return to driving with no further action
- Return to driving with specific restrictions
- Complete a driving rehabilitation program to improve or practice particular driving skills and be reassessed at its completion
- Trial specialised equipment or vehicle modifications
- Cancellation of licence

If cancellation of a driver's licence is considered the safest option, one or more of the following are provided:

- A personalised community transport plan, including support/training to access transport alternatives
- Motorised scooter assessment

Referrals

Referrals for Driving Assessment can be made by:

- Specialist Doctor
- General Practitioner
- Other health professional
- Family members

Costs

- A fee is charged for the off-road screening assessment with the Rehabilitation Physician and Occupational Therapist.
- Subsequent medical consultations with the Rehabilitation Physician are bulk billed.
- On-road assessments with an Occupational Therapist are an additional cost.

Clients are eligible for funding assistance through private health insurance, Department of Veterans' Affairs or compensation.

Questions

We are aware of the uncertainties you may be experiencing regarding your driving. Please

Contact the Driving and Health Clinic for any further information. We are happy to assist where we can.

Driving and Health Clinic Specialists

Rehabilitation Physicians

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Occupational Therapist

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