Sláinte agus Tiomáint
Medical Fitness to Drive Guidelines (Group 1 and 2 Drivers)
October 2018

An tÚdarás Um Shábháilteacht Ar Bhóithre
Road Safety Authority
This document will replace all preceding editions of Sláinte agus Tiomáint Medical Fitness To Drive Guidelines (Group 1 and 2 drivers). Further amendments, changes or editions will be made available electronically on www.rsa.ie and www.ndls.ie.

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The most recent edition will only be made available electronically on www.rsa.ie and www.ndls.ie.

N.B. Health professionals are advised to review www.rsa.ie or www.ndls.ie for updates and changes.
Legal Disclaimer

The Guidelines for medical fitness to drive Sláinte agus Tiomáint (‘the Guidelines’) have been compiled by the Road Safety Authority in conjunction with the National Office for Traffic Medicine* using all reasonable care and are based on expert medical opinion and relevant literature at the time of printing. The legal basis for the Guidelines in general is provided for in regulations made under the Road Traffic Acts. The Road Traffic (Licensing of Drivers) Regulations 2006 (SI 537 of 2006) is the substantive legislative instrument underpinning the Guidelines. This has been amended and will continue to be amended as EU Directives update medical fitness rules. Medical fitness rules relating to cardiac conditions, diabetes, epilepsy, vision and obstructive sleep apnoea syndrome were developed on foot of recommendations from EU Specialist Working Groups and reflected in EU Directives 2009/113/EC, 2014/85/EU and 2016/1106/EU. Doctors should be mindful that certain specific and detailed elements of the EU Directives have force of law by virtue of being incorporated into Irish regulations, particularly relating to cardiac conditions, diabetes, vision and epilepsy. These aspects are marked with an EU Symbol in the Guidelines. Neither the Road Safety Authority nor the National Office for Traffic Medicine nor the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland with which it is also associated, accepts responsibility for any consequences arising from their application, including any liability in respect of any claim or cause of action arising out of, or in relation to, the use or reliance on the Guidelines.

Health professionals should keep informed of any changes in health care and health technology that may affect their assessment of drivers. They should also maintain an awareness of any changes in the law that may affect their legal responsibilities.

*The National Office for Traffic Medicine is the body that provides support and guidance to the RSA on driver fitness matters. The Office was established in 2011 as part of the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland.
Foreword

Within the last decade Ireland has made great strides in the area of driver fitness which concerns the ability of a driver who may have a disability or illness to drive. Advances in technology and in medicine together with an ageing population mean that driver fitness is becoming a particularly complex area. Thankfully, it’s now possible for many drivers with an illness or disability to continue driving safely and we in the RSA recognise the importance of mobility for those who may face other challenges in their lives.

The RSA promotes the right to mobility consistent with safety on our roads and understands there is a broader social context for driving. Sláinte agus Tiomsáint is one element among a suite of supports available to medical professionals and the general public in determining fitness to drive. I’m grateful to the Office of Traffic Medicine for its work in this area and for its commitment to supporting and developing greater competence in this field. The Office has championed developments both in the area of driver fitness and the associated area of traffic medicine in Ireland and we look forward to future advances in the years to come.

Included in this edition are driver information leaflets on Cardiac Conditions, Diabetes, Alcohol, Obstructive Sleep Apnoea Syndrome and Epilepsy and how these conditions can affect driving. Also included is an advisory leaflet for drivers who been treated recently in Hospital Emergency Departments.

The Office also works to ensure that all doctors, healthcare disciplines, medical professionals, An Garda Síochána and transport professionals have training and support for the practical implementation of the guidelines on the ground. Sláinte agus Tiomsáint is an important addition to the range of initiatives that ensures we can continue to drive safely on our roads.

Moyagh Murdock, CEO
Road Safety Authority
Contents

Foreword .................................................. iii
Acknowledgements .......................................... vi

Part A: General information

1 Introduction ................................................. 1
1.1 Traffic medicine and the compilation of the guidelines. .......... 2
2.0 Roles and responsibilities of drivers, health professionals and the National Driver Licence Service. ............... 4
2.1 Roles and responsibilities of drivers ................................... 4
2.2 Roles and responsibilities of health professionals .................... 5
2.3 Roles and responsibilities of the NDLS ................................. 5
2.3.1 Confidentiality, privacy and reporting to the NDLS ......... 6
2.3.2 Patient–health professional relationship ......................... 7
2.3.3 Adverse patient reaction towards the health professional ...... 7
2.3.4 Dealing with individuals that are not regular patients ........... 7
2.4 Role of the consultant including specialist occupational physician .................. 7
2.4.1 Documentation ............................................. 8
3.0 General considerations for assessing fitness to drive .............. 8
3.1 Considerations for Group 2 licensing .................................. 8
3.2 Requirements of the driving task ...................................... 9
3.3 Medical conditions likely to affect fitness to drive .................... 10
3.4 Temporary conditions ............................................ 11
3.5 Undifferentiated conditions ........................................... 13
3.6 Multiple conditions and age-related change ......................... 13
3.7 Progressive disorders .............................................. 15
3.8 Congenital conditions .............................................. 15
3.9 Medications and driving ............................................. 15
3.9.1 General guidance for prescription medicine and driving .... 16
3.9.2 The effects of specific medicine classes ......................... 17
4.0 The legal basis for the medical standards ......................... 18

Tables
Table 1 Summary roles and responsibilities of drivers, health professionals and the National Driver Licence Service .... 4
Table 2 Factors affecting driving performance .......................... 10
Table 3 Examples of temporary conditions and their management ........................................ 12
Table 4 Legal considerations for licensing ............................. 18
Part B: Medical fitness to drive

Chapter 2 Neurological disorders .............................................. 19
Appendix Chapter 2 - Epilepsy standards for Group 1 and 2. .................. 43
Driver Information Leaflet: Epilepsy, Seizures and Driving .................. 46

Chapter 3 Cardiovascular disorders ........................................... 47
Appendix Chapter 3 - Group 1 and 2 entitlements ......................... 60
Driver Information Leaflet: Cardiac Conditions and Driving ................. 62

Chapter 4 Diabetes Mellitus .................................................... 64
Driver Information Leaflet: Diabetes and Driving .......................... 68

Chapter 5 Psychiatric disorders ............................................... 70
Appendix Chapter 5 - Psychiatric Notes ..................................... 80

Chapter 6: Part 1 Alcohol misuse and dependence .......................... 81
Driver Information Leaflet: Alcohol and Driving .......................... 84
Chapter 6: Part 2 Drugs misuse and dependence .......................... 86

Chapter 7 Visual Disorders ..................................................... 90
Appendix Chapter 7 - Visual notes ........................................... 94

Chapter 8 Renal disorders ...................................................... 96

Chapter 9 Respiratory and sleep disorders ................................. 98
Driver Information Leaflet: Obstructive Sleep Apnoea Syndrome (OSAS) and Driving .................................................. 99

Chapter 10 Miscellaneous Conditions and Driving with Disabilities ... 101
Driver Information Leaflet: Emergency Department (ED): getting back to driving after injury ......................... 103

Useful resources ................................................................. 105
Index ................................................................................. 106
Driver Advisory Form .......................................................... 111
Summary of Medical Amendments ........................................... 114
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AA Ireland
An Garda Síochána
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Association of Optometrists Ireland
Clinical Pharmacology, RCSI
College of Psychiatry of Ireland
Coroners Society of Ireland & Forensic and Legal Medicine
& the Medical Bureau of Road Safety
Medical Bureau of Road Safety
Faculty of Occupational Medicine
Faculty of Public Health Medicine
Health and Safety Authority
Irish Association for Emergency Medicine
Irish Association of Rehabilitation Medicine
Irish Cardiac Society
Irish College of General Practitioners
Irish College of Nephrology
Irish College of Rheumatology
Irish College of Thoracic Society
National Office for Traffic Medicine
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Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland
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Part A: General information

1. Introduction

This publication summarises Irish medical guidelines of fitness to drive. The information in these Guidelines is intended to assist doctors and other healthcare professionals in advising their patients on fitness to drive, requirements for reporting to the National Driver Licence Service (NDLS) and guidance on review of stability, progression or improvement of these conditions. It should be used by health professionals when:

- Treating any patient who holds a driving licence whose condition may impact on their ability to drive safely. The majority of adults drive, thus a health professional should routinely consider the impact of a patient’s condition on their ability to drive safely. Awareness of a patient’s occupation or other driving requirements is also helpful.
- Undertaking an examination at the request of NDLS:
  - Assessing a person whose driving the NDLS believes may be unsafe (i.e. ‘for cause’ examinations).
  - For licence renewal of an older driver.

This publication focuses on long-term health and disability-related conditions and their associated functional effects that may impact on driving. It sets out clear minimum medical requirements for licensing and forms the medical basis of decisions made by the NDLS. This publication also provides general guidance with respect to patient management for fitness to drive.

This publication is intended for use by any health professional who is involved in assessing a person’s fitness to drive including but not confined to:
- medical practitioners (general practitioners (GPs) and other specialists)
- optometrists
- occupational therapists
- psychologists
- physiotherapists
- substance misuse/dependence counsellors

These medical standards refer to Group 1 and Group 2 licence holders. The categories are outlined below.

These Guidelines are part of a larger project of the National Office for Traffic Medicine. This larger project will encompass the annual renewal and updating of Group 1 and Group 2 medical fitness to drive guidelines in conjunction with the delivery of education and research supports and developments such as conditional or restricted licences. The literature searches underpinning the annual review of the guidelines are available on the website of the National Office for Traffic Medicine www.rcpi.ie/traffic-medicine/

Group 1 Categories AM, A1, A2, A, B, BE, or W i.e. motorcycles, cars and tractors (with or without trailer).

Group 2 Categories C, CE, C1, C1E, D, DE, D1 or D1E i.e. truck and bus (with or without trailer).

The vehicles in Group 2 are regarded as higher-risk vehicles which require a higher standard of physical and mental fitness on the part of the driver.

The legal basis for the Guidelines in general is provided for in regulations made under the Road Traffic Acts. The Road Traffic (Licensing of Drivers) Regulations 2006 (SI 537 of 2006) is the substantive legislative instrument underpinning the Guidelines. This has been amended and will continue to be amended as EU Directives update medical fitness rules. Medical fitness rules relating to diabetes, epilepsy, vision and obstructive sleep apnoea syndrome were developed on foot of recommendations from EU Specialist Working Groups and reflected in EU Directives 2009/113/EC and 2014/85/EU. Doctors should be mindful that certain specific and detailed elements of the EU Directives have force of law by virtue of being incorporated into Irish regulations, particularly relating to diabetes, vision and epilepsy. These aspects are marked with an EU Symbol in the Guidelines.

Contact Details for Medical Fitness to Drive
Email: medicalfitness@rsa.ie  Website: www.ndls.ie  Telephone no.: 1890 40 60 40
1.1 Traffic medicine and the compilation of the guidelines

Although the first automobile fatality in the world occurred in Ireland in 1859\(^1\), Traffic Medicine is a relatively new specialism embracing all those disciplines, techniques, and methods aimed at reducing the harm traffic crashes inflict on human beings (International Traffic Medicine Association, 2009)\(^2\). There is also an enabling/rehabilitative element which tries to ensure that transport mobility (an important constituent of well-being and social inclusion) is not hampered, or rendered unsafe, by remediable illness or functional loss.

It involves a wide range of disciplines, with a rapidly increasing research database which encompasses an active process of reflection, debate and consensus to maximise safe mobility. The most visible face of Traffic Medicine in most jurisdictions is the ‘medical fitness to drive’ aspect of driver licensing. Support for the approach of using evidence based guidelines is provided by evidence of a significant drop in crashes among drivers when such guidelines are systematically applied\(^6\).

These Guidelines represent a synthesis of current research and clinical practice on medical fitness to drive as interpreted by the National Office for Traffic Medicine. The contributors to the RCPI Working Group on Traffic Medicine includes virtually every medical specialty relevant to medical fitness to drive, as well as associated disciplines, the Irish Patients’ Association, the Garda Síochána and the Automobile Association.

The Guidelines are based on four major sources of knowledge: i) Significant articles in the peer reviewed literature\(^4\) ii) Position papers by scientific organisations\(^5\) iii) National guidelines, particularly those of the UK Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency, Australia’s Austroads, the Canadian Medical Association (CMA), the American Medical Association (AMA) as well as the US FMCSA Medical Examiner Handbook Information for Group 2iv(6) the ‘grey’ literature including reports from the US Transportation Research Board, UK Transport Research Laboratory and other sources\(^7\). In addition, some key overview reports are used\(^8\) and the Directives of the European Union provide a legislative framework for some aspects, particularly vision, diabetes, epilepsy and sleep apnoea\(^9\).

Annual syntheses of emerging research from medical databases are prepared each year and distributed to the Working Group and its sub-groups to aid in the deliberations on potential revisions of each section. The key search strategy is through the Medical Sub-heading term “Automobile” AND “Driving” AND/OR “Medical” AND/OR “Fitness” in the Medline, Science Direct, Web of Science and Cochrane databases, with allocation of the key results to the various sections of the guide. The full results of the literature search can be accessed on the NOTM website using this link: Literature Review for the 2018 Guidelines. Given that any one recommendation may affect practice across many disciplines, the various aspects of medical fitness to drive are examined by various sub-groups (Cardiology, Diabetes, Neurology, Psychiatry, Rehabilitation, Substance Abuse and Vision) and also by the whole Working Group.

The determination of the guidelines, and their annual review is based on a number of factors, including likelihood of crash

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relating to factors associated with each illness, the importance of personal transport, fit with the practice and working of the Irish health services, European Union legislation and interdisciplinary perspectives.

The perspective of patients as drivers is incorporated through their review of the material processed through the Working Group: the incorporation of such perspectives is a topic which is not covered in the research literature on medical fitness to drive but thus far has been consensual in the development and review of the Irish guidelines.

In addition, and consistent with good practice in guideline preparation, external review of the guidelines is undertaken by an international expert in the field. Finally, the NOTM also reviews the utility and applicability of the guidelines with end users. The NOTM is joint-funded by the Road Safety Authority and RCPI: the preparation and review process of these guidelines is editorially independent from both bodies.

We are fortunate to be able to work with, and draw on the experience of, the UK Driver and Vehicle Licensing Authority (DVLA). The Irish Guidelines are to a very significant extent based on the DVLA’s “At a Glance” Guide to the current Medical Standards of Fitness to Drive, and some of the specialist contributors to the Irish Guidelines are honorary members of the Advisory Panels of the DVLA. These Panels, which meet biannually, consist of doctors and other professionals eminent in the respective of cardiology, neurology, diabetes, vision, alcohol/substance misuse and psychiatry together with lay members. Consequently, both the Irish and UK standards are reviewed and updated regularly.

Whilst every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information contained, no guarantees can be given concerning the completeness or up-to-date nature of the information provided in these Guidelines, which are only accurate at the time of publication. Health Professionals should keep themselves up-to-date with changes in medical knowledge and technology that may influence their assessment of drivers, and with legislation that may affect the duties of the health professional or the driver. Therefore, neither the Road Safety Authority nor the National Office for Traffic Medicine nor the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland accept liability whatsoever arising from errors or omissions in the Guidelines.

It is also emphasised that the majority of these Guidelines are for use as guidance only, and should be viewed in the context of appropriate Continuing Professional Development on the topic of medical fitness to drive, as well as referral for appropriate specialist advice.

The legal basis for the Guidelines in general is provided for in regulations made under the Road Traffic Acts. The Road Traffic (Licensing of Drivers) Regulations 2006 (SI 537 of 2006) is the substantive legislative instrument underpinning the Guidelines. This has been amended and will continue to be amended as EU Directives update medical fitness rules. Medical fitness rules relating to cardiac conditions, diabetes, epilepsy, vision and obstructive sleep apnoea syndrome were developed on foot of recommendations from EU Specialist Working Groups and reflected in EU Directives 2009/113/EC, 2014/85/EC and 2016/1106/EC. Doctors should be mindful that certain specific and detailed elements of the EU Directives have force of law by virtue of being incorporated into Irish regulations, particularly relating to cardiac conditions, diabetes, vision and epilepsy. These aspects are marked with an EU Symbol in the Guidelines.

2.0 Roles and responsibilities of drivers, health professionals and the National Driver Licence Service

Drivers, health professionals and the National Driver Licence Service all have roles and responsibilities in terms of medical fitness to drive and these are summarised in Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1: Summary roles and responsibilities of drivers, health professionals and the National Driver Licence Service</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Driver</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• To report to the National Driver Licence Service (NDLS) and their insurance provider any long-term or permanent injury or illness that may affect their ability to drive without elevated risk: if holding a licence from an EU country other than Ireland, or a recognised country for licence exchange, and developing a condition which could elevate risk of impairment while driving, the driver should contact the NDLS to arrange for an exchange of their licence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• To respond truthfully to questions from the health professional regarding their health status and the likely impact on their driving ability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• To adhere to prescribed medical treatment and monitor and manage their condition(s) and any adaptations with ongoing consideration of their fitness to drive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• To adhere to any driving restrictions advised by their doctor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• To comply with requirements of their licence as appropriate, including periodic medical reviews.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Health professional</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• To assess the person’s medical fitness to drive based on the current Sláinte agus Tiomáint medical standards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• To advise the person regarding the impact of their medical condition or disability on their ability to drive and recommend restrictions and ongoing monitoring as required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• To advise the person of their responsibility to report their condition to the NDLS if their long-term or permanent injury or illness may affect their ability to drive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• To treat, monitor and manage the person’s condition with ongoing consideration of their fitness to drive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• To report to the NDLS regarding a person’s fitness to drive in the exceptional circumstances where there is a risk to the public and the driver cannot or will not cease driving.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>National Driver Licence Service (NDLS)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• To make all decisions regarding the licensing of drivers. The NDLS will consider reports provided by health professionals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• To inform the driving public of their responsibility to report any long-term or permanent injury or illness to the NDLS if the condition may affect their ability to drive safely.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Will act on reports of third parties, Gardaí, general public and healthcare workers regarding concerns of public safety relating to medical fitness to drive.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.1 Roles and responsibilities of drivers

A driver should advise the NDLS of any long-term or permanent injury or illness that may elevate risk of impairment while driving.

At licence application and renewal, drivers complete a declaration regarding their health, including whether they have any relevant medical conditions from a list of 23 medical conditions. As advised on the Driving Licence Application form (D401), when the listed medical conditions are present the NDLS stipulates that a medical examination is required to confirm a driver’s fitness to hold a driving licence. In the case of medical examinations requested by the NDLS, drivers have a duty to declare their health status to the examining health professional. Drivers have a responsibility to report to the NDLS when they become aware of a health condition that may affect their ability to drive safely.

A driver should not drive while medically unfit to do so and can be convicted of an offence for doing so under Sections 32 and 48 of the Road Traffic Act 1961. Drivers should be aware that there may be long-term financial, insurance and legal consequences where there is failure to report a medical condition that may impact on their ability to drive safely to the NDLS and insurance provider. Drivers must adhere to prescribed medical treatment and monitor and manage their condition(s) and any adaptations with ongoing consideration of their fitness to drive.
2.2 Roles and responsibilities of health professionals

Drivers rely on health professionals to advise them if a permanent or long-term injury or illness could elevate risk of impairment while driving, and whether it should be reported to the NDLS. The health professional has an ethical obligation, and potentially a legal one, to give clear advice to the driver in cases where an illness or injury may elevate risk of impairment while driving, and to maximise health and function so as to facilitate ease and driving safety. In the case of an incident illness which may affect driving ability, it is the responsibility of the healthcare professional attending the patient for the relevant care episode to advise the patient on medical fitness to drive.

There may be options other than complete cessation of driving where a driver presents with a particular condition. A revised driver licence medical report form (D501) was introduced in 2017 which allows for a number of driving licence restrictions to be indicated by medical professionals and these are summarised in the box below.

Restrictions which may be indicated on the driver licence medical report form (D501)

• Needs driving to be restricted to certain types of vehicle
• Needs vehicle adaptation(s) fitted to the vehicle
• Limited to day-time driving (one hour after sunrise and one hour before sunset)
• Limited to journeys within a radius of 30km from place of residence
• Limited to a speed not greater than 80km/h

For full details of these restrictions, please visit the NDLS website: https://www.ndls.ie/medical-reports.html

When what appears to be dangerous driving, possibly related to medical fitness to drive issues, is reported to a healthcare professional by a third party, it is a misguided kindness to pursue an exclusively medical approach. Dangerous driving is a hazard to the driver and other road users and is a statutory offence so people who witness dangerous driving should report it immediately to the Gardaí. Unless witnessed by the healthcare professional directly, the onus for reporting lies with the person witnessing the alleged dangerous driving. The medical issues can be pursued at a later stage.

Witnesses to dangerous driving can contact Traffic Watch lo-call number

1890 205 805

Underlying the professional obligation to manage risk and fitness to drive, there is also a professional and moral obligation to recognise and support mobility through appropriate diagnosis, treatment and support, as the consequences of driving cessation is associated with serious health, mobility and quality of life concerns as well(12).

2.3 Roles and responsibilities of the NDLS

The responsibility for issuing, renewing, suspending, withdrawing, refusing or cancelling a person's driving licence lies ultimately with the NDLS. Licensing decisions are based on a full consideration of relevant factors relating to the driver's health and driving performance record. In making a licensing decision, the authority will seek input regarding a person’s medical fitness to drive, either directly from the driver and/or from a health professional by way of the driver licence medical report form (D501). Where appropriate, the NDLS will also consider unsolicited reports from health professionals or the police regarding a person's fitness to drive. Payments for health examinations or assessments related to fitness to drive are not the responsibility of the NDLS.

An appeals mechanism is available for drivers who have been refused a licence on medical grounds. The NDLS will inform drivers of the appeals process when informing them of the licensing decision.

See for further details: Email: medicalfitness@rsa.ie Website: http://www.ndls.ie Telephone: 1890 40 60 40

2.3.1 Confidentiality, privacy and reporting to the NDLS

Health professionals have both an ethical and legal duty to maintain patient confidentiality. The ethical duty is generally expressed through codes issued by professional bodies. The legal duty is expressed through legislative and administrative means, and includes measures to protect personal information about a specific individual. The duty to protect confidentiality also applies to the NDLS. The patient–professional relationship is built on a foundation of trust. Patients disclose highly personal and sensitive information to health professionals because they trust that the information will remain confidential. If such trust is broken, many patients could either forego examination/treatment and/or modify the information they give to their health professional, thus placing their health at risk.

Although confidentiality is an essential component of the patient–professional relationship, there are, on rare occasions, ethically and/or legally justifiable reasons for breaching confidentiality. With respect to assessing and reporting fitness to drive, the duty to maintain confidentiality is legally qualified in certain circumstances in order to protect public safety. The Irish Medical Council Guidelines provide for breach of confidentiality if the driver represents a risk to the safety of others, refuses or cannot inform the NDLS, fails to stop or adapt driving appropriately, and is not amenable to appropriate persuasion and discussion. The health professional should consider reporting directly to the NDLS in situations where the driver is:

- Unable or unwilling to appreciate the impact of their condition which is impacting on their fitness to drive; and is
- Unable or unwilling to take notice of the health professional's recommendations; and
- Continues driving despite appropriate advice and is likely to endanger the public.

If the situation is urgent and rises outside of normal NDLS working hours and in the opinion of the health professional is likely to prove a significant threat to the public, consideration should be given to inform the Gardaí.

A positive duty is imposed on health professionals to notify the relevant authority in writing of a belief that a driver is physically or mentally unfit to drive, poses a risk to public safety and is not compliant with professional advice to stop driving. It is preferable that any action taken in the interests of public safety should be taken with the consent of the driver wherever possible and should certainly be undertaken with the driver's knowledge of the intended action to the greatest extent possible. The driver should be fully informed as to why the information needs to be disclosed to the NDLS, and be given the opportunity to consider this information. Failure to inform the driver will only exacerbate the driver's (and others') mistrust in the patient–professional relationship.

It is recognised that there might be an occasion where the health professional feels that informing the driver of the disclosure may place the health professional at risk of violence. Under such circumstances, the health professional must consider how to appropriately manage such a situation. In making a decision to report directly to the NDLS, it may be useful for the health professional to consider:

- The seriousness of the situation (i.e. the immediate risks to public safety).
- The risks associated with disclosure without the individual's consent or knowledge, balanced against the implications of non-disclosure.
- The health professional's ethical and professional obligations.
- Whether the circumstances indicate a serious and imminent threat to the health, life or safety of any person.

Examinations requested by the NDLS

When a driver presents for a medical examination at the request of the NDLS, the situation is different with respect to confidentiality. The driver will present with a form or letter from the NDLS, requesting an examination for the purposes of licence application or renewal. The completed form will generally be returned by the driver to the NDLS, thus there is no risk of breaching confidentiality or privacy, provided only information relevant to the driver’s driving ability is included on the form, and a copy of the form/report should be retained by the assessing clinician.

Privacy legislation

All health professionals and the NDLS should be aware of data protection and other applicable legislation when collecting and managing patient information and when forwarding such information to third parties.
2.3.2 Patient–health professional relationship
It is expected that the health professional will be able to act objectively in assessing a patient’s fitness to drive. If this
cannot be achieved, for example, where there may be the possibility of the patient ceasing contact or avoiding all medical
management of their condition, health professionals should be prepared to disqualify themselves and refer their patient
to another practitioner.

2.3.3 Adverse patient reaction towards the health professional
Sometimes patients feel affronted by the possibility of restrictions to their driving or withdrawal of their licence, and may
be hostile towards their treating health professionals. In such circumstances, the health professional may elect to refer
the driver to another practitioner or may refer them directly to the NDLS without a recommendation regarding fitness
to drive with the former being the preference of the NDLS, as a completed D501 Medical Report is required in such cases
to inform the licensing decision. The NDLS recognise that it is their role to enforce the laws on driver licensing and road
safety and will not place pressure on health professionals that might needlessly expose them to risk of harassment or
intimidation. In addition guidelines of the medical council on hostile and violent behaviour i.e. Guide to professional
conduct and ethics for registered medical practitioners, s.14.1, should be considered. In addition, particularly for conditions
such as dementia where insight may be reduced, helpful guides are available for the manner in which such conversations
may be managed by doctors, families and patients from the Hartford Foundation (At the Crossroads: Family Conversations
about Alzheimer’s Disease, Dementia and Driving)\cite{13} and the Alzheimer Society of Ireland (Driving and dementia)\cite{14}.

2.3.4 Dealing with individuals that are not regular patients
Care should be taken when health professionals are dealing with drivers who are not regular patients. Some drivers may
seek to deceive health professionals about their medical history and health status, and may ‘doctor shop’ for a desirable
opinion. If a health professional has doubts about an individual’s reason for seeking a consultation, they should consider:

- Asking permission from the individual to request their medical file from their regular health professional.
- Conducting a more thorough examination of the individual than would usually be undertaken.

2.4 Role of the consultant including specialist occupational physician
In most circumstances, medical assessments of drivers can be conducted by a GP. However, if doubt exists about a patient’s
fitness to drive or if the patient’s particular condition or circumstances are not covered specifically by the standards,
review by a consultant experienced in the management of the particular condition is warranted and the GP should refer
the patient to such a specialist.

If in doubt about the patient’s suitability to drive, referral to a further specialist and associated multi-disciplinary team
(i.e. physiotherapy, occupational therapy, psychology, optometry) and/or on-road assessment with a driving assessor
qualified to assess driving among those with disabilities may be of assistance.

The consultant or specialist occupational physician should advise the driver’s GP on the fitness to drive or otherwise
relating to their specialist area of expertise. This would enable the GP to complete the D501 Medical Report based on
their assessment of the overall health of the driver, as well as incorporating the specialist opinion.

The D501 Medical Report is the form in general use for all medical conditions: the D502 Eyesight Report is used at original
licence application, and if through medical or surgical intervention the driver’s vision improves to the point that corrective
lenses, previously specified on a driving licence application, are no longer needed.

\cite{13} The Hartford Centre for Mature Market Excellence. “At the crossroads: Family Conversations About Alzheimer’s Disease, Dementia and Driving.” https://
s0.hfdstatic.com/sites/the_hartford/files/at-the-crossroads-2012.pdf
\cite{14} Alzheimer’s Society of Ireland. “Driving and Dementia.” https://www.alzheimer.ie/Living-with-dementia/I-am-a-Carer/Plan-for-the-future/Driving-and-
dementia.aspx
2.4.1 Documentation

Clear documentation of the assessment results and communication with the driver and NDLS is important, as well as maintenance of a record of decisions and advice given to the driver. The D501 Medical Reports or D502 Eyesight Reports are only accepted by NDLS if printed and signed as double-sided documents. The D501 Medical Report and D502 Eyesight Report forms are available for download at https://www.ndls.ie/medical-reports.html and http://www.rsa.ie/RSA/Licensed-Drivers/Safe-driving/Medical-Issues/. Where there is any doubt about how to complete the D501 Medical Report or D502 Eyesight Report forms please review the guide on our websites.

To aid the documentation of the assessment process, a discretionary but useful Driver Advisory Form is available on the NDLS website (https://www.ndls.ie/images/Documents/Forms/Patient_Advisory_Form_PDF.pdf). This form provides written information that can be given to the patient and where used it is also advisable to keep this form on file.

3.0 General considerations for assessing fitness to drive

The aim of determining fitness to drive is to achieve a balance between minimising any driving-related road safety risks for the individual and the community posed by the driver’s permanent or long-term injury or illness, and maintaining the driver’s lifestyle and employment-related mobility independence\(^\text{15-17}\). Indeed, for many conditions, remediation and rehabilitation may improve driver comfort and safety\(^\text{18}\).

The following pages outline the general principles and considerations for assessing driver fitness. Also included in this section is a summary of the assessment process. These principles should be considered in conjunction with the specific standards outlined in Part B of this publication.

3.1 Considerations for Group 2 licensing

The assignment of medical standards for vehicle drivers is based on an evaluation of the driver, passenger and public safety risk, where risk equals likelihood of the event \(\times\) severity of consequences.

Group 2 vehicle crashes may present a severe threat to passengers, other road users (including pedestrians and cyclists) and residents adjacent to the road. Such crashes present potential threats in terms of weight and height, spillage of chemicals, fire and other significant property damage.

Group 2 vehicle drivers generally spend considerable time on the road, thus increasing the likelihood of a motor vehicle crash. The risk of crashing for Group 1 drivers is lower because they spend less time on the roads than Group 2 drivers.

In order to minimise crash risk due to long-term injuries or illnesses and taking into account the increased risk for Group 2 drivers, medical standards are more stringent for this group are more stringent than those for Group 1 drivers. The standards outlined in this publication reflect these differences.

In developing the standards, a number of approaches have been adopted to manage the increased risk associated with driving a Group 2 vehicle. These approaches include:

- There are generally longer non-driving periods prescribed for Group 2 vehicle drivers compared with private vehicles, for example, after a seizure or heart attack.

- Some medical conditions may preclude a person from driving a Group 2 vehicle but they may still be eligible to hold a full or short period licence for 1-3 years for a Group 1 licence, for example, for drivers with an implanted cardiac defibrillator.

Note:
In such cases, both sets of standards may need to be consulted. The standards are intended for application to drivers who drive within the scope of ordinary road laws. Drivers who are permitted to exceed these laws, such as emergency service vehicle drivers, should have a risk assessment and an appropriate level of medical standard applied, as determined by the relevant occupational health service.

The review period for a short period licence for a Group 2 vehicle driver is 1, 3 or a maximum period of 5 years.

Group 2 standards are minimum standards and do not preclude employers setting higher standards in terms of the demands of driving and other tasks encountered in the course of employment.

3.2 Requirements of the driving task
Consideration of the requirements of the driving task is fundamental to assessing a person’s medical fitness to drive. The driving task involves a complex and rapidly repeating cycle that requires a level of skill and the ability to interact with both the vehicle and the external environment at the same time. Information about the road environment is obtained via the visual and auditory senses. The information is operated on by many cognitive and behavioural processes including short and long-term memory and judgement, which leads to decisions being made about driving. Decisions are put into effect via the musculoskeletal system, which acts on the steering, gears and brakes to alter the vehicle in relation to the road.

The overall process is coordinated via a complex process involving behaviour, strategic and tactical abilities and personality\(^{20}\) and adaptive strategies are important in maintaining the normal parameters of driving safety in the face of illness and disability\(^{20}\). This repeating sequence depends, among other elements, on:

- vision
- visuospatial perception
- hearing
- attention and concentration
- memory
- insight
- judgement
- adaptive strategies
- reaction time
- planning/organisation
- ability to self-monitor
- sensation
- muscle power
- co-ordination

Given these requirements, it follows that many body systems need to be functional in order to ensure safe and timely execution of the skills required for driving.

Table 2: Factors affecting driving performance
Driving tasks occur within a dynamic system influenced by complex driver, vehicle, task, organisational and external road environment factors including:

- The driver’s experience, training and attitude.
- The driver’s physical, mental and emotional health, including fatigue and the effect of prescription and non-prescription (over the counter) medicines.
- The driver’s insight, self-regulation of health and driving, and prudence
- The road system, for example, signs, other road users, traffic characteristics and road layout.
- Legal requirements, for example, speed limits and blood alcohol concentration.
- The natural environment, for example, night, extremes of weather and glare.
- Vehicle and equipment characteristics, for example type of vehicle, braking performance and maintenance.
- Personal requirements, trip purpose, destination, appointments, time pressures etc.
- Passengers and their potential to distract the driver.
- If the Group 2 driver is employed by a company, it may be helpful for the assessing doctor to ask the driver for a copy of the specifics of driving task and its nature and extent as identified and evaluated under his/her employer’s risk assessment process.

3.3 Medical conditions likely to affect fitness to drive
Given the many causal factors in motor vehicle crashes, the extent to which medical conditions contribute is difficult to assess. There is, however, recognition of the potential for certain conditions to cause serious impairments.

In general, this can occur through three different pathways:

- Suddenly disabling events  
  i.e., syncope, epilepsy, ICDs...

- Physical constraints  
  i.e., Parkinsonism, hemiplegia, vision...

- Impairment of self-regulation  
  i.e., imprudence, psychiatric illness, cognitive impairment...

A driver may present with symptoms relevant to these pathways due to conditions such as:

- blackouts
- cardiovascular diseases
- diabetes
- musculoskeletal conditions
- neurological conditions such as epilepsy, dementia and cognitive impairment due to other causes
- psychiatric conditions
- substance misuse/dependency
- sleep disorders
- vision problems

Some of these conditions can affect driving ability temporarily in the here-and-now, some may affect driving ability at some time in the future and some may be complicated by the presence of multiple conditions. Treatments for medical conditions (including drug treatments and others) can also affect driving ability, positively or negatively.

Drivers may present to treating health professionals with a range of conditions, some that affect driving temporarily, or may affect the driver’s ability to drive at some time in the future, or that are complicated by the presence of multiple conditions. The content of this publication focuses on common conditions known to affect fitness to drive and, in particular, on determining the risk of a driver’s involvement in a serious vehicle crash caused by loss of control of the vehicle.
It is accepted that other medical conditions or combinations of conditions may also be relevant and that it is not possible to define all clinical situations where an individual’s overall function would compromise public safety. Multiple conditions may have a synergistic effect and this is discussed later in section 3.6. A degree of professional judgement, with more extensive assessment or specialist opinion as required, is therefore required in assessing fitness to drive.

Should a clinician require further assessment of a driver (for example, occupational therapy specialist opinion or on-road assessment), the doctor in charge of their care should be able to advise the driver whether or not it is appropriate for them to continue to drive during the period until these further assessments have been completed. Drivers may be reminded that if they choose to ignore medical advice to cease driving, there could be consequences with respect to their insurance cover and liability to prosecution for a range of offences.

### 3.4 Temporary conditions

There is a wide range of conditions that temporarily affect the ability to drive safely. These include conditions such as post major surgery, severe migraine, or injuries to limbs. These conditions are self-limiting and hence do not impact on licence status; therefore, the NDLS need not be informed. However, the treating health professional should provide suitable advice to such driver’s regarding driving safely. Such advice should be based on consideration of the likely impact of the driver’s condition and their specific circumstances on the driving task as well as their specific driving requirements. Table 3 provides guidance on some common conditions that may temporarily impact on driving ability and their management. Note: this publication does not attempt to address every condition or situation that might temporarily affect safe driving ability. For conditions not specifically mentioned relevant clinical specialist advice may need to be invoked.
Table 3: Example of temporary conditions and their management

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition and impact on driving</th>
<th>Management guidelines</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Anaesthesia</strong>&lt;br&gt;Physical and mental capacity may be impaired for some time post anaesthesia (including both general and local anaesthesia). The effects of general anaesthesia will depend on factors such as duration of anaesthesia, the drugs administered and the surgery performed. The effect of local anaesthesia will depend on dosage and the region of administration. The use of analgesics and sedatives should also be considered.</td>
<td>In cases of recovery following surgery or procedures under general or local anaesthesia, it is the responsibility of the surgeon/dentist and anaesthetist to advise drivers not to drive until physical and mental recovery is compatible with driving safety.&lt;br&gt;• Following minor procedures under local anaesthesia without sedation (e.g. dental block), driving may be acceptable immediately after the procedure.&lt;br&gt;• Following brief surgery or procedures with short-acting anaesthetic drugs, the driver may be fit to drive after a normal night’s sleep.&lt;br&gt;• After longer surgery or procedures requiring general anaesthesia, it may not be safe to drive for 24 hours or more.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Post surgery</strong>&lt;br&gt;Surgery will impact on driving ability to varying degrees depending on the location, nature and extent of the procedure.</td>
<td>The non-driving period post-surgery should be determined by the treating health professionals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pregnancy</strong>&lt;br&gt;Under normal circumstances pregnancy should not be considered a barrier to driving. However, conditions that may be associated with some pregnancies should be considered when advising drivers. These include:&lt;br&gt;• Fainting or light-headedness.&lt;br&gt;• Hyperemesis gravidarum.&lt;br&gt;• Hypertension of pregnancy.&lt;br&gt;• Post caesarean section.</td>
<td>A caution regarding driving may be required depending on the severity of symptoms and the expected effects of medication.&lt;br&gt;Seatbelts should continue to be worn, with advice on correct fitting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Temporary or short-term vision impairments</strong>&lt;br&gt;A number of conditions and treatments may impair vision in the short term, for example, temporary patching of an eye, use of mydriatics or other drugs known to impair vision, or eye surgery. For long-term vision problems, refer to Part B, Chapter 7, Vision and eye disorders.</td>
<td>People whose vision is temporarily impaired by a short-term eye condition or an eye treatment should be advised not to drive for an appropriate period. Clinics where patients routinely receive mydriatics should prospectively advise on driving precautions. In the elective setting, such as in screening for diabetic retinopathy, the level of risk that might be accepted should be lower than for emergency cases, and it is appropriate that patients should be advised in writing ahead of their appointment not to drive to the assessment, and either use public transport, taxi, or arrange for another person to bring them to and from the appointment(^2).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Deep vein thrombosis and pulmonary embolism</strong>&lt;br&gt;While deep vein thrombosis may lead to an acute pulmonary embolus there is little evidence that such an event causes crashes. Therefore there is no licensing standard applied to either condition. Non-driving periods are advised.</td>
<td>The non-driving period after Deep Vein Thrombosis (DVT) should be determined by the treating health professionals.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.5 Undifferentiated conditions

A driver may present with symptoms that could have implications for their licence status but the diagnosis is not clear. Investigation of the symptoms will mean there is a period of uncertainty before a definitive diagnosis is made and before the licensing requirements can be confidently applied.

Each situation will need to be assessed individually, with due consideration being given to the probability of a serious disease or long-term or permanent injury or illness that may affect driving, and to the circumstances in which driving is required. However, patients presenting with symptoms of a potentially serious nature, for example, chest pains, dizzy spells or black-outs, or delusional states should be advised not to drive until their condition can be adequately assessed. During this interim period, no formal communication with the NDLS is required. After a diagnosis is firmly established and the relevant guidance advised, normal notification procedures apply, if needed. The health professional should consider the impact on the driver’s livelihood and investigate the condition as quickly as possible. Where appropriate, health professionals now have the option of recommending restricted driving options (see Section 2.3 for details).

3.6 Multiple conditions and age-related change

Where a vehicle driver has multiple conditions or a condition that affects multiple body systems, there may be an additive or a compounding detrimental effect on driving abilities, for example, in:

- Congenital disabilities such as cerebral palsy, spina bifida and various syndromes.
- Multiple trauma causing orthopaedic and neurological injuries as well as psychiatric sequelae.
- Multi-system diseases such as diabetes, connective tissue disease and HIV.
- Dual diagnoses involving psychiatric illness and substance abuse disorders
- Ageing-related changes in motor, cognitive and sensory abilities together with degenerative disease.
- Fatigue related to cancer and neurological conditions.

Although these medical standards are designed principally around individual conditions, clinical judgement is needed to integrate and consider the effects on safe driving of any medical conditions and disabilities that a driver may present with. For example, glaucoma may cause a slight loss of peripheral vision. If combined with cervical spondylosis and low insight, there is likely to be a substantial reduction in the driver’s visual fields and possibly their perceptual abilities, thus increasing the risks of missing important visual information when driving.

Advanced age, in itself, is not a barrier to driving, and older drivers in general have an admirable safety record. Functional ability rather than chronological age should be the criterion used in assessing the fitness to drive of older people, although physicians should be mindful that multi-morbidity increases with age. Age-related physical and mental changes vary greatly between individuals but will eventually affect the ability to drive safely. For instance, limitations in function, such as Activities of Daily Living (i.e. personal care) and Instrumental Activities of Daily Living (i.e. cooking, managing appliances) should be a red flag for assessment of fitness to drive. Professional judgement must determine what is acceptable decline (compensated by the driver’s long experience and self-imposed limitations on when and where they drive) and what is irreversible, hazardous deterioration in driving-related skills, requiring reporting to the NDLS. This may require careful consideration and specialist referral: options include specialist medical referral, occupational therapy assessment, and an on-road assessment.

As all possible combinations of disabilities are too numerous to detail here, the following guidelines provide a general approach to assessing these drivers:

**The driving task:**
First, consider the ergonomics of the driving task. How might the various impairments (sensory, cognitive and musculoskeletal), disabilities and general fitness levels impact on function required to complete driving-related tasks?

**General functionality:**
Consider to what extent the person is currently able to function with regard to domestic or occupational requirements and what compensatory or coping strategies may have been developed. Information gained from relatives or carers is also likely to be important in this regard. Individuals may be likely to cope better with congenital or slow-onset conditions compared with traumatic or rapidly developing conditions.

**Clinical assessment:**
*The key considerations are:*
- Behaviour including risk-taking and prudence.
- Cognition (including attention, concentration, presence of hallucinations and delusions, insight, judgement, memory, problem-solving skills, thought processing and visuospatial skills).
- Motor function (including joint movements, strength and co-ordination).
- Sensory (in particular visual acuity and visual fields but also cutaneous, muscle and joint sensation).

It may be necessary for the health professional to consider medical standards for each condition. However, it is insufficient simply to apply the medical standards contained in this publication for each condition separately, as a driver may have several minor impairments that alone may not affect driving but when taken together may make risks associated with driving unacceptable. It will, therefore, be necessary to integrate all clinical information, bearing in mind the additive or compounding effect of each condition on the overall capacity of the driver to control the vehicle, and to act and react in an appropriate and timely way to emergent traffic and road conditions.

**Capacity to learn to drive:**
Young people with multiple disabilities may seek the opportunity to gain a driving licence. In order to ensure they receive informed advice and reasonable opportunities for training, it is helpful if they are trained by a driving instructor with experience in the area of teaching drivers with disabilities.

**Occupational therapy assessment:**
A referral for an assessment by a generalist occupational therapist may be useful. It could request an evaluation of overall functioning (personal, mobility, community and work activities) as well as seek an opinion on general capacity for driving.

**On-road driving assessment:**
An on-road assessment may also be helpful.

The National Office for Traffic Medicine is currently working to develop guidelines for competencies and training for on-road assessment based on the outline from the European PORTARE project. In the interim there a number of agencies and providers of on-road assessment outlined in this NOTM document published in July 2016: On-Road Driving Assessor Information although the NOTM cannot as yet endorse any particular provider of on-road assessments. Clinicians whose practice is likely to involve a significant number of on-road assessments should ideally develop a linkage with a specific provider or providers so as to allow for ready exchange of information and audit as indicated.

On-road driving assessment may be conducted by the on-road driving assessor in isolation, or may involve an OT as well in some cases if indicated. Options that may be indicated by such an assessment include vehicle modifications or a course of driver lessons.

The final decision on medical certification rests with the referring doctor, who should make a synthesis based on all of the assessments: clinical, off-road and on-road assessments, as occasionally the clinical evidence (i.e., an informant history of a consistent pattern of dangerous driving) may over-rule a single successful on-road assessment.
In light of the information given above, the health professional may advise the driver regarding their fitness to drive and provide advice to the NDLS. The key question is: Is there a likelihood the person will be unable to control the vehicle and act or react appropriately to the driving environment in a safe, consistent and timely manner?

Where one or more conditions are progressive, it may be important to reduce driving exposure and ensure ongoing monitoring of the driver. The requirement for periodic reviews can be included as recommendations. This is also important for drivers with conditions likely to be associated with future reductions in insight and self-regulation. If lack of insight may become an issue in the future, it is important to advise the driver to report the condition(s) to the NDLS.

A new driver licence medical report form (D501) was introduced in 2017, where it is possible to recommend a restricted licence in terms of daylight driving, driving within a specific distance from home, etc., and this may be a useful aid in maintaining safe driving.24

3.7 Progressive disorders

Often diagnoses of progressive disorders are made well before there is any need to question whether the driver remains safe to drive (e.g. multiple sclerosis). However, it is advantageous to raise issues relating to the likely effects of these disorders on personal independent mobility early in the management process so as to facilitate future planning, and possible eventual driving cessation and sourcing of alternative transportation.

In a mobile society, people frequently make choices about employment, place of residence and recreational and social activities based on the assumption of continued access to a car. Changing jobs, home and social contacts takes a great deal of time and places substantial emotional demands on drivers and their families.

It is, therefore, recommended that the driver be advised appropriately where a progressive condition is diagnosed that may result in future restrictions on driving. It is important to give the driver as much lead time as possible to make the lifestyle changes that may later be required. Assistance from an occupational therapist may be valuable in such instances.

3.8 Congenital conditions

People with congenital or childhood conditions may have developed coping strategies that enable safe driving despite their impairment. They will require individual assessment by a Specialist and may need tutoring prior to a practical assessment. While they may require specific vehicle modifications, if the condition is static they may not require periodic reviews.

3.9 Medications and driving

For the purposes of these Guidelines, prescription medicines are defined as: Licensed medical product for human use requiring to be used in accordance with a prescription or medical product for human use requiring it to be used in accordance with prescription or medical or health care (including pharmacist) advice.

Any medication that acts on the central nervous system has the potential to adversely affect driving skills. Conversely, it is recognized that many medications, such as medications for attention-deficit and hyperactivity disorder25, antiparkinsonian medications, anti-inflammatory agents and antidepressants, may actually make driving safer and more comfortable and due compliance is an important aspect of MFTD in such cases26.
Central nervous system depressants, for example, may reduce vigilance, increase reaction times and impair decision making in a very similar manner to alcohol. In addition, medications that affect behaviour may exaggerate adverse behavioural traits and introduce risk-taking behaviours. Group 2 drivers need to be mindful that such effects may be considered to be included in the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act (2005) s.13 (b) which stipulates that “employees must…ensure…that he or she is not under the influence of an intoxicant to the extent that he or she is in such a state as to endanger his or her own safety, health or welfare at work or that of any other person.”

Acute impairment due to alcohol or drugs (including illicit, prescription and over-the-counter drugs) is managed through specific road safety legislation that prohibits driving over a certain blood alcohol concentration (BAC) or levels of cannabis, cocaine or heroin, or when impaired by other drugs. This is a separate consideration to long-term medical fitness to drive and licensing, thus specific medical requirements are not provided in this publication. Dependency and substance misuse, including chronic misuse of prescription drugs, is a licensing issue and standards are outlined in Chapter 6.

Where medication is relevant to the overall assessment of fitness to drive in the management of specific conditions, such as diabetes, epilepsy and psychiatric conditions, this is covered in the respective chapters. Prescribing doctors and pharmacists do however, need to be mindful of the potential effects of all prescribed and over-the-counter medicines and to advise drivers accordingly. General guidance is provided below.

3.9.1 General guidance for prescription medicine and driving

While many medicines have effects on the central nervous system most, with the exception of benzodiazepines, tend not to pose a significantly increased crash risk when the medicines are used as prescribed, and once the driver is stabilised on the treatment. This may also relate to drivers’ self-regulating their driving behaviour. When advising patients and considering their general fitness to drive, whether in the short or longer term, health professionals should consider the following:

- The balance between potential impairment due to the medicine and the driver’s improvement in health on safe driving ability.
- The individual response of the patient - some individuals are more affected than others.
- The type of licence held and the nature of the driving task, i.e. Group 2 vehicle driver assessments should be more stringent.
- The added risks of combining two or more medicines capable of causing impairment, including alcohol.
- The added risks of sleep deprivation on fatigue while driving, which is particularly relevant to Group 2 vehicle drivers.
- The potential impact of changing medications or changing dosage.
- The cumulative effects of medications.
- The presence of other medical conditions that may combine to adversely affect driving ability.
- Other factors that may exacerbate risks, such as known history of alcohol or drug misuse.

For individual medicinal products, the summary of product characteristics (SmPC) and patient information leaflet (PIL) may be a useful source of information on the impact of these products on driving safety. SmPCs and PILs can be found on the Health Products Regulatory Authority website: www.hpra.ie.

Liaison between prescribing doctors and pharmacists is encouraged in the consideration of advice given to drivers taking medications which may impact on driving safety.
3.9.2 The effects of specific medicine classes

For the following psychoactive medications, the driver should be advised about concerns over sedation while initiating and changing treatment, and that driving should cease if such signs are noted: resumption should only recommence when such sedating side-effects have ceased. Helpful background information can be obtained from the deliberations of the EU-FP6 funded project “Driving under the Influence of Drugs, Alcohol and Medicines” (DRUID) [27–28].

Benzodiazepines

Benzodiazepines, particularly long-acting benzodiazepines, increase the risk of a crash. In many of these studies, benzodiazepines were used without prescription, at supra-therapeutic doses, or in combination with other impairing and/or illicit substances. If a hypnotic is needed, a shorter-acting medicine is preferred. Tolerance to the sedative effects of the longer-acting benzodiazepines used in the treatment of anxiety gradually reduces their adverse impact on driving skills. Particular caution should be exercised with Group 2 drivers and benzodiazepines[29], avoiding benzodiazepines to the greatest extent possible, and if any doubt persists about their impact on driving, a second opinion from a psychiatrist or occupational physician should be sought.

Antidepressants

Although antidepressants are one of the more commonly detected drug groups in fatally injured drivers, this tends to reflect their wide use in the community. The ability to impair is greater with sedating tricyclic antidepressants, such as amitriptyline and dosulepin, than with less sedating serotonin reuptake inhibitors, such as fluoxetine and sertraline, and the mixed reuptake inhibitors. However, antidepressants can reduce the psychomotor and cognitive impairment caused by depression and return mood towards normal. This can improve driving performance.

Antipsychotics

This diverse class of drugs can improve performance if substantial psychotic-related cognitive deficits are present. However, most antipsychotics are sedating and have the potential to adversely affect driving skills through blockade of central dopaminergic and other receptors. Older drugs such as chlorpromazine are very sedating due to their additional actions on the cholinergic and histamine receptors. Some newer drugs are also sedating, such as clozapine, olanzapine and quetiapine, while others such as aripiprazole, risperidone and ziprasidone are less sedating. Sedation may be a particular problem early in treatment and at higher doses.

Opioids

There is little direct evidence that opioid analgesics such as hydromorphone, morphine or oxycodone have direct adverse effects on driving behaviour[30]. It should be noted however, that only a tiny number of studies examining on-road driving behaviour have been conducted to date. Cognitive performance is reduced early in treatment, largely due to their sedative effects, but neuroadaptation is rapidly established. This means that drivers on a stable dose of an opioid may not have a higher risk of a crash. This includes drivers on buprenorphine and methadone for their opioid dependency, providing the dose has been stabilised over some weeks and they are not abusing other impairing drugs. Driving at night may be a problem due to the persistent miotic effects of these drugs reducing peripheral vision.

Medicinal Cannabis

The Health Products Regulatory Authority (successor to the Irish Medicines Board) authorised, in July 2014, by issue of a product license, an approved human medicine called Sativex which contains the active ingredients delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) and cannabidiol (CBD) which may be prescribed as treatment for symptom improvement in adult patients with moderate to severe spasticity due to multiple sclerosis (MS). The therapeutic indication is for patients with MS who have not responded adequately to other anti-spasticity medication and who demonstrate clinically significant improvement in spasticity related symptoms during an initial trial of therapy. Medicinal cannabis may impair judgment.

and performance of skilled tasks. Research however suggests that drivers adapted to their medicinal dose generally, but not always, maintain their driving ability\(^{31}\). Drivers should be advised about potential effects of the medication on their driving and also advised to self-monitor accordingly for any indications of impairment of driving particularly when they first start to take the medication and until they are established on a stable daily dose.

### 4.0 The legal basis for the medical standards

Since January 2013 the Road Safety Authority is the licensing authority with the responsibility of ensuring that all licence holders are fit to drive. The legal basis for the Guidelines in general is provided for in regulations made under the Road Traffic Acts. The Road Traffic (Licensing of Drivers) Regulations 2006 (SI 537 of 2006) is the substantive legislative instrument underpinning the Guidelines. This has been amended and will continue to be amended as EU Directives update medical fitness rules. National Driver Licence Service or NDLS, is the name given to the new, dedicated service which receives applications for learner permits and driving licences, see Table 4 below.

**Table 4: Legal considerations for licensing**

- **NDLS processes following medical advice**
  - Driving licences are issued or maintained by the NDLS on the basis that the driver has not been advised to cease driving by a doctor or healthcare professional on the basis of clinical assessment it would be prudent to consider the advice contained within these Guidelines\(^{32}\). Should a driver be advised to cease driving by a doctor or healthcare professional on the basis of this clinical assessment, he/she should inform the NDLS. It is then a matter for the NDLS to take appropriate action.

- **Appeals**
  - Decisions about the granting of a driving licence are a matter for the NDLS and arrangements concerning the review or appeal against such decisions should be taken up with the NDLS.

- **Age limits**
  - Group 1 licences are normally issued for a 10 year period subject to expiry at age 70 years, unless restricted to a shorter duration for medical reasons. There is no upper limit but after age 70 renewal is necessary every 3 years, or every year if medical assessment so indicates. All licence applications after 70 currently require a medical report furnished by the applicant. Group 2 licences are issued for a maximum of 5 years up to the age of 70.

- **Garda/Army driver licensing**
  - Responsibility for determining the standards, including medical requirements, to be applied to Garda/Army vehicle drivers, rests with the Garda Commissioner/Army Director of Services.

- **Taxi drivers**
  - The provision of driving licences for small public service vehicles is the responsibility of An Garda Síochána. Responsibility for determining the standards, including medical requirements, to be applied to taxi drivers, over and above the Group 1 driving licence requirements, rests with the National Transport Authority, who are required to consult with the Garda Commissioner in relation to such proposals.


Part B: Medical fitness to drive

Chapter 2
Neurological disorders


Group 2 standards are minimum standards and do not preclude employers setting higher standards in terms of the demands of the driving tasks encountered in the course of employment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Neurological Disorders</th>
<th>Group 1 - Entitlement ODL car, motorcycle and tractor</th>
<th>Group 2 Entitlement ODL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Epilepsy(^{33,34})</td>
<td>The epilepsy standards apply*</td>
<td>The epilepsy standards apply*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not permitted to drive following diagnosis.</td>
<td>Not permitted to drive following diagnosis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Standards require a driver to remain seizure-free for one year for a 1-year licence to be issued, and remain seizure-free for 5 years with annual review for a longer duration licence to be issued by the NDLS, with medication as indicated, provided that there is no other disqualifying condition.</td>
<td>Standards require a driver to remain seizure-free for 10 years since the last attack without antiepileptic medication.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Permitted to drive subsequently provided the driver is able to satisfy the standards, a 3 year licence will be issued normally by the NDLS.</td>
<td>Permitted to drive subsequently provided the driver is:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Before age 70 a person must be seizure-free for 5 years to qualify for a 10 year licence in the absence of any other disqualifying condition.</td>
<td>• Without anti-epileptic medication for the required period of seizure freedom.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Driver should notify NDLS.</td>
<td>• Has completed an appropriate medical follow-up.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• After extensive neurological investigation, has no relevant cerebral pathology established and there is no epileptiform activity on the electroencephalogram (EEG).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Driver should notify NDLS.

See Appendix at end of this chapter for epilepsy standards.

Recent reviews include:

Neurological Disorders | Group 1 - Entitlement ODL | Group 2 Entitlement ODL
---|---|---
**Epilepsy/epileptic seizures** | In all cases where epilepsy has been diagnosed, the epilepsy standards apply. These cases will include all cases of single seizure where a primary cerebral cause is present and the liability to recurrence cannot be excluded. An exception may be made when seizures occur at the time of an acute head injury or intracranial surgery. When seizures occur at the time of intracranial venous thrombosis, 6 months is required, free from attacks, before resuming driving. | In all cases where a “liability to epileptic seizures” either primary or secondary has been diagnosed, the specific epilepsy standard for this group applies. The only exception is a seizure occurring immediately at the time of an acute head injury or intracranial surgery, and not thereafter and/or where no liability to seizure has been demonstrated. Following head injury or intracranial surgery, the risk of seizure must have fallen to no greater than 2% per annum before returning to Group 2 driving. | **Driver should notify NDLS.**

**First unprovoked seizure** | Permitted to drive subsequently 6 months from the date of the seizure unless there are clinical factors or investigation results which, in the opinion of the treating consultant suggest an unacceptably high risk of a further seizure, i.e. 20% or greater per annum. | Permitted to drive subsequently, 5 years from the date of the seizure, provided the licence holder has undergone recent assessment by a neurologist and there are no clinical factors or investigation results (e.g. EEG, brain scan) which indicate that the risk of a further seizure is greater than 2% per annum. They should have taken no antiepileptic medication throughout the 5 year period immediately prior to the granting of the licence. | **Driver should notify NDLS.**

If risk of further seizure is greater than 2% per annum Group 2 epilepsy standards apply.

**The following features are consistent with a person having a good prognosis:**
- No relevant structural abnormality of the brain on imaging;
- No definite epileptiform activity on EEG;
- Clinical evaluation of the neurologist;
- Seizure risk considered to be 2% or less per annum for Group 2 licensing and 20% or less per annum for ordinary driving licensing.

See Appendix at end of this chapter for epilepsy standards.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Neurological Disorders</th>
<th>Group 1 - Entitlement ODL car, motorcycle and tractor</th>
<th>Group 2 Entitlement ODL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Withdrawal of antiepileptic medication and driving</strong></td>
<td>See Appendix at end of this chapter for epilepsy standards.</td>
<td>Standards require a driver to remain seizure-free for 10 years since the last attack without antiepileptic medication before being permitted to drive. See Appendix at end of this chapter for epilepsy standards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Provoked seizures</strong> (Apart from alcohol or illicit drug misuse)</td>
<td>See Appendix at end of this chapter for epilepsy standards.</td>
<td>Standards require a driver to remain seizure-free for 10 years since the last attack without antiepileptic medication before being permitted to drive. See Appendix at end of this chapter for epilepsy standards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non Epileptic seizure attacks</strong></td>
<td>Permitted to drive provided attacks have been satisfactorily controlled and there are no relevant mental health issues.</td>
<td>Permitted to drive provided attacks have been satisfactorily controlled and there are no relevant mental health issues.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See Appendix at end of this chapter for epilepsy standards.

Loss of consciousness/loss of or altered awareness[^39-41]

Excluding Cough Syncope (See Chapter 9)

A full history is imperative to include pre-morbid history, prodromal symptoms, period of time unconscious, degree of amnesia and confusion on recovery. A neurological cause, for example, epilepsy, subarachnoid haemorrhage, can often be identified by the history, examination and the appropriate referral made. The relevant Sláinte agus Tiomáint guidelines will then apply. In 80% of all cases there is a cardiovascular cause and again, these can also be determined by history, examination and ECG. Investigate and treat accordingly and use the relevant Sláinte agus Tiomáint guidelines.

The remaining cases can be classified under five categories in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Neurological Disorders</th>
<th>Group 1 - Entitlement ODL</th>
<th>Group 2 Entitlement ODL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Reflex Vasovagal Syncope</strong></td>
<td>Permitted to drive. Driver needn’t notify NDLS.</td>
<td>Permitted to drive. Driver needn’t notify NDLS. N.B. Cough Syncope see Chapter 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definite provocational factors with associated prodromal symptoms and which are unlikely to occur whilst sitting or lying. Benign in nature. If recurrent, will need to check the “3 Ps” apply on each occasion (provocation/prodrome/postural). (If not see Number 6 below).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2. Solitary loss of consciousness/loss of or altered awareness likely to be unexplained syncope but with a high probability of reflex vasovagal syncope.</strong> These have no clinical evidence of structural heart disease and a normal ECG.</td>
<td>Permitted to drive. Driver needn’t notify NDLS.</td>
<td>Not permitted to drive initially. Permitted to drive 3 months after the event provided there has been no further recurrence. Driver should notify NDLS. N.B. Cough Syncope see Chapter 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3. Solitary loss of consciousness/loss of or altered awareness likely to be cardiovascular in origin (Excluding 1 or 2 directly preceding).</strong> Factors indicating high risk: A. Abnormal ECG. B. Clinical evidence of structural heart disease. C. Syncope causing injury, occurring at the wheel or whilst sitting or lying. D. More than one episode in previous 6 months. Further investigations such as ambulatory ECG (48hrs), echocardiography and exercise testing may be indicated after consultant opinion has been sought. <strong>For Pacemakers see Chapter 3</strong></td>
<td>Not permitted to drive for 6 months if no cause identified. Permitted to drive 3 months after the event provided the cause has been identified and treated satisfactorily. Driver should notify NDLS if cause not identified.</td>
<td>Not permitted to drive for 12 months if no cause identified. Permitted to drive 3 months after the event provided the cause has been identified and treated satisfactorily. Driver should notify NDLS if cause not identified.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*See Appendix at end of this chapter for epilepsy standards.*
4. Solitary loss of consciousness/loss of or altered awareness with seizure markers.
This category is for those where there is a strong clinical suspicion of a seizure but no definite evidence.

**Factors to be considered:**
- Without reliable prodromal symptoms.
- Unconsciousness for more than 5 minutes.
- Amnesia longer than 5 minutes.
- Injury.
- Tongue biting.
- Incontinence.
- Remain conscious but with confused behavior.
- Headache post attack.

Not permitted to drive for 6 months from the date of an episode of loss of consciousness/loss of or altered awareness. However, if a person has a previous history of epilepsy or a solitary seizure, 12 months' freedom from any further episode of loss of consciousness with seizure markers must be attained.

If a person suffers recurrent episodes of loss of consciousness with seizure markers, 12 months' freedom from such episodes must be attained.

*Driver should notify NDLS.*

5. Solitary loss of consciousness/loss of or altered awareness with no clinical pointers.
This category will have had appropriate neurological and cardiac opinion and investigations but with no abnormality detected.

Not permitted to drive for 6 months.

Permitted to drive subsequently provided there is no further recurrence.

*Driver should notify NDLS.*

6. Two or more episodes of loss of consciousness/loss of or altered awareness without reliable prodromal symptoms.

Not permitted to drive for 12 months or until the risk has been reduced to < 20% per annum.

*Driver should notify NDLS.*

See Appendix at end of this chapter for epilepsy standards.
Neurological Disorders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary/Central Hypersonnias(^{(42)}) Including Narcoleptic syndromes</th>
<th>Not permitted to drive initially.</th>
<th>Not permitted to drive initially.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Permitted to drive subsequently provided there has been a period of between 3 and 6 months satisfactory control of symptoms with appropriate treatment has elapsed. If not requiring treatment, relicensing may be considered after satisfactory objective assessment of maintained wakefulness, e.g. the Osler test.</td>
<td>Permitted to drive subsequently, subject to consultant assessment and a satisfactory objective assessment of maintained wakefulness e.g. the Osler test.</td>
<td>Driver should notify NDLS if driving cessation is going to be 6 months or greater.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Driver should notify NDLS if driving cessation is going to be 6 months or greater.</td>
<td>Driver should notify NDLS.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chronic Neurological Disorders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Neurological Disorders</th>
<th>Group 1 - Entitlement ODL car, motorcycle and tractor</th>
<th>Group 2 Entitlement ODL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Multiple sclerosis(^{(43-45)}), motor neurone disease, myopathy etc., which may affect vehicle control because of impairment of co-ordination and muscle power.</td>
<td>Permitted to drive providing medical assessment confirms that driving performance is not impaired.</td>
<td>Not permitted to drive if condition is progressive or disabling.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 or 3 year licence may be advised. Should the driver require a restriction to certain controls, the law requires this to be specified on the licence. Due consideration should be given to functional status, rehabilitation, specialist on-road assessment and adaptations which may help to adapt to, or overcome, relevant cognitive and physical impairment.</td>
<td>Driver should notify NDLS.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See Appendix at end of this chapter for epilepsy standards.

### Neurological Disorders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parkinson’s disease and other forms of Parkinsonism[44-51]</th>
<th>Group 1 - Entitlement ODL car, motorcycle and tractor</th>
<th>Group 2 Entitlement ODL car, motorcycle and tractor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Permitted to drive provided the condition does not impair safe driving e.g. there is no clinically significant variability in motor function. Due consideration should be given to medication review (with due attention to tendency to drowsiness/ sleepiness), rehabilitation, specialist on-road assessment and adaptations which may help to adapt to, or overcome, relevant cognitive and physical impairment. If driving safety not impaired, can continue driving subject to satisfactory reports. Fitness to drive is subject to regular review.</td>
<td>Not permitted to drive if condition is disabling and/or there is clinically significant variability in motor function. Permitted to drive provided driving would not be impaired, subject to individual assessment by a consultant. Licence may be issued subject to annual review.</td>
<td>Driver should notify NDLS.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Dizziness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Liability to sudden attacks of unprovoked or unprecipitated disabling dizziness or vestibular symptoms</th>
<th>Group 1 - Entitlement ODL car, motorcycle and tractor</th>
<th>Group 2 Entitlement ODL car, motorcycle and tractor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not permitted to drive on diagnosis Permitted to drive subsequently provided satisfactory control of symptoms achieved. If remains asymptomatic, a 10 year licence or if over 60-years-old, a licence expiring at age 70 can be issued. After age 70, a 1 or 3 year licence can be issued, subject to medical report.</td>
<td>Not permitted to drive on diagnosis May be permitted to drive subsequently, having taken into consideration the underlying diagnosis and if likely to cause recurrent attacks, must be symptom-free and completely controlled for 1 year from last attack before resuming driving.</td>
<td>Driver should notify NDLS.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See Appendix at end of this chapter for epilepsy standards.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Neurological Disorders</th>
<th>Group 1 - Entitlement ODL car, motorcycle and tractor</th>
<th>Group 2 Entitlement ODL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stroke/TIA</strong> (52-56)</td>
<td>Transient ischaemic attack (TIA)</td>
<td>Transient ischaemic attack (TIA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not permitted to drive for 1 week. Driver needn’t notify NDLS.</td>
<td>Not permitted to drive for at least 3 months. Driver should notify NDLS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stroke</td>
<td>Stroke</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not permitted to drive for 4 weeks.</td>
<td>Not permitted to drive for at least 3 months.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Permitted to drive after this period provided the clinical recovery is satisfactory. Driver does not need to notify NDLS unless there is significant residual neurological deficit 4 weeks after the episode; of particular importance are visual field defects, cognitive defects including visual neglect and inattention and impaired limb function. Minor limb weakness alone will not require notification unless restriction to certain types of vehicle or vehicles with adapted controls is needed. Due consideration should be given to risk of reoccurrence, rehabilitation, specialist on-road assessment and adaptations which may help to adapt to, or overcome, relevant cognitive and physical impairment.</td>
<td>Permitted to drive after at least 3 months and subject to at least annual review taking into account:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Seizures occurring at the time of a stroke/TIA or in the ensuing 24 hours may be treated as provoked for licensing purposes in the absence of any previous seizure history or previous cerebral pathology.</td>
<td>• The nature of the driving task (e.g. petrol tanker vs light van).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Information provided by an appropriate consultant regarding the level of impairment of any of the following; visuospatial perception, insight, judgement, attention, reaction time, memory, sensation, muscle power, coordination, vision (including visual fields) and the likely impact on driving ability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• The results of a practical driver assessment if required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• The risk of recurrence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• If intra-cerebral haemorrhage, that the risk of seizure is 2% or less per annum, as judged by competent specialist.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Driver should notify NDLS.

See Appendix at end of this chapter for epilepsy standards.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Neurological Disorders</th>
<th>Group 1 - Entitlement ODL</th>
<th>Group 2 Entitlement ODL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acute Encephalitic Illnesses Including Limbic Encephalitis associated with seizures.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Permitted to drive provided no seizure(s), when clinical recovery is complete. The Driver should notify NDLS only if there is significant residual disability.</td>
<td>1. Permitted to drive provided no residual disabling symptoms, and clinical recovery is complete as assessed by a neurologist. The Driver should notify NDLS only if there is significant residual disability.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. If associated with seizures during acute febrile illness, not permitted to drive for 6 months from the date of seizure(s). Driver should notify NDLS.</td>
<td>2. If associated with seizures during acute febrile illness not permitted to drive and Driver should notify NDLS.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. If associated with any seizure(s) early or late during or after convalescence, permitted to drive provided the current epilepsy standards have been met. Driver should notify NDLS.</td>
<td>a) Encephalitis – there have been no further seizures for at least 12 months without use of antiepileptic medication assessment by neurologist required.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. If associated with any seizure(s) early or late during or after convalescence, not permitted to drive, driver should notify NDLS, and meet current epilepsy standards before driving resumes.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transient Global Amnesia</td>
<td>Permitted to drive provided epilepsy, any sequelae from head injury and other causes of altered awareness have been excluded. Driver needn’t notify NDLS.</td>
<td>A single confirmed episode does not require cessation of driving. Not permitted to drive if two or more episodes occur. Driver should notify NDLS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Consultant assessment required to exclude all other causes of acute transient memory loss.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See Appendix at end of this chapter for epilepsy standards.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Neurological Disorders</th>
<th>Group 1 - Entitlement ODL car, motorcycle and tractor</th>
<th>Group 2 Entitlement ODL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arachnoid Cysts</td>
<td>Permitted to drive.</td>
<td>Permitted to drive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asymptomatic and untreated</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colloid Cysts</td>
<td>Permitted to drive.</td>
<td>Permitted to drive unless prescribed prophylactic medication for seizures when there should be individual assessment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asymptomatic and untreated</td>
<td></td>
<td>Driver should notify NDLS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colloid Cysts</td>
<td>Not permitted to drive for 6 months after the treatment. Permitted to drive thereafter, provided that there is no debarring residual impairment likely to affect driving safety.</td>
<td>Not permitted to drive for 2 years after the treatment. Permitted to drive thereafter, provided that there is no debarring residual impairment likely to affect driving safety.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Craniotomy and/or Endoscopic Treatment.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Driver should notify NDLS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pituitary Tumour</td>
<td>Permitted to drive provided no visual field defect. If visual field loss.</td>
<td>Permitted to drive provided no visual field defect. If visual field loss.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No need for treatment, or treated by transsphneoidal surgery or drugs or radiotherapy</td>
<td>See section: Visual Disorders Chapter 7.</td>
<td>See section: Visual Disorders Chapter 7.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pituitary Tumour</td>
<td>Not permitted to drive for 6 months. Permitted to drive thereafter, provided no visual field defect. If visual field loss.</td>
<td>Not permitted to drive for 2 years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treated by Craniotomy</td>
<td></td>
<td>Driver must notify NDLS.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See Appendix at end of this chapter for epilepsy standards.
## Neurological Disorders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Treatment</th>
<th>Group 1 - Entitlement ODL</th>
<th>Group 2 Entitlement ODL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Benign Supratentorial Tumour</strong></td>
<td>Not permitted to drive for 6 months.</td>
<td>Not permitted to drive. In the absence of any seizures, a short period licence can be considered 5 years after surgery, with evidence of complete removal. If tumour is associated with seizures, 10 years freedom from seizures without antiepileptic drugs following surgery and consultant assessment is required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E.g. WHO Grade 1 Meningiomas</td>
<td>Permitted to drive thereafter provided there is no debarring residual impairment likely to affect safe driving.</td>
<td><strong>Driver should notify NDLS.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Treatment by Craniotomy</strong></td>
<td><strong>Driver should notify NDLS.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Epilepsy standards apply if relevant history of seizure(s).</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Treatment with Stereotactic Radiosurgery</strong></td>
<td>Not permitted to drive for 4 weeks.</td>
<td>Not permitted to drive for 3 years after the completion of the primary treatment of the tumour.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Permitted to drive thereafter provided there is no debarring residual impairment likely to affect driving safety.</td>
<td>Permitted to drive thereafter provided that there is evidence on imaging of stability. If tumour association with seizure(s), 10 years' freedom from seizures without antiepileptic drugs following surgery and consultant assessment is required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Driver should notify NDLS.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Driver should notify NDLS.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Epilepsy standards apply if relevant history of seizure(s).</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Treatment with Fractionated Radiotherapy</strong></td>
<td>Permitted to drive on completion of treatment, provided that there is no debarring residual impairment likely to affect safe driving.</td>
<td>Not permitted to drive for 3 years after the completion of the primary treatment of the tumour.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Epilepsy standards apply if relevant history of seizure(s).</td>
<td>Permitted to drive thereafter, provided that there is evidence on imaging of stability. If tumour association with seizure(s), 10 years’ freedom from seizures without antiepileptic drugs following surgery and consultant assessment is required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Driver should notify NDLS.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Driver should notify NDLS.</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*See Appendix at end of this chapter for epilepsy standards.*
### Neurological Disorders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group 1 - Entitlement ODL</th>
<th>Group 2 Entitlement ODL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **WHO Grade II Meningiomas**<br> treated by Craniotomy and/or Radiosurgery and/or Radiotherapy | Not permitted to drive for 1 year, dating from the completion of treatment.  
Permitted to drive thereafter provided there is no debarring residual impairment likely to affect driving safety.  
*Driver should notify NDLS.*  
Epilepsy standards apply if relevant history of seizure(s). | Not permitted to drive.  
In the absence of any seizures, return to driving can considered 5 years after surgery, with evidence of complete removal. If tumour is associated with seizure(s), 10 years freedom from seizures without antiepileptic drugs following surgery is required. Consultant assessment may be required. |
| **Asymptomatic, incidental meningiomas: Untreated** | Permitted to drive.  
*Driver needn’t notify NDLS.* | Not permitted to drive until two scans 12 months apart showing no growth. If growth, consultant assessment with 1 year short period licence and review.  
*Driver should notify NDLS.* |
| **Benign Infratentorial Tumours**<br> E.g. Meningioma with surgery by craniotomy with or without radiotherapy. | Permitted to drive on recovery from treatment.  
*Driver needn’t notify NDLS.* | Permitted to drive on recovery provided there is no debarring residual impairment likely to affect driving safety.  
*Driver needn’t notify NDLS.* |
| **Acoustic Neuroma/Schwannoma** | Permitted to drive.  
*Driver needn’t notify NDLS unless accompanied by disabling vestibular symptoms.* | Permitted to drive.  
*Driver needn’t notify NDLS unless accompanied by disabling vestibular symptoms and/or the condition is bilateral.* |
| **Malignant Tumours (including metastatic deposits) and Gliomas**<br> Supratentorial Gliomas Grades I and II | Not permitted to drive for 1 year from time of completion of the primary treatment.  
Permitted to drive thereafter, provided there is no debarring residual impairment likely to affect driving safety.  
*Driver should notify NDLS.* | Not permitted to drive.  
Pineocytoma, Grade I: Permission to drive can be considered on an individual basis 2 years post primary treatment if satisfactory MRI.  
*Driver should notify NDLS.* |

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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Neurological Disorders</th>
<th>Group 1 - Entitlement ODL car, motorcycle and tractor</th>
<th>Group 2 Entitlement ODL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WHO Grade III Meningioma</td>
<td>Not permitted to drive for 2 years from time of completion of primary treatment. Permitted to drive thereafter, provided there is no debarring residual impairment likely to affect driving safety. <em>Driver should notify NDLS.</em></td>
<td>Not permitted to drive. Pineocytoma, Grade I: Permission to drive can be considered on an individual basis 2 years post primary treatment if satisfactory MRI. <em>Driver should notify NDLS.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gliomas Grade III and IV and Metastatic Deposit(s).</td>
<td>Not permitted to drive for 2 years from time of completion of primary treatment. Permitted to drive thereafter, provided there is no debarring residual impairment likely to affect driving safety. <em>Driver should notify NDLS.</em></td>
<td>Not permitted to drive. <em>Driver should notify NDLS.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solitary Metastatic Deposit</td>
<td>If totally excised, can be considered for recommending 1 year licence after completion of primary treatment if free from recurrence and no evidence of secondary spread elsewhere in the body; thereafter permitted to drive provided there is no debarring residual impairment likely to affect driving safety. <em>Driver should notify NDLS.</em></td>
<td>Not permitted to drive. <em>Driver should notify NDLS.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infratentorial Tumours Gliomas Grade I</td>
<td>As for benign tumours: i.e. permitted to drive on recovery. Permission to drive subject to individual assessment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gliomas Grade II, III &amp; IV</td>
<td>As for Supratentorial tumour <em>Driver should notify NDLS.</em></td>
<td>Not permitted to drive. <em>Driver should notify NDLS.</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*See Appendix at end of this chapter for epilepsy standards.*
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Neurological Disorders</th>
<th>Group 1 - Entitlement ODL</th>
<th>Group 2 Entitlement ODL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Medulloblastoma or Low Grade Ependymoma</td>
<td>Not permitted to drive.</td>
<td>Not permitted to drive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If totally excised, can</td>
<td>If entirely infratentorial, may be</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>be considered for 1 year</td>
<td>considered for driving when disease-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>licence after primary</td>
<td>free for 5 years after</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>treatment, if free</td>
<td>treatment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>from recurrence.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Driver should notify NDLS.</td>
<td>Driver should notify NDLS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Grade Ependymomas, Other Primary Malignant Brain Tumours and Primary CNS</td>
<td>Not permitted to drive.</td>
<td>Not permitted to drive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lymphomas</td>
<td>Can be considered for relicensing</td>
<td>Driver should notify NDLS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 years following</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>treatment.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Driver should notify NDLS.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metastatic deposits</td>
<td>Not permitted to drive.</td>
<td>Not permitted to drive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Can be considered for driving</td>
<td>Can be considered for a licence 5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>on a 1 year licence after</td>
<td>from the date of completion of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>completion of primary</td>
<td>the primary treatment if</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>treatment if otherwise</td>
<td>asymptomatic and subject to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>well.</td>
<td>annual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Driver should notify NDLS.</td>
<td>Driver should notify NDLS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malignant Intracranial Tumours in children who survive to adult life without</td>
<td>Permitted to drive.</td>
<td>Permitted to drive subject</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>recurrence</td>
<td></td>
<td>to individual assessment: see</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>above as for “Benign Supratentorial Tumour”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traumatic brain injury</td>
<td>Usually requires 6-12</td>
<td>Not permitted to drive if</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>months off driving</td>
<td>the person has had head</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>depending on features</td>
<td>injury producing significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>such as seizures, post-</td>
<td>impairment of any of the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>traumatic amnesia, dural</td>
<td>following: visuospatial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tear, haematoma and</td>
<td>perception, insight,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>contusions.</td>
<td>judgement, attention,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>There will need to have</td>
<td>reaction time, memory,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>been a satisfactory</td>
<td>sensation, muscle power,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>clinical recovery and</td>
<td>coordination, vision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>in particular no visual</td>
<td>(including visual fields).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>field defect, or cognitive</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>or behavioural impairment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>likely to affect driving</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>safety. Due consideration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>should be given to</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>rehabilitation, specialist</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>on-road assessment and</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>adaptations which may</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>help to adapt to, or</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>overcome, relevant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>cognitive and physical</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>impairment.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Driver should notify NDLS.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Driver should notify NDLS.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When a low grade glioma is an incidental finding and asymptomatic, the case may be considered on an individual basis for Group 1.

See Appendix at end of this chapter for epilepsy standards.
Subdural haematoma

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Neurological Disorders</th>
<th>Group 1 - Entitlement ODL car, motorcycle and tractor</th>
<th>Group 2 Entitlement ODL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Spontaneous Acute Subdural Haematoma**
(Treated by Craniotomy) | Not permitted to drive for 6 months. Permitted to drive thereafter, provided there is no significant residual disability. If significant residual disability, due consideration should be given to rehabilitation, specialist on-road assessment and adaptations which may help to adapt to, or overcome, relevant cognitive and physical impairment. *Driver should notify NDLS.* | Not permitted to drive for 6 months. Thereafter, licensing will be contingent on an individual assessment by a consultant as to fitness to return to driving. *Driver should notify NDLS.* |
| **Chronic Subdural Haematoma**
(Treated surgically) | Permitted to drive on recovery provided there is no significant residual disability. If significant residual disability, due consideration should be given to rehabilitation, specialist on-road assessment and adaptations which may help to adapt to, overcome, relevant cognitive and physical impairment. *Driver should notify NDLS.* | Not permitted to drive for 6 months – 1 year. Thereafter, licensing is contingent on with an individual assessment by consultant as to fitness to return to driving. *Driver should notify NDLS.* |

*See Appendix at end of this chapter for epilepsy standards.*
Subarachnoid Haemorrhage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Neurological Disorders</th>
<th>Group 1 - Entitlement ODL car, motorcycle and tractor</th>
<th>Group 2 Entitlement ODL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subarachnoid Haemorrhage</td>
<td>Permitted to drive provided comprehensive cerebral angiography normal, following recovery if no significant residual disability. If significant residual disability, due consideration should be given to rehabilitation, specialist on-road assessment and adaptations which may help to adapt to, or overcome, relevant cognitive and physical impairment.</td>
<td>Not permitted to drive for 6 months. Permitted to drive thereafter provided comprehensive cerebral angiography normal, and there is no debarring residual impairment likely to affect driving safety. Driver should notify NDLS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. No cause found</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Subarachnoid Haemorrhage

2A. Associated with Intracranial Aneurysm

N.B. If any other procedure is undertaken e.g. V.P. shunt, craniotomy for a haematoma etc., then the standards for that procedure shall apply.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Neurological Disorders</th>
<th>Group 1 Entitlement ODL car, motorcycle and tractor</th>
<th>Group 2 Entitlement ODL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cranioetomy</td>
<td>Permitted to drive on clinical recovery. mRS &lt; 2 at 2 months; not permitted to drive for 12 months. Permitted to drive thereafter provided there is no residual impairment likely to affect driving.</td>
<td>mRS 2 or &gt; at 2 months; not permitted to drive for 24 months. Permitted to drive thereafter provided there is no residual impairment likely to affect driving.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non Middle Cerebral Artery</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aneurysm</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See Appendix at end of this chapter for epilepsy standards.
## Modified Rankin Scale (mRS)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Neurological Disorders</th>
<th>Group 1 Entitlement ODL car, motorcycle and tractor</th>
<th>Group 2 Entitlement ODL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Craniotomy</td>
<td>mRS &lt; 2 at 2 months; not permitted to drive for 24 months. Permitted to drive thereafter provided there is no residual impairment likely to affect driving.</td>
<td>mRS 2 or &gt; at 2 months; Not permitted to drive. See below*.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Cerebral Artery Aneurysm</td>
<td>mRS &lt; 2 at 2 months; not permitted to drive for 12 months. Permitted to drive thereafter provided there is no residual impairment likely to affect driving.</td>
<td>mRS 2 or &gt; at 2 months; not permitted to drive for 24 months. Permitted to drive thereafter provided there is no residual impairment likely to affect driving.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Endovascular Treatment Non Middle Cerebral Artery Aneurysm</td>
<td>mRS &lt; 2 at 2 months; not permitted to drive for 24 months. Permitted to drive thereafter provided there is no residual impairment likely to affect driving.</td>
<td>mRS 2 or &gt; at 2 months; not permitted to drive. See* below.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Endovascular Treatment Middle Cerebral Artery Aneurysm</td>
<td>mRS &lt; 2 at 2 months; not permitted to drive for 24 months. Permitted to drive thereafter provided there is no residual impairment likely to affect driving.</td>
<td>mRS 2 or &gt; at 2 months; not permitted to drive. See* below.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Consultant assessment required, seizure risk should be 2% per annum or less and there should be no residual impairment likely to affect driving.

## Neurological Disorders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Neurological Disorders</th>
<th>Group 1 - Entitlement ODL car, motorcycle and tractor</th>
<th>Group 2 Entitlement ODL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subarachnoid Haemorrhage</td>
<td>Not permitted to drive for 6 months. Driver should notify NDLS.</td>
<td>Not permitted to drive. Driver should notify NDLS.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2B. No Treatment i.e. Aneurysm responsible for SAH but no intervention.

*See Appendix at end of this chapter for epilepsy standards.*
### Neurological Disorders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Neurological Disorders</th>
<th>Group 1 - Entitlement ODL car, motorcycle and tractor</th>
<th>Group 2 Entitlement ODL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subarachnoid Haemorrhage</strong></td>
<td>Permitted to drive on clinical recovery.</td>
<td>Permitted to drive provided anterior circulation aneurysms (excluding cavernous carotid) are &lt; 13mm in diameter. Posterior circulation aneurysms must be &lt; 7mm diameter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2C. Truly Incidental Findings of Intracranial Aneurysm (aneurysm has not been responsible for subarachnoid haemorrhage).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Treatment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Surgery Craniotomy</strong></td>
<td>Permitted to drive on clinical recovery.</td>
<td>Not permitted to drive for 1 year. <em>Driver should notify NDLS.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Endovascular Treatment</strong></td>
<td>Permitted to drive on clinical recovery.</td>
<td>Not permitted to drive until clinical recovery.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Permitted to drive thereafter unless there are complications from the procedure as determined by treating consultant. <em>N.B. The above is independent of the standard for ruptured aneurysm in section 2A.</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Arteriovenous Malformation

**N.B.** If any other procedure is undertaken e.g. V.P. shunt, craniotomy for a haematoma etc. then the standards for that procedure shall apply.

### Arteriovenous Malformation Supratentorial AVMS Intracerebral Haemorrhage due to Supratentorial AVM

**A. Craniotomy**

- Not permitted to drive for 6 months.
- Permitted to drive thereafter, provided there is no debarring residual impairment likely to affect driving. If significant residual disability, due consideration should be given to rehabilitation, specialist on-road assessment and adaptations which may help to adapt to, or overcome, relevant cognitive and physical impairment. *Driver should notify NDLS.*

- Not permitted to drive until the lesion is completely removed or ablated and the patient is 10 years seizure-free from last definitive treatment.
- Permitted to drive thereafter provided there is no debarring residual impairment likely to affect driving. *Driver should notify NDLS.*

*See Appendix at end of this chapter for epilepsy standards.*
### Neurological Disorders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Neurological Disorders</th>
<th>Group 1 - Entitlement ODL car, motorcycle and tractor</th>
<th>Group 2 Entitlement ODL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **B. Other treatment (embolisation or stereotactic radiotherapy)** | Not permitted to drive for 4 weeks.  
Permitted to drive thereafter, provided there is no debarring residual impairment likely to affect driving.  
*Driver needn’t notify NDLS.* | Not permitted to drive until the lesion is completely removed or ablated and the patient is 10 years seizure-free from last definitive treatment.  
Permitted to drive thereafter provided there is no debarring residual impairment likely to affect driving.  
*Driver should notify NDLS.* |
| **C. No treatment** | Not permitted to drive for 4 weeks.  
Permitted to drive thereafter provided there is no debarring residual impairment likely to affect driving.  
*Driver needn’t notify NDLS.* | Not permitted to drive.  
*Driver should notify NDLS.* |

#### Incidental finding of a supratentorial AVM (no history of intracranial bleed)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Neurological Disorders</th>
<th>Group 1 - Entitlement ODL car, motorcycle and tractor</th>
<th>Group 2 Entitlement ODL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **A. No treatment** | Permitted to drive.  
*Driver should notify NDLS.* | Not permitted to drive.  
*Driver should notify NDLS.* |
| **B. Surgical or other treatment** | See above: as for AVM with Intracranial Haemorrhage. | Not permitted to drive drive until the lesion is completely removed or ablated and the patient is 10 years seizure-free from last definitive treatment.  
Permitted to drive thereafter provided there is no debarring residual impairment likely to affect driving.  
*Driver should notify NDLS.* |

*See Appendix at end of this chapter for epilepsy standards.*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Neurological Disorders</th>
<th>Group 1 - Entitlement ODL car, motorcycle and tractor</th>
<th>Group 2 Entitlement ODL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Infratentorial AVMs Intracranial haemorrhage due to AVM:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **A. Treated by Craniotomy** | Permitted to drive provided there is no debarring residual impairment likely to affect driving.  
*Driver needn’t notify NDLS.* | Not permitted to drive until confirmation of complete obliteration with no debarring residual impairment likely to affect driving.  
*Driver should notify NDLS.* |
| **B. Embolisation/Stereotactic Radiotherapy** | Permitted to drive provided there is no debarring residual impairment likely to affect driving.  
*Driver needn’t notify NDLS.* | Not permitted to drive until confirmation of complete obliteration with no debarring residual impairment likely to affect driving.  
*Driver should notify NDLS.* |
| **C. No treatment** | Permitted to drive provided there is no debarring residual impairment likely to affect driving.  
*Driver needn’t notify NDLS.* | Not permitted to drive.  
*Driver should notify NDLS.* |
| **Incidental finding of an infratentorial AVM** | | |
| **A. No treatment** | Permitted to drive. | Not permitted to drive.  
*Driver should notify NDLS.* |
| **B. Surgical or other treatment** | Permitted to drive provided there is no debarring residual impairment likely to affect driving.  
*Driver needn’t notify NDLS.* | Not permitted to drive until confirmation of complete obliteration with no debarring residual impairment likely to affect driving.  
*Driver should notify NDLS.* |
| **Dural AV Fistula** | Permitted to drive, subject to individual assessment by appropriate consultant.  
*Driver should notify NDLS.* | Permitted to drive, subject to individual assessment by appropriate consultant.  
*Driver should notify NDLS.* |

*See Appendix at end of this chapter for epilepsy standards.*
### Neurological Disorders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Group 1 - Entitlement ODL: car, motorcycle and tractor</th>
<th>Group 2 Entitlement ODL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cavernous Malformation Supratentorial</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **A. Incidental, no surgical treatment** | *Permitted to drive.*  
*Driver needn’t notify NDLS.* | *Permitted to drive*, subject to individual assessment by appropriate consultant.  
*Driver needn’t notify NDLS.* |
| **B. Seizure, no surgical treatment** | Epilepsy standards apply if history of seizure(s). | Epilepsy standards apply if history of seizure(s). |
| **C. Haemorrhage and/or focal neurological deficit, no surgical treatment** | *Permitted to drive* provided there is no debarring residual impairment likely to affect driving.  
Epilepsy standards apply if history of seizure(s).  
*Driver should notify NDLS.* | *Not permitted to drive.*  
*Driver should notify NDLS.* |
| **D. Treated by Surgical Excision (Craniotomy)** | *Permitted to drive* provided there is no debarring residual impairment likely to affect driving.  
If significant residual disability, due consideration should be given to rehabilitation, specialist on-road assessment and adaptations which may help to adapt to, or overcome, relevant cognitive and physical impairment.  
Epilepsy standards apply if there is a history of seizure(s).  
*Driver should notify NDLS.* | *Not permitted to drive for 10 years post-obliteration of the lesion.*  
Epilepsy standards apply if there is a history of seizure(s).  
*Driver should notify NDLS.* |

See Appendix at end of this chapter for epilepsy standards.
### Neurological Disorders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Neurological Disorders</th>
<th>Group 1 - Entitlement ODL</th>
<th>Group 2 Entitlement ODL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>E. Treated by radiosurgery</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(I). Incidental</td>
<td>Permitted to drive.</td>
<td>Not permitted to drive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Driver should notify NDLS.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(II). Symptomatic</td>
<td>Permitted to drive provided there is no debarring residual impairment likely to affect driving. Epilepsy standards apply if history of seizure(s).</td>
<td>Not permitted to drive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Driver should notify NDLS.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Infratentorial cavernous malformation</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Incidental</td>
<td>Permitted to drive. <em>Driver needn’t notify NDLS.</em></td>
<td>Permitted to drive. <em>Driver needn’t notify NDLS.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. With focal Neurological Deficit or Haemorrhage whether treated surgically or not</td>
<td>Permitted to drive provided there is no debarring residual impairment likely to affect driving. Epilepsy standards apply if history of seizure(s). <em>Driver should notify NDLS.</em></td>
<td>Permitted to drive provided there is no debarring residual impairment likely to affect driving. Epilepsy standards apply if history of seizure(s). <em>Driver should notify NDLS.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Intracerebral Abscess/Subdural Empyema</strong></td>
<td>Not permitted to drive for one year. <em>Driver must notify NDLS.</em></td>
<td>Not permitted to drive. Very high prospective risk of seizure(s). May consider licensing if 10 years seizure-free from treatment. <em>Driver must notify NDLS.</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*N.B. Multiple Cavernoma: no firm evidence of increased morbidity. Size is not an issue.*

*See Appendix at end of this chapter for epilepsy standards.*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Neurological Disorders</th>
<th>Group 1 - Entitlement ODL car, motorcycle and tractor</th>
<th>Group 2 Entitlement ODL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Hydrocephalus | Permitted to drive provided the condition is uncomplicated and there are no associated neurological problems.  
*Driver needn’t notify NDLS.* | Permitted to drive provided the condition is uncomplicated and there are no associated neurological problems.  
*Driver must notify NDLS.* |
| Intraventricular Shunt or Extraventricular Drain Insertion or revision of upper end of ventricular shunt or extra-ventricular drain | Not permitted to drive for 6 months.  
Permitted to drive thereafter provided there is no debarring residual impairment likely to affect driving safety.  
*Driver should notify NDLS.* | Not permitted to drive for 6 months.  
Thereafter, licensing shall be dependent upon the individual assessment of the underlying condition.  
*Driver should notify NDLS.* |
| Neuroendoscopic procedures  
E.g. IIIrd ventriculostomy | Not permitted to drive for 6 months.  
Permitted to drive thereafter provided there is no debarring residual impairment likely to affect driving safety.  
*Driver should notify NDLS.* | Not permitted to drive for 6 months.  
Thereafter, licensing shall be dependent upon the individual assessment of the underlying condition.  
*Driver should notify NDLS.* |
| Intracranial Pressure Monitoring Device Inserted by Burr hole surgery | Permitted to drive.  
However, the prospective risk from the underlying condition must be considered.  
*Driver needn’t notify NDLS.* | The prospective risk from the underlying condition must be considered.  
*Driver should notify NDLS.* |

*See Appendix at end of this chapter for epilepsy standards.*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Neurological Disorders</th>
<th>Group 1 - Entitlement ODL car, motorcycle and tractor</th>
<th>Group 2 Entitlement ODL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Implanted Electrodes</strong>&lt;br&gt;Deep brain stimulation for movement disorder or pain</td>
<td>Not permitted to drive until there is clinical confirmation of recovery.&lt;br&gt;Permitted to drive thereafter provided:&lt;br&gt;• there are no complications from surgery&lt;br&gt;• the patient is seizure-free&lt;br&gt;• there is no debarring residual impairment likely to affect safe driving.&lt;br&gt;Driver needn’t notify NDLS.</td>
<td>Not permitted to drive until there is clinical confirmation of recovery.&lt;br&gt;Permitted to drive thereafter provided:&lt;br&gt;• there are no complications from surgery&lt;br&gt;• the patient is seizure-free&lt;br&gt;• there is no debarring residual impairment likely to affect safe driving.&lt;br&gt;Driver should notify NDLS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Implanted Motor Cortex stimulator</strong> for pain relief</td>
<td>Not permitted to drive for 6 months if aetiology of pain is non-cerebral e.g. trigeminal neuralgia.&lt;br&gt;Not permitted to drive for 12 months if the aetiology is cerebral e.g. stroke.&lt;br&gt;Permitted to drive thereafter provided there is no debarring residual impairment likely to affect driving safety.&lt;br&gt;Driver should notify NDLS.</td>
<td>Not permitted to drive.&lt;br&gt;Driver should notify NDLS.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See Appendix at end of this chapter for epilepsy standards.
Appendix — Chapter 2
Epilepsy standards for Group 1 and 2

Group 1

The following special considerations apply under the epilepsy standards for drivers of cars and motorcycles;

This means that:
1. A person who has suffered an epileptic attack whilst awake must refrain from driving for at least one year from the date of the attack: driving cannot resume until the driver has had no further seizures while awake during this period. This includes being free of minor seizures and epilepsy signs (e.g. limb jerking, auras and absences). Episodes not involving loss of consciousness are included.

2. A person who has experienced seizures exclusively while asleep may be considered for a one year licence despite continuing seizures only during sleep, and subject to at least annual review, taking into account information provided by the treating doctor (with appropriate expertise and due consultation with a consultant neurologist) as to whether the following criteria are met:
   - There have been no previous seizures while awake; and
   - The first sleep-only seizure was at least 12 months ago; and
   - The person follows medical advice, including adherence to medication if prescribed.
   or
   - There have been previous seizures while awake but not in the preceding one year; and
   - Sleep-only seizures have been occurring for at least one year; and
   - The person follows medical advice, including adherence to medication if prescribed.

and in both cases

3. I. So far as practicable, the person complies with advised treatment and check-ups for epilepsy, and
      II. The driving of a vehicle by such a person should not be likely to cause danger to the public.

A specific exception to these are seizures judged by the treating consultant neurologist as not impairing consciousness or driving ability at any time. An annual licence may be granted by the National Driver Licence Service (NDLS) subject to at least annual review, taking into account information provided by the treating consultant as to whether the following criteria are met:

   - Seizures as judged not impairing consciousness or driving ability at any time have been present for at least one year; and
   - There have been no seizures of other type for at least one year; and
   - The person follows medical advice, including adherence to medication if prescribed.

Group 2

Drivers of busses and lorries must satisfy all the following conditions under the epilepsy regulations:

During the period of 10 years immediately preceding the date when the licence is granted the applicant/licence holder should:

1) be free from any epileptic attack AND
2) have not taken medication to treat epilepsy AND
3) not otherwise be a source of danger whilst driving.
In addition, someone with a structural intracranial lesion who has an increased risk of seizures will not be able to drive vehicles of this group until the risk of a seizure has fallen to no greater than 2% per annum, which permits compliance with the standards.

**Guidance for clinicians advising patients to cease driving in the case of break-through seizures in those with established epilepsy for Group 1 Drivers:**

In the event of a seizure, the driver must be advised not to drive unless they are able to meet the conditions of the asleep concessions. The driver must be advised to notify the NDLS. In exceptional cases (e.g. seizure secondary to prescribing error), a consultant may advise a return after a shorter period.

**Guidance for withdrawal of antiepileptic medication being withdrawn on specific medical advice for Group 1 Drivers:**

(N.B. This advice only relates to treatment for epilepsy)

From a medico-legal point of view, the risk of further epileptic seizures occurring during this therapeutic procedure should be noted. If an epileptic seizure does occur, the driver will need to satisfy driving licence standards before resuming driving and will need to be counselled accordingly. The current epilepsy standards require a period of at least one year free of any manifestation of epileptic seizure or attacks whilst awake from the date of the last attack; special consideration is given where attacks have occurred only whilst asleep.

It is clearly recognised that withdrawal of antiepileptic medication is associated with a risk of seizure recurrence. A number of studies have shown this, including the randomised study of antiepilepsy drug withdrawal in patients in remission, conducted by the UK Medical Research Council Anti-epileptic Drug Withdrawal Study Group in the UK (57). This study shows a 30% risk of seizure in the first year of withdrawal of medication compared with those who continued on treatment.

Patients who are drivers and who are undergoing withdrawal or reduction of antiepilepsy medications should be warned of the risk they run, both of needing to cease driving and also of having a seizure which could result in a road traffic accident.

There is a difference between reducing the number of antiepileptic medications to a lesser number and the complete withdrawal of antiepileptic medications. Neurologist opinion is required for Group 1 drivers as to whether the risk of seizure within the next year is >20%, and a number of clinical factors may help the specialist in this decision.

The highest risk of seizure is for complete cessation of antiepileptic medications, and driving should cease during the period of withdrawal and for at least 3 months thereafter, or a longer period as considered appropriate by the neurologist.

If there is a withdrawal-associated seizure, driving should cease for at least 3 months once previously effective therapy is reinstated.

For reduction of numbers of medications from a greater to a lesser number, clinical judgment should exercised by a neurologist on an individual basis.

This advice may not be appropriate in every case. One specific example is withdrawal of antiepileptic medication when there is a well-established history of seizures only while asleep. In such cases, any restriction in driving is best determined by the consultant concerned, after considering the history. It is up to the driver to comply with such advice.

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Provoked seizures

Provoked or acute symptomatic seizures may be dealt with on an individual basis if there is no previous seizure history. *Seizures associated with alcohol or drug misuse, sleep deprivation or a structural abnormality are not considered provoked for licensing purposes. Similarly, reports of seizures as a side-effect of prescribed medication do not automatically imply that such events should be considered as provoked.* For seizure(s) with alcohol or illicit drugs, please see Chapter 6 in these Guidelines.

Doctors may wish to advise drivers that the period of time likely to be recommended off driving will be influenced inter alia by:

A. Whether it is clear that the seizure had been provoked by a stimulus which does not convey any risk of recurrence and does not represent an unmasking of an underlying liability;

 AND

B. Whether the stimulus had been successfully/appropriately treated or is unlikely to occur at the wheel.

In the absence of any previous seizure history or previous cerebral pathology, the following seizures may also be treated as provoked:

- Eclamptic seizures.
- Convulsive syncope.
- Seizure in first week following a head injury (see head injury section) at the time of a Stroke/TIA or within the ensuing 24 hours.
- During intracranial surgery or in the ensuing 24 hours.

The D501 Medical Report form provides provision for the assessing doctor to signal that any driver he/she considers fit to drive less than 12 months after a seizure that this is because the seizure was a) a first seizure, b) a provoked seizure, c) seizure exclusively while asleep, and d) seizure not affecting consciousness of driving ability, e) seizure related to withdrawal or reduction of antiepileptic medication, as adjudicated by a consultant neurologist.
Epilepsy, Seizures and Driving
This is an overview of driving with epilepsy. The complete standards are published in Sláinte agus Tiomáint: Medical Fitness to Drive (MFTD) Guidelines.

What is epilepsy?
Epilepsy is a medical condition characterised by frequent seizures, sometimes referred to as “epileptic fits”. Seizures cause abnormal electrical activity in the brain which can affect movement and behaviour. There are different types of epilepsy and seizures. In most cases, seizures are controlled by medication.

What are ‘provoked’ and ‘unprovoked’ seizures?
A provoked seizure is one where the cause can usually be identified - for example, a head trauma or low blood sugar. An unprovoked seizure has no cause that can be identified.

Why is health important for drivers?
Your health is important, as driving any motor vehicle requires:
- constant attention;
- good judgment;
- appropriate responsiveness;
- reasonable perception and physical capability; and
- good senses - for example, sight and hearing.

All of these can be affected by a driver’s physical and psychological health. In someone with epilepsy, these abilities can also be affected before, during and after a seizure.

Epilepsy
How does being diagnosed with epilepsy affect my driver’s licence?
A diagnosis of epilepsy is usually made if you have had two or more seizures less than five years apart.

1. Provoked seizure - exception
A seizure which has recognisable cause and is, therefore, avoidable, and where you have no previous history of epileptic seizures.
Examples of seizures that happen:
- during pregnancy;
- collapse or twitching due to lack of oxygen;
- if you have had a head injury;
- at the time of a stroke or within 24 hours of a stroke;
- during brain surgery or within 24 hours of brain surgery.

2. Unprovoked seizure - exception
A seizure which has no cause that can usually be identified.

3. Exceptional cases for Group 1 drivers only
A Group 1 driver can be declared as an exceptional case if:
1. they have a provoked seizure;
2. the seizure only happens when they are asleep;
3. the seizure pattern does not affect consciousness or the ability to act at any time;
4. the seizures are as a result of withdrawal from anti-epileptic medication.

What are not considered provoked seizures?
Seizures that occur as a result of:
- alcohol or drug misuse;
- sleep deprivation;
- structural abnormality in the brain.

The table below provides more detail on each of these exceptions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exceptional Case</th>
<th>Group 1 Drivers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Provoked seizure</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Unprovoked seizure</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Seizure only happens when asleep</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Seizure pattern does not affect consciousness or ability to act</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Seizures as a result of withdrawal from anti-epileptic medication</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What are the standards set for you are higher because your job requires:
- good attention;
- good judgement;
- good awareness;
- good handling and coordination;
- good senses - for example, sight and hearing.

The standards set for you are higher because your job requires:
- good attention;
- good judgement;
- good awareness;
- good handling and coordination;
- good senses - for example, sight and hearing.

After that, if you do not have any other medical conditions relevant to driving:
- a 3-5 year licence may be issued; and
- a renewal licence may be issued if you have not had a seizure for 5 years.

If you have seizures only when you are asleep, you can start driving after the minimum seizure-free period as outlined below has passed.

Group 2 drivers – driving a bus or truck
You must stop driving until you have been seizure free for 5 years.

First unprovoked seizure
How does a first unprovoked seizure affect my driving licence?
A first unprovoked seizure is not necessarily epilepsy, unless you suffer a further seizure within 5 years.

If you are a Group 1 or Group 2 driver and you have been diagnosed with epilepsy, you must stop driving until your treating consultant is satisfied that your medical results show that you are medically fit to drive. You can’t just get professional medical advice on your medical fitness to drive if you develop a medical condition, or if your condition changes, during the term of your licence.

This leaflet covers medical fitness to drive relating to epilepsy, first seizures and provoked seizures. These terms are defined below.

What is epilepsy?
Epilepsy is a medical condition characterised by frequent seizures, sometimes referred to as “epileptic fits”. Seizures cause abnormal electrical activity in the brain which can affect movement and behaviour. There are different types of epilepsy and seizures. In most cases, seizures are controlled by medication.

What is a provoked seizure?
A provoked seizure is one where the cause can usually be identified - for example, a head trauma or low blood sugar. An unprovoked seizure has no cause that can be identified.

Why is health important for drivers?
Your health is important, as driving any motor vehicle requires:
- constant attention;
- good judgment;
- appropriate responsiveness;
- reasonable perception and physical capability; and
- good senses - for example, sight and hearing.

All of these can be affected by a driver’s physical and psychological health. In someone with epilepsy, these abilities can also be affected before, during and after a seizure.

Epilepsy
How does being diagnosed with epilepsy affect my driver’s licence?
A diagnosis of epilepsy is usually made if you have had two or more seizures less than five years apart.

Group 1 drivers – driving a car, motor cycle or tractor
You must stop driving until you have been seizure free for 12 months.

If you are a Group 1 or Group 2 driver and you have a first unprovoked seizure, you must stop driving until your treating consultant is satisfied that your medical results show that you are medically fit to drive. You can’t just get professional medical advice on your medical fitness to drive if you develop a medical condition, or if your condition changes, during the term of your licence.

This leaflet covers medical fitness to drive relating to epilepsy, first seizures and provoked seizures. These terms are defined below.

What is epilepsy?
Epilepsy is a medical condition characterised by frequent seizures, sometimes referred to as “epileptic fits”. Seizures cause abnormal electrical activity in the brain which can affect movement and behaviour. There are different types of epilepsy and seizures. In most cases, seizures are controlled by medication.

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A provoked seizure is one where the cause can usually be identified - for example, a head trauma or low blood sugar. An unprovoked seizure has no cause that can be identified.

Why is health important for drivers?
Your health is important, as driving any motor vehicle requires:
- constant attention;
- good judgment;
- appropriate responsiveness;
- reasonable perception and physical capability; and
- good senses - for example, sight and hearing.

All of these can be affected by a driver’s physical and psychological health. In someone with epilepsy, these abilities can also be affected before, during and after a seizure.

Epilepsy
How does being diagnosed with epilepsy affect my driver’s licence?
A diagnosis of epilepsy is usually made if you have had two or more seizures less than five years apart.

Group 1 drivers – driving a car, motor cycle or tractor
You must stop driving until you have been seizure free for 12 months.

If you are a Group 1 or Group 2 driver and you have a first unprovoked seizure, you must stop driving until your treating consultant is satisfied that your medical results show that you are medically fit to drive. You can’t just get professional medical advice on your medical fitness to drive if you develop a medical condition, or if your condition changes, during the term of your licence.

This leaflet covers medical fitness to drive relating to epilepsy, first seizures and provoked seizures. These terms are defined below.

What is epilepsy?
Epilepsy is a medical condition characterised by frequent seizures, sometimes referred to as “epileptic fits”. Seizures cause abnormal electrical activity in the brain which can affect movement and behaviour. There are different types of epilepsy and seizures. In most cases, seizures are controlled by medication.

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- constant attention;
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All of these can be affected by a driver’s physical and psychological health. In someone with epilepsy, these abilities can also be affected before, during and after a seizure.

Epilepsy
How does being diagnosed with epilepsy affect my driver’s licence?
A diagnosis of epilepsy is usually made if you have had two or more seizures less than five years apart.

Group 1 drivers – driving a car, motor cycle or tractor
You must stop driving until you have been seizure free for 12 months.
2. Seizures happen only when asleep - exception

Your treating consultant must be satisfied that you have an established pattern of sleep seizures with no history of seizures while you are awake.

Group 1 drivers – driving a car, motor cycle or tractor
You must stop driving until this pattern of exclusive sleep seizures has been established for the minimum period of 12 months. After that, if you do not have any other medical condition(s) relevant to driving:
- a 1-3 year licence may be issued.

3. Seizures that do not affect consciousness or ability to act at any time - exception

Your treating consultant will review your seizure history and other clinical factors to determine that your seizures do not affect your consciousness and your ability to act and function normally at any time.

Group 1 drivers – driving a car, motor cycle or tractor
You must stop driving until a seizure pattern has been established for 12 months. After this pattern has been established for 12 months, your treating consultant must be satisfied that:
- your seizures do not impair consciousness or driving ability at any time;
- you have not had any other seizures types for at least one year;
- you follow medical advice, including taking any prescribed medication as directed.
After that, if you do not have any other medical condition(s) relevant to driving:
- a 1-year licence may be issued subject to at least a yearly review.

4. Seizures resulting from withdrawal of anti-epileptic medication – exception

You should be aware that you are at risk of a seizure once you reduce or stop your epilepsy medication, even when you do so under medical supervision.

Group 1 drivers – driving a car, motor cycle or tractor
You must stop driving from the date you begin reducing your anti-epileptic medication. Once you have stopped taking all anti-epileptic medication, you must not drive for a minimum period of 6 months. After that, you must get medical fitness to drive certification from your treating consultant.

What will happen if I continue to drive?
It is important to strike a balance between mobility and safety. If you continue to drive against medical advice, and evidence is found of this, it will affect your insurance. Also, the NDLS and the Gardaí will take action to revoke (cancel) your licence.

General advice
If you experience seizures, blackouts or episodes of memory loss, you should see a doctor so that the risk of further episodes and the need for treatment can be determined.

Get a correct diagnosis of epilepsy or your seizure type. It means the right treatment is started, and your ability to drive safely can be assessed.

Some seizure types are not epilepsy, but they are related to other medical conditions. You should get advice from your doctor on your seizure type and your driving.

If I need to, how do I inform the NDLS?
If following consultation with your doctor, your medical condition is one that needs to be noted on your driver record (but does not change your licence entitlement), or if your licence needs to be changed – for example, fatal for a licence period – you must notify the NDLS.
You need to complete forms (1) and (2) listed below and return them to person at any NDLS centre along with your current licence and proof of your PPS number. These forms are available on www.ndls.ie.

Checklist of what you need to bring:
- a completed Driver Licence Application Form;
- a Medical Report form (D501) completed by your doctor (a letter from your doctor is not accepted);
- proof of PPSN and
- your current licence.
You will then, within a specified time frame, be issued with a new, updated licence.

Further information sources:
- Your doctor or nurse
- Epilepsy Ireland is a valuable source of support:
  Web: www.epilepsy.ie/
  Tel: 01 455 7500
  Email: info@epilepsy.ie
- Sláinte agus Tiomáint: Medical Fitness To Drive Guidelines is available on www.ndls.ie.
Cardiovascular disorders can lead to a sudden impairment of the cerebral functions that constitutes a danger to road safety. These conditions represent grounds for establishing temporary or permanent restrictions to driving (EU Directive 2016/1106). A licence holder or applicant must meet the standards for cardiovascular disorders outlined below, and if there is reason to doubt that these are met, the applicant or licence holder should undergo a more detailed examination by a consultant cardiologist. For details see the Appendix to this chapter.

Group 2 standards are minimum standards and do not preclude employers setting higher standards in terms of the demands of the driving tasks encountered in the course of employment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cardiovascular Disorders</th>
<th>Group 1 Entitlement ODL car, motorcycle and tractor</th>
<th>Group 2 Entitlement ODL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Angina                   | Not permitted to drive when symptoms occur at rest, with emotion, or at the wheel.  
**Driver should notify NDLS.**  
Permitted to drive provided satisfactory symptom control is achieved.  
• The condition has been effectively treated  
• Competent medical authorisation has been obtained  
• Where appropriate, regular medical assessment is conducted  
**Driver needn’t notify NDLS.** | Not permitted to drive with continuing symptoms (treated and/or untreated).  
Permitted to drive provided; Free from angina for at least 4 weeks.  
The exercise or other functional test requirements can be met.  
• The condition has been effectively treated  
• Competent medical authorisation has been obtained  
• Where appropriate, regular medical assessment is conducted  
• There is no other disqualifying condition.  
**Driver should notify NDLS.** |

See appendix at end of this chapter

58. Helpful recent reviews include: Sorajja D, Shen WK. Driving guidelines and restrictions in patients with a history of cardiac arrhythmias, syncope, or implantable devices. Curr Treat Options Cardiovasc Med. 2010 0xt12051443-56
Cardiovascular Disorders

**Acute Coronary Syndromes (ACS) defined as:**

1. Unstable angina (symptoms at rest with ECG changes).
2. Non STEMI with at least two of the following criteria:
   - Symptoms at rest
   - Raised serum Troponin
   - ECG changes
3. STEMI symptoms with ST elevation on ECG.

If **successfully** treated by coronary angioplasty, driving permitted to drive after **1 week** provided:

- No other URGENT revascularisation is planned. (URGENT refers to within 4 weeks from acute event).
- Left Ventricular Ejection Fraction (LVEF) is at least 35% prior to hospital discharge.
- There is no other disqualifying condition.

If not successfully treated by coronary angioplasty, permitted to drive after **4 weeks** provided:

- The condition has been effectively treated
- Competent medical authorization has been obtained
- Where appropriate, regular medical assessment is conducted
- There is no other disqualifying condition.

*Driver needn’t notify NDLS.*

**Group 1 Entitlement ODL**

- car, motorcycle and tractor

**Group 2 Entitlement ODL**

All Acute Coronary Syndromes disqualify the licence holder from driving for at least **4 weeks**.

Permitted to drive thereafter provided:

- The exercise or other functional test requirements can be met.
- The condition has been effectively treated
- Competent medical authorization has been obtained
- Where appropriate, regular medical assessment is conducted
- There is no other disqualifying condition.

*Driver should notify NDLS.*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cardiovascular Disorders</th>
<th>Group 1 Entitlement ODL car, motorcycle and tractor</th>
<th>Group 2 Entitlement ODL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Percutaneous Coronary Intervention</strong></td>
<td>Not permitted to drive for at least 2 days.</td>
<td>Not permitted to drive for at least 4 weeks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Angioplasty ± stent)</td>
<td>Permitted to drive thereafter provided:</td>
<td>Permitted to drive thereafter provided:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Elective</strong></td>
<td>• The condition has been effectively treated</td>
<td>• The exercise or other functional test requirements can be met.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Competent medical authorization has been obtained</td>
<td>• The condition has been effectively treated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Where appropriate, regular medical assessment is conducted</td>
<td>• Competent medical authorization has been obtained</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• There is no other disqualifying condition.</td>
<td>• Where appropriate, regular medical assessment is conducted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Driver needn’t notify NDLS.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>• There is no other disqualifying condition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cardiac Surgery CABG including valve or replacement or repair</strong></td>
<td>Not permitted to drive for at least 4 weeks.</td>
<td>Not permitted to drive for at least 3 months.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Permitted to drive thereafter provided;</td>
<td>Permitted to drive thereafter provided:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The condition has been effectively treated</td>
<td>• The condition has been effectively treated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Competent medical authorization has been obtained</td>
<td>• There is no evidence of significant impairment of left ventricular function i.e. LVEF is ≥ 35%.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Where appropriate, regular medical assessment is conducted</td>
<td>• The exercise or other functional test requirements can be met months or more post operatively.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• There is no other disqualifying condition.</td>
<td>• Competent medical authorization has been obtained</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Driver needn’t notify NDLS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>• There is no other disqualifying condition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Driver should notify NDLS.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Driver should notify NDLS.</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*See appendix at end of this chapter*
## Cardiovascular Disorders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arrhythmia</th>
<th>Group 1 Entitlement ODL</th>
<th>Group 2 Entitlement ODL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sinoatrial disease, Significant atrio-ventricular conduction defect, Atrial flutter/ fibrillation, Narrow or broad complex tachycardia (See also following Sections - Pacemakers are considered separately). <strong>N.B. Transient Arrhythmias</strong> occurring during acute coronary syndromes do not require assessment under this section.</td>
<td>Not permitted to drive if the arrhythmia has caused or is likely to cause incapacity. Permitted to drive provided;</td>
<td>Not permitted to drive if the arrhythmia has caused or is likely to cause incapacity. Permitted to drive provided;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The condition has been effectively treated i.e. the underlying cause has been identified and controlled for at least 4 weeks.</td>
<td>• The condition has been effectively treated i.e. the underlying cause has been identified and controlled for at least 3 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Competent medical authorization has been obtained</td>
<td>• The LVEF is ≥ 35%.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Where appropriate, regular medical assessment is conducted</td>
<td>• Competent medical authorization has been obtained</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• There is no other disqualifying condition.</td>
<td>• Where appropriate, regular medical assessment is conducted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NDLS need not be notified unless there are distracting/disabling symptoms.</td>
<td>• There is no other disqualifying condition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>NDLS need not be notified unless there are distracting/disabling symptoms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long QT syndrome with syncope, Torsade des Pointes and QTc &gt; 500 ms</td>
<td>Permitted to drive provided;</td>
<td>Not permitted to drive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The condition has been effectively treated i.e. the underlying cause has been identified and controlled for at least 4 weeks.</td>
<td>Driver should notify NDLS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Competent medical authorization has been obtained</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Where appropriate, regular medical assessment is conducted</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• There is no other disqualifying condition.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brugada syndrome with syncope or aborted sudden cardiac death</td>
<td>Not permitted to drive.</td>
<td>Not permitted to drive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Driver should notify NDLS.</td>
<td>Driver should notify NDLS.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<th>Group 2 Entitlement ODL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Successful Catheter Ablation</strong></td>
<td>Not permitted to drive for at least 2 days. Permitted to drive thereafter provided there is no other disqualifying condition. <em>Driver needn’t notify NDLS.</em></td>
<td>Not permitted to drive for 6 weeks following <strong>successful</strong> catheter ablation for an arrhythmia that has caused or would likely have caused incapacity. Permitted to drive thereafter provided there is no other disqualifying condition. When the arrhythmia has <strong>not</strong> caused nor would likely have caused incapacity, driving permitted after 1 week provided there is no other disqualifying condition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pacemaker Implant</strong></td>
<td>Not permitted to drive for at least 1 week. Permitted to drive thereafter provided there is no other disqualifying condition. <em>Driver needn’t notify NDLS.</em></td>
<td>Not permitted to drive for 4 weeks. Permitted to drive thereafter provided; • The condition has been effectively treated • Competent medical authorization has been obtained • Where appropriate, regular medical assessment is conducted • There is no other disqualifying condition. <em>Driver should notify NDLS.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unpaced Congenital Complete Heart Block</strong></td>
<td>Not permitted to drive if symptomatic. <em>Driver should notify NDLS.</em> Permitted to drive if asymptomatic. <em>Driver needn’t notify NDLS.</em></td>
<td>Not permitted to drive whether symptomatic or asymptomatic. <em>Driver should notify NDLS.</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*See appendix at end of this chapter*
<table>
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<th>Group 1 Entitlement ODL car, motorcycle and tractor</th>
<th>Group 2 Entitlement ODL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Implantable Cardioverter Defibrillator (ICD) Implanted for ventricular arrhythmia associated with incapacity</td>
<td>Drivers with ICDs implanted for sustained ventricular arrhythmias are not permitted to drive for:</td>
<td>Not permitted to drive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. A period of 6 months after the first implant.</td>
<td>Driver should notify NDLS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. A further 6 months after any shock therapy and/or symptomatic antitachycardia pacing (see 3A below).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3A. A period of 2 years if any therapy following device implantation has been accompanied by incapacity (whether caused by the device or arrhythmia), except as in 3B and 3C.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3B. If therapy was delivered due to an inappropriate cause, i.e. atrial fibrillation or programming issues, then permitted to drive 4 weeks after this has been completely controlled to the satisfaction of the cardiologist.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NDLS need not be notified.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Continued on next page</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Implantable Cardioverter Defibrillator (ICD)</td>
<td>3C. If the incapacitating shock was appropriate (i.e. for sustained VT or VF) and steps have been taken to prevent recurrence, (e.g., introduction of anti-arrhythmic drugs or ablation procedure) permitted to drive after 6 months in the absence of further symptomatic therapy. For 2 and 3A/3C, if the driver has been re-licensed prior to the event. Driver should notify NDLS.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implanted for ventricular arrhythmia associated with incapacity</td>
<td>4. Not permitted to drive for 4 weeks following any revision of the electrodes or alteration of anti-arrhythmic drug treatment.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. A Not permitted to drive for 1 week after a defibrillator box change. Return to driving requires that:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. The device is subject to regular review with interrogation.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. There is no other disqualifying condition.</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See appendix at end of this chapter
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cardiovascular Disorders</th>
<th>Group 1 Entitlement ODL car, motorcycle and tractor</th>
<th>Group 2 Entitlement ODL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Implantable Cardioverter Defibrillator (ICD)** | If the driver presents with a non-disqualifying cardiac event, i.e. haemodynamically stable non-incapacitating sustained ventricular tachycardia, the patient is permitted to drive 4 weeks after ICD implantation providing all of the following conditions are met:  
  - LVEF is ≥ 35%.  
  - No fast VT induced on electrophysiological study (RR < 250 msec).  
  - Any induced VT could be pace-terminated by the ICD twice, without acceleration, during the post implantation study.  
  
  **Driver needn’t notify NDLS.**  
  Should the ICD subsequently deliver ATP and/or shock therapy (except during normal clinical testing) then the licensing criteria on the previous page applies and  
  
  **Driver should notify NDLS.** | **Not permitted to drive.**  
  **Driver should notify NDLS.** |
| **Prophylactic ICD Implant**                     | Asymptomatic individuals with high risk of significant arrhythmia are not permitted to drive for 4 weeks.  
  
  **Driver needn’t notify NDLS.**  
  Should the ICD subsequently deliver ATP and/or shock therapy (except during normal clinical testing) then the licensing criteria on previous page for ICD applies.  
  
  **Driver should notify NDLS.** | **Not permitted to drive.**  
  **Driver should notify NDLS.** |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cardiovascular Disorders</th>
<th>Group 1 Entitlement ODL car, motorcycle and tractor</th>
<th>Group 2 Entitlement ODL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ascending/Descending Thoracic and Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm</td>
<td>Not permitted to drive where the aortic diameter is 6.5 cm or more. Driver should notify NDLS.</td>
<td>Not permitted to drive where the aortic diameter is $&gt;5.5$ cm. Permitted to drive after satisfactory medical or surgical treatment, unless other disqualifying condition. N.B. The exercise or other functional test requirements will apply to abdominal aortic aneurysm. Driver should notify NDLS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Permitted to drive subject to annual review with any aneurysm of 6 cm in diameter, despite treatment.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Permitted to drive after satisfactory medical (blood pressure control) or surgical treatment, without evidence of further enlargement. There should be no other disqualifying condition. Driver should notify NDLS.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chronic Aortic Dissection</td>
<td>Permitted to drive following satisfactory medical (blood pressure well-controlled) or surgical treatment, unless other disqualifying condition. Driver needn’t notify NDLS.</td>
<td>Permitted to drive provided ALL of the following criteria can be met:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>• The maximum transverse diameter of the aorta, including false lumen/thrombosed segment, does not exceed 5.5 cm</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• there is complete thrombosis of the false lumen</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• the BP is well controlled*.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>* NOTE “well controlled” refers to clinical standard.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypertension</td>
<td>Permitted to drive unless treatment causes unacceptable side effects. Driver needn’t notify NDLS.</td>
<td>Not permitted to drive if resting BP consistently 180 mm Hg systolic or more and/or 100 mm Hg diastolic or more.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Permitted to drive when controlled provided that treatment does not cause side effects which may interfere with driving.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*See appendix at end of this chapter*
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Cardiovascular Disorders</th>
<th>Group 1 Entitlement ODL</th>
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</table>
| Dilated Cardiomyopathy           | Permitted to drive provided no other disqualifying condition.  
(See also arrhythmia, pacemaker, I.C.D. and heart failure sections etc.) | Not permitted to drive if symptomatic.  
Permitted to drive provided that there is no other disqualifying condition.  
*Driver needn’t notify NDLS.* |
| Hypertrophic Cardiomyopathy (H.C.M.) | Permitted to drive provided no other disqualifying condition.  
(See also arrhythmia, pacemaker and ICD sections)  
If there is a history of syncope, the standards for syncope need to be met in addition.  
*Driver needn’t notify NDLS.* | Not permitted to drive if symptomatic.  
Permitted to drive provided at least three of the following criteria are met:  
- There is no family history in a first degree relative of sudden premature death from presumed HCM.  
- The cardiologist can confirm that the HCM is not anatomically severe. The maximum wall thickness does not exceed 3cm.  
- There is no serious abnormality of heart rhythm demonstrated; e.g. ventricular tachy-arrhythmia excluding isolated ventricular pre excitation beats.  
- There is at least a 25mm Hg increase in systolic blood pressure during exercise testing  
  (exercise testing to be repeated every 3 years).  
- If there is a history of syncope, the standards for syncope need to be met in addition.  
*Driver should notify NDLS.*  
See Appendix to this Chapter for full details. |

*See appendix at end of this chapter*
<table>
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<th>Group 2 Entitlement ODL</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Heart Failure</td>
<td><strong>Not permitted to drive if NYHA Grade IV heart failure.</strong>&lt;br&gt;Permitted to drive with NYHA Grades I, II or III provided there are no symptoms that may distract the driver’s attention.</td>
<td><strong>Not permitted to drive if symptomatic, or NYHA Grade III or IV.</strong>&lt;br&gt;Permitted to drive with NYHA Grade I or II provided:&lt;br&gt;• The LVEF is $\geq 35%$.&lt;br&gt;• There is no other disqualifying condition.&lt;br&gt;Exercise or other functional testing may be required depending on the likely cause for the heart failure.&lt;br&gt;<em>Driver should notify NDLS.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valvular heart disease with aortic regurgitation, aortic stenosis, mitral regurgitation or mitral stenosis</td>
<td><strong>Not permitted to drive if functional ability is estimated to be NYHA IV or if there have been syncopal episodes.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Not permitted to drive if NYHA III or IV or with ejection fraction (EF) below 35%, mitral stenosis and severe pulmonary hypertension or with severe echocardiographic aortic stenosis or aortic stenosis causing syncope; except for completely asymptomatic severe aortic stenosis if the exercise tolerance test requirements are fulfilled.</strong>&lt;br&gt;<em>Driver should notify NDLS.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cardiac Resynchronisation Therapy (CRT) CRT-P</td>
<td><strong>Not permitted to drive for at least 1 week following implantation.</strong>&lt;br&gt;Permitted to drive thereafter provided;&lt;br&gt;• There are no symptoms relevant to driving.&lt;br&gt;• There is no other disqualifying condition.</td>
<td><strong>Not permitted to drive for 4 weeks following implantation.</strong>&lt;br&gt;Permitted to drive thereafter provided;&lt;br&gt;• The heart failure requirements are met.&lt;br&gt;• There is no other disqualifying condition.&lt;br&gt;<em>Driver should notify NDLS.</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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</table>
| **Cardiac Assist Devices** | Permitted to drive provided;  
| | • The condition has been effectively treated  
| | • Competent medical authorization has been obtained  
| | • Where appropriate, regular medical assessment is conducted  
| | • There is no other disqualifying condition. | Not permitted to drive.  
| | Driver should notify NDLS. |
| **CRT-D** | Permitted to drive provided the ICD requirements are met and there is no other disqualifying condition. | Not permitted to drive.  
| | Driver should notify NDLS. |
| **Congenital Heart Disease** | Permitted to drive provided there is no other disqualifying condition.  
| | Following a first licence application or identification of such a condition, consultant assessment may be required before a licence is (re)issued. Certain conditions will require licence review every 1, 3 years, in this instance.  
| | Driver should notify NDLS if symptomatic. | Not permitted to drive when complex or severe disorder(s) is (are) present.  
| | Following a first licence application or identification of such a condition, consultant cardiologist assessment may be required before a licence is (re)issued. Those with minor disease and others who have had successful repair of defects or relief of valvular problems, fistulae, etc. may be licensed provided there is no other disqualifying condition.  
| | Certain conditions will require licence review every 1, 3 years, in this instance.  
| | Driver should notify NDLS. |
| **N.B. Cough Syncope see Chapter 9** | | |
| **ECG Abnormality** | Permitted to drive unless other disqualifying condition.  
| | Driver needn’t notify NDLS. | Permitted to drive provided:  
| | • There is no other disqualifying condition.  
| | • The exercise or other functional test requirements can be met. |

*See appendix at end of this chapter*
Appendix — Chapter 3 Cardiovascular Disorders

Group 1 and 2 entitlements

Medication
If drug treatment for any cardiovascular condition is required, any patient experiencing an adverse effect which is likely to affect driver performance is not fit to drive.

Group 2 entitlements only

Licence Duration
An applicant or driver who has, after cardiac assessment, (usually for ischaemic or untreated heart valve disease) been permitted to hold either a Group 2 licence will usually be issued with a short term licence (maximum duration 3 years) renewable on receipt of satisfactory D501 Medical Report.

Exercise testing

Exercise evaluation shall be performed on a treadmill. Drivers should be able to achieve 90% of age predicted heart rate of standard Bruce protocol or equivalent safely, without antianginal* medication for 48 hours and should remain free from signs of cardiovascular dysfunction, viz. angina pectoris, syncope, hypotension, sustained ventricular tachycardia, and/or electrocardiographic ST segment shift which accredited medical opinion interprets as being indicative of myocardial ischaemia (usually > 2mm horizontal or down-sloping) during exercise or the recovery period. In the presence of established coronary heart disease, exercise evaluation shall be required at regular intervals not to exceed 3 years.

*Antianginal medication refers to the use of nitrates, beta-blockers, calcium channel blockers, nicorandil, ivabradine and ranolazine prescribed for antianginal purposes or for other reasons e.g. cardio-protection.

N.B. When any of the above drugs are being prescribed purely for the control of hypertension or an arrhythmia then discontinuation prior to exercise testing is not required.

Should atrial fibrillation develop de novo during exercise testing, provided the individual meets all the NDLS exercise tolerance test criteria, the individual will be required to undergo an echocardiogram and meet the licensing criteria, just as any individual with a pre-existing atrial fibrillation.

Chest pain of uncertain cause

Exercise testing should be carried out as above. Those with a locomotor disability who cannot comply will require either a gated myocardial perfusion scan, stress echo study and/or specialised cardiological opinion.
Stress Myocardial Perfusion Scan/Stress Echocardiography

The licensing standard requires that:
1. The LVEF is ≥ 35%
2A. No more than 10% of the myocardium is affected by reversible ischaemic change on myocardial perfusion imaging. or
2B. No more than one segment is affected by reversible ischaemic change on stress echocardiography.

N.B. Full details of NDLS protocol requirements for such tests can be obtained on request.

Coronary Angiography

The functional implication of coronary heart disease is considered to be more predictive for licensing purposes than the anatomical findings. For this reason the exercise tolerance test and where necessary, myocardial perfusion imaging or stress echocardiography are the investigations of relevance for licensing purposes and it is the normal requirement that the standard of one or other of these must be met. Angiography is therefore not commissioned for (re-) licensing purposes. When there remains conflict between the outcome of a functional test and the results of recent angiography, such cases can be considered on an individual basis. However, (re-) licensing will not normally be considered unless the coronary arteries are unobstructed or the stenosis is not flow limiting and the LVEF is ≥ 35%.

‘Predictive’ refers to the risk of an infarct within 1 year. Grafts are considered as ‘Coronary Arteries’.

ETT and Hypertrophic Cardiomyopathy

For the purpose of assessment of hypertrophic cardiomyopathy (HCM) cases, an exercise test falling short of exercise target above would be acceptable provided:

1. 90% of age-predicted heart rate.
2. There is no obvious cardiac cause for stopping the test prematurely.
3. There is at least a 25mm Hg rise in systolic blood pressure during exercise testing.
4. Meets all other requirements as mentioned in HCM section.
Be a responsible driver
It is your responsibility as a driver to:

- take any prescribed medication and manage your condition;
- stop driving if any of the medications you are taking for your heart have side effects that affect your ability to drive – for example drowsiness;
- tell the National Driver Licence Service (NDLS) and your insurance provider of any long-term or permanent injury or illness that may affect your ability to drive safely;
- comply with requirements of your licence as appropriate, including periodic medical reviews;
- get professional advice on your medical fitness to drive if you develop a medical condition during the term of your licence.

Note: You are committing an offence if you carry on driving after you become aware that you are not fit to do so. Awareness can be your own awareness – that is, things you notice yourself without being diagnosed by a doctor. For example, dizziness, fainting and so on. Awareness can also be as a result of a warning not to drive from your doctor.

Tell the NDLS about your condition
You need to declare certain heart conditions on your Application or Renewal Form for a Driving Licence, under Part 2: Driver Fitness. Before your completed application with a Dyspe Medical Report Form completed by your doctor. (Please see www.ndls.ie for this and other forms.)

Driving a car, motor cycle or tractor (Group 1) Driver Guidelines
If you develop a heart condition during the term of your licence, your doctor will advise you on when you can resume driving and whether you need to contact the NDLS. The following pages set out some of the standards given in the Medical Fitness to Drive guidelines.

Driving a bus or truck (Group 2)
Driver guidelines
Generally, Group 2 drivers with cardiac conditions must stop driving for longer periods than Group 1 drivers – for example, after a seizure or a heart attack.

If you develop a heart condition during the term of your licence, your doctor will advise you on when you can resume driving and whether you need to contact the NDLS. Below are some of the standards given in the Medical Fitness to Drive guidelines.

Be a responsible driver
It is your responsibility as a driver to:

- take any prescribed medication and manage your condition;
- stop driving if any of the medications you are taking for your heart have side effects that affect your ability to drive – for example drowsiness;
- tell the National Driver Licence Service (NDLS) and your insurance provider of any long-term or permanent injury or illness that may affect your ability to drive safely;
- comply with requirements of your licence as appropriate, including periodic medical reviews;
- get professional advice on your medical fitness to drive if you develop a medical condition during the term of your licence.

Note: You are committing an offence if you carry on driving after you become aware that you are not fit to do so. Awareness can be your own awareness – that is, things you notice yourself without being diagnosed by a doctor. For example, dizziness, fainting and so on. Awareness can also be as a result of a warning not to drive from your doctor.

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You need to declare certain heart conditions on your Application or Renewal Form for a Driving Licence, under Part 2: Driver Fitness. Before your completed application with a Dyspe Medical Report Form completed by your doctor. (Please see www.ndls.ie for this and other forms.)

Driving a car, motor cycle or tractor (Group 1) Driver Guidelines
If you develop a heart condition during the term of your licence, your doctor will advise you on when you can resume driving and whether you need to contact the NDLS. The following pages set out some of the standards given in the Medical Fitness to Drive guidelines.

Driving a bus or truck (Group 2)
Driver guidelines
Generally, Group 2 drivers with cardiac conditions must stop driving for longer periods than Group 1 drivers – for example, after a seizure or a heart attack.

If you develop a heart condition during the term of your licence, your doctor will advise you on when you can resume driving and whether you need to contact the NDLS. Below are some of the standards given in the Medical Fitness to Drive guidelines.

Be a responsible driver
It is your responsibility as a driver to:

- take any prescribed medication and manage your condition;
- stop driving if any of the medications you are taking for your heart have side effects that affect your ability to drive – for example drowsiness;
- tell the National Driver Licence Service (NDLS) and your insurance provider of any long-term or permanent injury or illness that may affect your ability to drive safely;
- comply with requirements of your licence as appropriate, including periodic medical reviews;
- get professional advice on your medical fitness to drive if you develop a medical condition during the term of your licence.

Note: You are committing an offence if you carry on driving after you become aware that you are not fit to do so. Awareness can be your own awareness – that is, things you notice yourself without being diagnosed by a doctor. For example, dizziness, fainting and so on. Awareness can also be as a result of a warning not to drive from your doctor.

Tell the NDLS about your condition
You need to declare certain heart conditions on your Application or Renewal Form for a Driving Licence, under Part 2: Driver Fitness. Before your completed application with a Dyspe Medical Report Form completed by your doctor. (Please see www.ndls.ie for this and other forms.)

Driving a car, motor cycle or tractor (Group 1) Driver Guidelines
If you develop a heart condition during the term of your licence, your doctor will advise you on when you can resume driving and whether you need to contact the NDLS. The following pages set out some of the standards given in the Medical Fitness to Drive guidelines.

Driving a bus or truck (Group 2)
Driver guidelines
Generally, Group 2 drivers with cardiac conditions must stop driving for longer periods than Group 1 drivers – for example, after a seizure or a heart attack.

If you develop a heart condition during the term of your licence, your doctor will advise you on when you can resume driving and whether you need to contact the NDLS. Below are some of the standards given in the Medical Fitness to Drive guidelines.

Be a responsible driver
It is your responsibility as a driver to:

- take any prescribed medication and manage your condition;
- stop driving if any of the medications you are taking for your heart have side effects that affect your ability to drive – for example drowsiness;
- tell the National Driver Licence Service (NDLS) and your insurance provider of any long-term or permanent injury or illness that may affect your ability to drive safely;
- comply with requirements of your licence as appropriate, including periodic medical reviews;
- get professional advice on your medical fitness to drive if you develop a medical condition during the term of your licence.

Note: You are committing an offence if you carry on driving after you become aware that you are not fit to do so. Awareness can be your own awareness – that is, things you notice yourself without being diagnosed by a doctor. For example, dizziness, fainting and so on. Awareness can also be as a result of a warning not to drive from your doctor.

Tell the NDLS about your condition
You need to declare certain heart conditions on your Application or Renewal Form for a Driving Licence, under Part 2: Driver Fitness. Before your completed application with a Dyspe Medical Report Form completed by your doctor. (Please see www.ndls.ie for this and other forms.)

Driving a car, motor cycle or tractor (Group 1) Driver Guidelines
If you develop a heart condition during the term of your licence, your doctor will advise you on when you can resume driving and whether you need to contact the NDLS. The following pages set out some of the standards given in the Medical Fitness to Drive guidelines.

Driving a bus or truck (Group 2)
Driver guidelines
Generally, Group 2 drivers with cardiac conditions must stop driving for longer periods than Group 1 drivers – for example, after a seizure or a heart attack.

If you develop a heart condition during the term of your licence, your doctor will advise you on when you can resume driving and whether you need to contact the NDLS. Below are some of the standards given in the Medical Fitness to Drive guidelines.
Sláinte agus Tiomáint | Medical Fitness To Drive Guidelines | (Group 1 and Group 2 Drivers)

Driving a bus or truck (Group 2)

Driver Guidelines

If you have this cardiac condition:

atrial fibrillation, cardiac arrhythmia

You should not drive for 6 weeks.

If you have this cardiac condition:

cardiomyopathy

You must not drive. If you have any symptoms for example shortness of breath, extreme fatigue, dizziness, palpitations, swelling in the legs and feet (edema) and abdomen (bloating).

You can only resume driving when your doctor is satisfied that you meet the Medical Fitness To Drive Guidelines. You must notify NDLS.

If your doctor tells you to stop driving and you disagree, you can get a second opinion. You must stop driving until the opinion has been completed and you get permission to drive again.

What if I don’t agree that I should stop driving?

If your doctor tells you to stop driving and you disagree, you can get a second opinion. You must stop driving until the opinion has been completed and you get permission to drive again.

What will happen if I still drive?

It is important to strike a balance between mobility and safety. If you continue to drive against medical advice or ignore early warning symptoms, and evidence is found of this, it will affect your insurance, and the NDLS and Gardaí will take action to remove your licence.

How do I inform the NDLS?

If, following consultation with your GP, your medical condition is one that needs to be notified to the NDLS, you need to complete forms (1) and (2) below and return in person to any NDLS centre.

You need to bring:

1. a completed Driver Licence Application Form;
2. a Medical Report Form (does not comply) from your doctor (a letter from your doctor is not accepted);
3. proof of your PP/ID and
4. your current licence.

You will then, within a specified time frame, be issued with a new, updated licence.

Please see www.ndls.ie for locations, bookings and forms.

If you have more questions, please email medicalfitness@rsa.ie or telephone 1890 40 60 40.

Please note if you have supplied a medical report form to obtain your existing licence or permit and the terms of licence or permit are not being altered, you may submit your new application together with your medical report form by post to:

National Driver Licence Service, PO Box 97, Southside Delivering Office, Co. Cork.

Further information sources:

- Your GP or nurse
- HSE Web: info@hse.ie
- HSE Helpdesk: 1800 80 80 80
- HSE Web: http://www.hse.ie
- IHF Web: http://www_irishheart.ie
- HSE Helpline: 1850 24 1850
- HI Web: www.hi.ie
- IHF Web: http://www_irishheart.ie

NDLS
National Driver Licence Service

Tips about resuming driving

- If you are in any doubt about your fitness to drive, please consult your doctor.
- When you resume driving, take it in easy stages.
- Driving with a passenger can be helpful.
- Avoid heavy traffic and motorways until you know you can cope.
- Give yourself plenty of time for your journey.
- Do not drive for longer than 2 hours without a break.
- Try to keep calm and relaxed. If you feel driving stressful, leave it for a while until you feel a bit better.

Know when to stop

You should stop driving if you experience:

- chest pain, tightness or pressure that may spread to your jaw or arms,
- shortness of breath,
- excessive fatigue,
- dizziness, fainting, nausea or sweating.

If you experience any of these symptoms, it is your legal responsibility as a driver to stop driving and consult with your doctor who will try to help you manage your symptoms.

What if I don’t agree that I should stop driving?

If your doctor tells you to stop driving and you disagree, you can get a second opinion. You must stop driving until the opinion has been completed and you get permission to drive again.

Further information sources:

- Your GP or nurse
- HSE Web: info@hse.ie
- HSE Helpdesk: 1800 80 80 80
- HSE Web: http://www.hse.ie
- IHF Web: http://www_irishheart.ie
- HSE Helpline: 1850 24 1850
- HI Web: www.hi.ie
- IHF Web: http://www_irishheart.ie
Diabetes mellitus is a disease which may affect eligibility to hold a driving licence and increase the risk of road traffic crashes. An applicant or driver with diabetes treated with medication which carries a risk of inducing hypoglycaemia shall demonstrate an understanding of the risk of hypoglycaemia and adequate control of the condition.

Driving licences shall not be issued to, or renewed for, applicants or drivers who have recurrent severe hypoglycaemia, unless supported by the opinion of a specialist physician registered on the specialist register for Endocrinology & Diabetes Mellitus of the Medical Council and regular medical assessment. For such recurrent severe hypoglycaemias during waking hours a licence shall not be issued or renewed until at least 3 months after the most recent episode: driving licences may be issued or renewed in such exceptional cases, provided that it is duly justified by an opinion a specialist physician registered on the specialist register for Endocrinology & Diabetes Mellitus of the Medical Council and subject to regular medical assessment, ensuring that the person is still capable of driving the vehicle safely taking into account the effects of the medical condition.

Failure to meet the following standards, or the presence of any progressive neurological disorder requires the applicant or licence holder to inform the NDLS unless stated otherwise in the text.

Group 2 standards are minimum standards and do not preclude employers setting higher standards in terms of the demands of the driving tasks encountered in the course of employment.

Helpful recent reviews include:

### Diabetes Mellitus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Insulin-Treated</th>
<th>Group 1 Entitlement ODL car, motorcycle and tractor</th>
<th>Group 2 Entitlement ODL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Permitted to drive provided the following criteria are satisfied:</td>
<td>Permitted to drive provided the following criteria are satisfied:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Must have had not more than 1 episode of hypoglycaemia requiring the assistance of another person in the preceding 12 months</td>
<td>1. Must have NO episode of hypoglycaemia requiring the assistance of another person in the preceding 12 months</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Must have appropriate awareness of hypoglycaemia at appropriate glucose level*</td>
<td>2. Must have appropriate awareness of hypoglycaemia at appropriate glucose level*</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Must demonstrate an understanding of the risks of hypoglycaemia</td>
<td>3. Must demonstrate an understanding of the risks of hypoglycaemia</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Must monitor blood glucose at times relevant to driving to enable the detection of hypoglycaemia</td>
<td>4. Must show adequate control of condition by regularly monitoring blood glucose i.e. at least twice daily and at times relevant to driving using a glucose meter with a memory function to measure and record blood glucose levels. At the annual examination by a consultant endocrinologist, 3 months blood glucose readings must be available.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Must be under regular medical review</td>
<td>5. Must be under regular medical review</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. There are no other debarring complications of diabetes such as visual field defect.</td>
<td>6. There are no other debarring complications of diabetes such as visual field defect.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Must not be regarded as a likely source of danger to the public while driving.</td>
<td>Driver needn’t notify NDLS.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Driver needn’t notify NDLS.</strong></td>
<td>If there has been a hypoglycaemic event in the preceding 12 months. <strong>Driver should notify NDLS.</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If the above medical standards are met, a 1 - 3 year licence may be issued**.</td>
<td>If the above medical standards are met, a 1-year licence may be issued**.</td>
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</table>

* Impaired awareness of hypoglycaemia is defined as ‘an inability to detect the onset of hypoglycaemia because of a total absence of warning symptoms’.

** Note: The treating endocrinologist is not obliged to provide a medical report on fitness to drive; in this case, the driver should be advised to seek a separate consultant endocrinologist for a medical report on fitness to drive.
### Diabetes Mellitus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Temporary Insulin Treatment</strong></th>
<th><strong>Group 1 Entitlement ODL car, motorcycle and tractor</strong></th>
<th><strong>Group 2 Entitlement ODL</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>e.g. Post-Myocardial Infarction, participants in Oral/Inhaled Insulin Trials.</td>
<td>Permitted to drive provided the following criteria are satisfied:</td>
<td>As per Insulin Treated Diabetes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>See Appendix to this chapter for the NDLS driver information leaflet – Diabetes and Driving.</td>
<td>1. Must have appropriate awareness of hypoglycaemia at appropriate glucose level*</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Must be under medical supervision</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3. Must not have been advised by their doctor that they are at risk of disabling hypoglycaemia.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Driver needn’t notify NDLS.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>However;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Driver should notify NDLS.</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. If experiencing disabling hypoglycaemia</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. If treatment continues for more than 3 months or for more than 3 months after delivery for gestational diabetes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Managed by tablets which carry a risk of Inducing Hypoglycaemia. This includes Sulphonylureas and Glinides.

Permitted to drive. Driver needn’t notify NDLS unless:

- Diabetic eye problems occur, affecting visual acuity or visual field.

As per Insulin Treated Diabetes As per Insulin Treated Diabetes

### Managed only by:
- Tablets other than those mentioned above OR by:
- Non-insulin injectable medication

Permitted to drive. Driver needn’t notify NDLS unless:

- Must be under regular medical review
- Drivers are advised to monitor their blood glucose regularly and at times relevant to driving

Permitted to drive provided the following criteria are satisfied:

- Diabetic eye problems occur, affecting visual acuity or visual field. Driver needn’t notify NDLS unless:

  - Diabetic eye problems occur, affecting visual acuity or visual field.

As per Insulin Treated Diabetes As per Insulin Treated Diabetes
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Diabetic Mellitus</th>
<th>Group 1 Entitlement ODL car, motorcycle and tractor</th>
<th>Group 2 Entitlement ODL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Managed by diet alone</td>
<td>Permitted to drive.</td>
<td>Permitted to drive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Drivers need not notify NDLS unless:Diabetic eye problems occur, affecting visual acuity or visual field.</td>
<td>Drivers need not notify NDLS unless:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Diabetic eye problems occur, affecting visual acuity or visual field.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impaired awareness of Hypoglycaemia</td>
<td>Not permitted to drive if impaired awareness is confirmed.</td>
<td>Not permitted to drive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Permitted to drive thereafter provided the driver’s consultant/GP provides a report confirming that awareness of hypoglycaemia has been regained.</td>
<td>Driver should notify NDLS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuous Glucose Monitoring Systems (CGMS)</td>
<td>Since CGMS systems measure interstitial glucose, drivers must continue to produce all required blood glucose results stated elsewhere in this document by non-CGMS means regardless of any additional use of CGMS.</td>
<td>Since CGMS systems measure interstitial glucose, drivers must continue to produce all required blood glucose results stated elsewhere in this document by non-CGMS means regardless of any additional use of CGMS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eyesight Complications (affecting visual acuity or fields)</td>
<td>See section: Visual Disorders Chapter 7.</td>
<td>See previous page for insulin treated and See section: Visual Disorders Chapter 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renal Disorders</td>
<td>See section: Renal Disorders Chapter 8.</td>
<td>See section: Renal Disorders Chapter 8.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limb Disability E.g. Peripheral Neuropathy</td>
<td>See section: Drivers with disabilities Chapter 10.</td>
<td>See section: Disabled Drivers Chapter 10.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Be a responsible driver

It is your responsibility as a driver to:

- take any prescribed medication, monitor and manage your condition(s);
- tell the National Driver Licence Service (NDLS) and your insurance provider of any long-term or permanent injury or illness that may affect your ability to drive safely;
- comply with requirements of your licence as appropriate, including periodic medical reviews; and
- get professional advice on your medical fitness to drive if you develop a medical condition during the term of your licence.

What is Diabetes?

Diabetes mellitus is a lifelong condition caused by a lack of insulin in your body. Insulin is a hormone that regulates blood glucose (sugar). If some of the treatments for diabetes (particularly insulin and certain types of the tablets) are not managed properly, this can cause ‘hypoglycaemia’ – low blood sugar levels. An episode of hypoglycaemia is sometimes called ‘a hypo’. Hypoglycaemia makes you feel unwell and can affect your ability to drive safely. If you suffer a severe hypo, it means you need someone to help you – you could become dizzy or drowsy and you need to get your sugar levels under control. In severe cases, you could lose consciousness. The risk of a hypo is the main danger to safe driving for people with diabetes. The risk increases the longer you are on insulin treatment.

If you get warning symptoms of a hypo whilst driving, you must always stop as soon as it is possible to do so safely. Do not ignore the warning symptoms.

Note: You are committing an offence if you carry on driving after you become aware that you are not fit to do so. ‘Awareness’ can be your own awareness – that is, things you notice yourself without being diagnosed by a doctor. Awareness can also be as a result of a warning not to drive from your doctor.

What are the early warning symptoms of Hypoglycaemia?

The early symptoms include:

- sweating
- shakiness or trembling
- feeling weak or hungry
- fast pulse or palpitations
- anxiety
- tingling lips

If you do not get treatment for these early signs, you may experience more severe symptoms such as:

- slurred speech
- difficulty concentrating
- confusion
- disorientation or irrational behaviour, which may be mistaken for drunkenness

If left untreated, you could lose consciousness.

Drivers with insulin-treated diabetes are advised to take the following precautions to manage their condition and drive safely.

Carry

Always carry your glucose meter and blood glucose strips with you. You must check your blood glucose before driving and every two hours whilst driving. Also, always carry personal identification to show that you have diabetes in case of injury in a road traffic accident.
Group 1 – Driving a car, motor cycle or tractor

If you are a Group 1 driver, you must inform NDLS if:

- you suffer more than one episode of severe hypoglycaemia (where you need someone to help you) within the last 12 months.

Group 2 – Driving a bus or truck

If you are a Group 2 driver, you must inform NDLS if:

- you suffer one episode of severe hypoglycaemia;
- your medical team feels you are at high risk of developing hypoglycaemia;
- you begin to have difficulty in recognising warning symptoms of low blood sugar (impaired awareness of hypoglycaemia);
- you suffer severe hypoglycaemia while driving;
- an existing medical condition gets worse, or you develop any other condition that may affect safe driving.

If you are a Group 1 or Group 2 driver applying for, or renewing your licence, or if you have been diagnosed with diabetes, you must inform NDLS if:

- you are treated by insulin, or if your diabetes is managed by tablets which carry a risk of inducing hypoglycaemia (bringing on a hypo attack), for example sulphonylureas. (Ask your doctor whether you are on sulphonylureas or other medications which carry a risk of inducing hypoglycaemia.)
- you develop any problems with your circulation or sensation in your legs or feet which makes it necessary for you to drive certain types of vehicles only (for example, automatic vehicles or adapted vehicles).
- you are on temporary insulin treatment, you should consult with your doctor as to whether or not you must notify the NDLS. 

If you are on temporary insulin treatment, you should consult with your doctor as to whether or not you must notify the NDLS. There is no need to notify the NDLS if your diabetes is managed by diet alone, or only by medications which do not carry a risk of inducing hypoglycaemia.

Diabetes and eyesight

- Diabetes may affect your eyesight. You should have an eye test at least every year carried out by a doctor or optometrist or orthoptist. They might recommend that you have more frequent tests at regular intervals. These tests should be a full examination including the back of the eye.

What will happen if I still drive?

It is important to strike a balance between mobility and safety. If you continue to drive against medical advice or ignore early warning symptoms, and evidence is found of this, it will affect your insurance, and the NDLS and Garda will take action to remove your licence.

How do I inform the NDLS?

If, following consultation with your GP, your medical condition is one that needs to be notified to the NDLS, you need to complete forms (1) and (2) below and return in person to any NDLS centre.

You need to bring:

- a completed Driver Licence Application Form;
- a Medical Report Form (Form D501) completed by your doctor (a letter from your doctor is not accepted);
- proof of your PPSN;
- your current licence.

You will then, within a specified time frame, be issued with a new, updated licence.

Please see www.ndls.ie for locations, bookings and forms.

If you have more questions, please email medicalfitness@rsa.ie or telephone 1890 40 60 40.

Please note if you have supplied a medical report form to obtain your existing licence or permit and the terms of licence or permit are not being altered, you may submit your new application together with your medical report form by post to:

National Driver Licence Service
PO Box 631
Southside Delivery Office
Co Cork

Further information sources:

- Your GP or nurse.
- Diabetes Ireland is a valuable source of support and information.

Web: www.diabetes.ie
Helpline: 1850 909 909
Email: info@diabetes.ie

April 2017
# Chapter 5

## Psychiatric disorders

Group 2 standards are minimum standards and do not preclude employers setting higher standards in terms of the demands of the driving tasks encountered in the course of employment.

| Psychiatric Disorders | Group 1 Entitlement ODL  
car, motorcycle and tractor | Group 2 Entitlement ODL |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anxiety or depression</td>
<td>Permitted to drive.</td>
<td>Permitted to drive in very minor, short-lived illnesses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Driver needn’t notify NDLS.</td>
<td>Driver needn’t notify NDLS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Driver should notify NDLS if medical advice is to cease driving for 6 months or longer.</td>
<td>Driver should notify NDLS if medical advice is to cease driving for 6 months or longer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More severe anxiety states or depressive illnesses</td>
<td>Not permitted to drive pending the outcome of medical enquiry. A period of stability depending upon the circumstances will be required before driving can be resumed.</td>
<td>Not permitted to drive pending assessment by a consultant psychiatrist as being well and stable for a substantial period.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Particularly dangerous are those who may attempt suicide at the wheel 66.</td>
<td>Particularly dangerous are those who may attempt suicide at the wheel 66.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Medication must not cause side effects which would interfere with alertness or concentration.</td>
<td>Medication must not cause side effects which would interfere with alertness or concentration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Driving is usually permitted if the anxiety or depression is long-standing, but is controlled on doses of psychotropic medication which do not impair driving function.</td>
<td>Driving is usually permitted if the anxiety or depression is long-standing, but is controlled on doses of psychotropic medication which do not impair driving function.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N.B. It is the illness rather than the medication, which is of prime importance, but see notes on medication.</td>
<td>N.B. It is the illness rather than the medication, which is of prime importance, but see notes on medication.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Driver should notify NDLS if medical advice is to cease driving for 6 months or longer.</td>
<td>Driver should notify NDLS if medical advice is to cease driving for 6 months or longer.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*See note about medication in Appendix at end of this Chapter.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Psychiatric Disorders</th>
<th>Group 1 Entitlement ODL car, motorcycle and tractor</th>
<th>Group 2 Entitlement ODL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Acute Psychotic disorders of any type** | **Not permitted to drive** during the acute illness. Return to driving can be considered when all of the following conditions can be satisfied:  
A. Has remained well and stable with an awareness of fitness to drive (i.e. to have experienced a good level of functional recovery with insight into their illness and including engagement with the medical services) before driving can be resumed.  
B. Is not suffering from adverse effects of medication which would impair driving. In line with good practice, attempts should be made to achieve the minimum effective antipsychotic dose; tolerability should be optimal and not associated with any deficits (e.g. in alertness concentration and motor performance) that might impair driving ability.  
*Driver should notify NDLS if medical advice is to cease driving for 6 months or longer.* | **Not permitted to drive** pending the outcome of medical assessment. It is a requirement that the person is assessed by a consultant psychiatrist. Return to driving can be considered when all of the following conditions can be satisfied:  
A. Has remained well and stable with an awareness of fitness to drive (i.e. to have experienced a good level of functional recovery with insight into their illness and including engagement with the medical services) before driving can be resumed.  
B. Is not suffering from adverse effects of medication which would impair driving. In line with good practice, attempts should be made to achieve the minimum effective antipsychotic dose; tolerability should be optimal and not associated with any deficits (e.g. in alertness concentration and motor performance) that might impair driving ability.  
*Driver should notify NDLS if medical advice is to cease driving for 6 months or longer.* |

_N.B._ For cases which also involve persistent misuse of or dependence on alcohol/drugs, please refer to the appropriate section of Chapter 6 Alcohol/Drugs misuse and dependence Where psychiatric illness has been associated with substance misuse, continuing misuse is not acceptable for licensing.

_Slán te agus Tiamaint_ | Medical Fitness To Drive Guidelines | (Group 1 and Group 2 Drivers) 71
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Psychiatric Disorders</th>
<th>Group 1 Entitlement ODL car, motorcycle and tractor</th>
<th>Group 2 Entitlement ODL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hypomania/Mania</td>
<td><strong>Not permitted to drive</strong> during the acute illness.</td>
<td><strong>Not permitted to drive</strong> pending the outcome of medical assessment. It is a requirement that the person is assessed by a consultant Psychiatrist.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Permitted to drive thereafter provided all of the following conditions can be satisfied:</td>
<td>Permitted to drive thereafter provided all of the following conditions can be satisfied:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A. Has remained well and stable with an awareness of fitness to drive (i.e. to have experienced a good level of functional recovery with insight into their illness and including engagement with the medical services) before driving can be resumed.</td>
<td>A. Has remained well and stable with an awareness of fitness to drive (i.e. to have experienced a good level of functional recovery with insight into their illness and including engagement with the medical services) before driving can be resumed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B. Is not suffering from adverse effects of medication which would impair driving. In line with good practice, attempts should be made to achieve the minimum effective antipsychotic dose; tolerability should be optimal and not associated with any deficits (e.g. in alertness, concentration and motor performance) that might impair driving ability.</td>
<td>B. Is not suffering from adverse effects of medication which would impair driving. In line with good practice, attempts should be made to achieve the minimum effective antipsychotic dose; tolerability should be optimal and not associated with any deficits (e.g. in alertness, concentration and motor performance) that might impair driving ability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Driver should notify NDLS if medical advice is to cease driving for 6 months or longer.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Driver should notify NDLS if medical advice is to cease driving for 6 months or longer.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repeated changes of mood:</td>
<td>Hypomania or mania are particularly dangerous to driving when there are repeated changes of mood. In such cases a specialist opinion from a consultant Psychiatrist is advised.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychiatric Disorders</td>
<td>Group 1 Entitlement ODL</td>
<td>Group 2 Entitlement ODL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Relapsing/remitting**
**Schizophrenia and Psychoses** | **Not permitted to drive** during the acute illness. | **Not permitted to drive** during the acute illness. |

**N.B.** For cases which also involve persistent misuse of or dependence on alcohol/drugs, please refer to the appropriate section of Chaper 6 Alcohol/Drugs misuse and dependence. Where psychiatric illness has been associated with substance misuse, continuing misuse is not acceptable for licensing.

Permitted to drive thereafter provided all of the following conditions can be satisfied:

A. Has remained well and stable with an awareness of fitness to drive (i.e. to have experienced a good level of functional recovery with insight into their illness and including engagement with the medical services) before driving can be resumed.

B. Is not suffering from adverse effects of medication which would impair driving. In line with good practice, attempts should be made to achieve the minimum effective anti-psychotic dose; tolerability should be optimal and not associated with any deficits (e.g. in alertness, concentration and motor performance) that might impair driving ability.

*Driver should notify NDLS.*

*Continued on next page*
### Psychiatric Disorders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Group 1 Entitlement ODL</th>
<th>Group 2 Entitlement ODL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Relapsing/remitting</strong></td>
<td><strong>Schizophrenia and Psychoses</strong></td>
<td><strong>Continuing symptoms:</strong> Even with limited insight, these do not necessarily preclude licensing. Symptoms should be unlikely to cause significant concentration problems, memory impairment or distraction whilst driving. Particularly dangerous, are those drivers whose psychotic symptoms relate to other road users. Due consideration should be given to specialist on-road assessment if doubt remains about fitness to drive. <strong>Driver should notify NDLS if medical advice is to cease driving for 6 months or longer.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Car, motorcycle and tractor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Developmental disorders</strong></td>
<td><strong>Includes Asperger’s Syndrome, autism, severe communication disorders and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder.</strong></td>
<td>**May be permitted to drive. A diagnosis of any of these conditions is not in itself a bar to licensing. Factors such as impulsivity, lack of awareness of the impact of own behaviours on self or others need to be considered. <strong>Driver should notify NDLS.</strong> May be permitted to drive. It is normally a requirement that the person is assessed by a consultant psychiatrist. Continuing minor symptomatology may be compatible with licensing. Cases will be considered on an individual basis. <strong>Driver should notify NDLS.</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*See appendix at end of this chapter*
Psychiatric Disorders

**Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)**

Group 1 Entitlement ODL
car, motorcycle and tractor

- May be permitted to drive.
- Factors such as impulsivity, lack of awareness of the impact of own behaviours on self or others need to be considered.
- Compliance with medication is associated with reduced crash risk in ADHD.

Group 2 Entitlement ODL

- May be permitted to drive.
- It is normally a requirement that the person is assessed by a consultant psychiatrist. Continuing minor symptomatology may be compatible with licensing. Cases will be considered on an individual basis. Compliance with medication is associated with reduced crash risk in ADHD.

See appendix at end of this chapter
### Psychiatric Disorders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group 1 Entitlement ODL</th>
<th>Group 2 Entitlement ODL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mild Cognitive Impairment (MCI)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Permitted to drive provided there is no objective impairment of function.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Driver needn’t notify NDLS.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Where there is objective impairment of function or specific treatment is required then MCI will not be the cause and a doctor should clarify the cause and apply the relevant section of <em>Sláinte agus Tiomáint</em>.</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| | **Given that a significant proportion of people with MCI progress to dementia over time, at least yearly review of diagnostic status is recommended to monitor for transition to dementia by the doctor.** 
<p>| | <strong>Where there is no objective impairment of function a 1 year licence may be issued.</strong> |
| | <strong>Driver needn’t notify NDLS.</strong> |
| | <strong>Where there is objective impairment of function or specific treatment is required then MCI will not be the cause and a doctor (it is normally a requirement that the person is assessed by a consultant psychiatrist, geriatrician or neurologist) should clarify the cause and apply the relevant section of <em>Sláinte agus Tiomáint</em>.</strong> |
| | <strong>Given that a significant proportion of people with MCI progress to dementia over time, at least yearly review of diagnostic status is recommended to monitor for transition to dementia by the doctor.</strong> |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Psychiatric Disorders</th>
<th>Group 1 Entitlement ODL</th>
<th>Group 2 Entitlement ODL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dementia or any Organic Brain Syndrome (75–83)</td>
<td>May be permitted to drive. However, it can be difficult to assess driving ability in those with dementia. Those who have poor short-term memory, disorientation, lack of insight and judgement are almost certainly not fit to drive.</td>
<td>Not permitted to Drive. Driver should notify NDLS. See Section: 2.3.1 Chapter 1. Continued on next page</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The variable presentations and rates of progression are acknowledged. Disorders of attention will also cause impairment. A decision regarding fitness to drive is usually based on consultant medical assessment, further assessment by occupational therapy and/or neuropsychology, with a low threshold for an on-road driving assessment (77).

Continued on next page

Useful reviews include:


Continued on next page
### Psychiatric Disorders

| Dementia or any Organic Brain Syndrome | In early dementia when sufficient skills are retained and progression is slow, a licence may be issued subject to annual review or sooner if a significant medical or functional decline is noted. A formal driving assessment is generally an integral part of assessment and review but the overall decision rests with the treating doctor (see section 3.6).  

*Driver should notify NDLS.*  

*See Section: 2.3.1 Chapter 1.* |  |

### Learning disability

Severely below average general intellectual functioning accompanied by significant limitations in adaptive functioning in at least two of the following areas: communication, self-care, home-living, social/interpersonal skills, use of community resources, self-direction, functional academic skills, work, leisure, health and safety.

Permitted to drive provided the disability is mild, and there are no other relevant problems.

Not permitted to drive where the learning disability is severe.

*Driver should notify NDLS.*

Permitted to drive provided:

- There are minor degrees of learning disability
- When the condition is stable with no medical or psychiatric complications

Not permitted to drive where the learning disability is moderate or severe.

*Driver should notify NDLS.*

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*See appendix at end of this chapter*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Psychiatric Disorders</th>
<th>Group 1 Entitlement ODL car, motorcycle and tractor</th>
<th>Group 2 Entitlement ODL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Behaviour disorders</strong></td>
<td>Not permitted to drive if seriously disturbed e.g. violent behaviour or alcohol abuse and likely to be a source of danger at the wheel.</td>
<td>Not permitted to drive if seriously disturbed e.g. violent behaviour or alcohol abuse and likely to be a source of danger at the wheel.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Includes post head injury syndrome and Non-Epileptic Seizure Disorder.</td>
<td>Permitted to drive thereafter provided medical assessment confirms that behavioural disturbances have been satisfactorily controlled.</td>
<td>Permitted to drive thereafter provided assessment by consultant psychiatric confirms enduring stability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Personality disorders</strong></td>
<td>Not permitted to drive if likely to be a source of danger at the wheel.</td>
<td>Not permitted to drive if associated with serious behaviour disturbance likely to make the individual be a source of danger at the wheel. In such cases licensing can be considered if assessment by consultant psychiatrist confirms stability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Licensing may be permitted providing medical enquiry confirms that any behaviour disturbance is not related to driving or not likely to adversely affect driving or road safety.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Driver should notify NDLS if medical advice is to cease driving for 6 months or longer.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See appendix at end of this chapter
Appendix — Chapter 5

Psychiatric notes

Important Notes
Other psychiatric conditions, which do not fit neatly into the aforementioned classification, should be reported to the National Driver Licence Service (NDLS) if causing or felt likely to cause symptoms affecting driving safety. These would include for example any impairment of consciousness or awareness, any increased liability to distraction or symptoms affecting the safe operation of vehicle controls. The driver should be advised to declare both the condition and symptoms of concern.

It is the relationship of symptoms to driving that is of importance.

- These Directives make a clear distinction between the standards needed for Group 1 (car and motorcycle) and Group 2 (lorries and buses) licences. The standards for the latter being more stringent due to the size of vehicle and the greater time spent at the wheel during the course of the occupation.
- Severe mental disorder for the purposes of these Guidelines is defined as including mental illness, arrested or incomplete development of the mind, psychopathic disorder or severe impairment of intelligence or social functioning. The standards must reflect, not only the need for an improvement in the mental state, but also a period of stability, such that the risk of relapse can be assessed should the driver fail to recognise any deterioration, this is especially pertinent in the assessment of Group 2 licence.
- Misuse of or dependence on alcohol or drugs will require the standards in this chapter to be considered in conjunction with those of Chapter 6 of this publication.

Medication

- Any person who drives, attempts to drive or is in charge of a vehicle in a public place whilst under the influence of an intoxicant (including a drug or drugs) to such an extent as to be incapable of having proper control of the vehicle is liable to prosecution, as set out in the Road Traffic Acts.
- All drugs acting on the central nervous system can impair alertness, concentration and driving performance. This is particularly so at initiation of treatment, or soon after and when dosage is being increased. Driving must cease if adversely affected until the patient is unimpaired.
- The older tricyclic antidepressants can have pronounced anticholinergic and antihistaminic effects, which may impair driving. The more modern antidepressants may have fewer adverse effects. These considerations need to be taken into account when planning the treatment of a patient who is also a driver.
- Antipsychotic drugs, including the depot preparations, can cause motor or extrapyramidal effects as well as sedation or poor concentration, which may, either alone or in combination, be sufficient to impair driving. Careful clinical assessment is required.
- The epileptogenic potential of psychotropic medication should be considered particularly when drivers are professional drivers.
- Benzodiazepines are the most likely psychotropic medication to impair driving performance, particularly the long acting compounds. Alcohol will potentiate the effects.
- Doctors and pharmacists have a duty of care to advise drivers of the potential dangers of adverse effects from medication and interactions with other substances, especially alcohol.
- Drivers with psychiatric illnesses are often safer when well and on regular psychotropic medication than when they are ill. Inadequate treatment or irregular compliance may render a driver impaired by both the illness and medication.

Confidentiality
See Part A, Introduction Chapter 1, Section 2.3.1.
Chapter 6: Alcohol and other Substance Abuse and Dependence

Part 1: Alcohol misuse and dependence

The presence of any of the conditions listed below requires the applicant or licence holder to inform the National Driver Licence Service (NDLS) unless stated otherwise in the text.

Group 2 standards are minimum standards and do not preclude employers setting higher standards in terms of the demands of the driving tasks encountered in the course of employment.

### Alcohol Problems

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alcohol misuse</th>
<th>Group 1 Entitlement ODL</th>
<th>Group 2 Entitlement ODL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Persistent alcohol misuse, confirmed by medical enquiry with or without evidence of otherwise unexplained abnormal blood biomarkers:  
**Not permitted to drive** until a **minimum 3 month** period of controlled drinking or abstinence has been attained, with normalisation of biomarkers, if relevant.  
Driver must seek advice from medical or other sources during the period off the road.  
**Driver should notify NDLS.** | Persistent alcohol misuse, confirmed by medical enquiry with or without evidence of otherwise unexplained abnormal blood biomarkers:  
**Not permitted to drive** until a **minimum 1 year** period of abstinence or controlled drinking has been attained, with normalisation of biomarkers, if relevant.  
Driver must seek advice from medical or other sources during the period off the road.  
**Driver should notify NDLS.** |

**Reference to ICD10F10.1** is relevant.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alcohol Problems</th>
<th>Group 1 Entitlement ODL</th>
<th>Group 2 Entitlement ODL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Alcohol dependence | Alcohol dependence, confirmed by medical enquiry: **Not permitted to drive** until a 6 month period free from alcohol has been attained with normalisation of biomarkers, if relevant.  
*Driver should notify NDLS.*  
**Return to Driving**  
Will require satisfactory medical assessment from own doctor(s) and management of blood biomarkers if relevant. Consultant support/referral may be necessary.  
**See also under “Alcohol related seizures”**. | Alcohol dependence, confirmed by medical enquiry: **Not permitted to drive**: Group 2 licence will not be granted where there is a history of alcohol dependence within the past 3 years.  
*Driver should notify NDLS.*  
**Return to Driving**  
Will require satisfactory medical assessment from own doctor(s) and management of blood biomarkers if relevant. Consultant support/referral may be necessary.  
**See also under “Alcohol related seizures”**. |

Alcohol dependence

“A cluster of behavioural, cognitive and physiological phenomena that develop after

- repeated alcohol use and which include a strong desire to take alcohol, difficulties in controlling its use, persistence in its use despite harmful consequences, with evidence of increased tolerance and sometimes a physical withdrawal state.”

Indicators may include a history of withdrawal symptoms, of tolerance, of detoxification(s) and/or alcohol related fits.

Reference to ICD10F10.1 is relevant.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alcohol Problems</th>
<th>Group 1 Entitlement ODL car, motorcycle and tractor</th>
<th>Group 2 Entitlement ODL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol related seizures</td>
<td>Following a solitary alcohol-related seizure:</td>
<td>Following a solitary alcohol-related seizure, Not permitted to drive for a minimum 5 year period from the date of the event.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not permitted to drive for a minimum 6 month period from the date of the event.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Driver should notify NDLS.</td>
<td>Driver should notify NDLS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Since these seizures occur against a background of alcohol, the standards for such conditions need to be satisfied before a new application can be considered.</td>
<td>Return to driving thereafter requires:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Return to driving should only occur after an appropriate period free from persistent alcohol misuse and/or dependence. Independent medical assessment with management of blood biomarkers if relevant and consultant opinion will normally be necessary.</td>
<td>• No underlying cerebral structural abnormality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Where more than one seizure has occurred, the epilepsy standards will apply.</td>
<td>• Off antiepileptic medication for at least 5 years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(See Appendix to Neurology Chapter 2 for full details).</td>
<td>• Maintained abstinence from alcohol if previously dependent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Driver should notify NDLS.</td>
<td>• Review by a doctor on the specialist register for General Practice of Psychiatry, who has expertise and experience in the area of substance use disorders.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol related disorders</td>
<td>Not permitted to drive until there is satisfactory recovery and all other relevant medical standards have been satisfied.</td>
<td>Not permitted to drive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Driver should notify NDLS.</td>
<td>Driver should notify NDLS.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Alcohol and Driving

This is an overview of the driving risks for drivers who misuse alcohol and have alcohol-dependence issues. Full guidelines are published in Sláinte agus Tiomáint: Medical Fitness to Drive (MFTD) Guidelines.

Alcohol and speed are two leading factors in fatal collisions. Alcohol was shown to be a factor in over 15% of fatal collisions in 2007 (Review of Pre-crash Behaviour in Fatal Road Collisions Report 1: Alcohol. NDLS. Research Department, etc.)

Be a responsible driver

It is your responsibility as a driver to:

1. Take any prescribed medication and manage your conditions;
2. Tell the National Driver Licence Service (NDLS) and your insurance provider of any long-term or permanent injuries or illnesses that may affect your ability to drive safely;
3. Comply with requirements of your licence as appropriate, including periodic medical reviews;
4. Get medical advice on your medical fitness to drive if you develop a medical condition during the term of your licence.

For further advice and information on alcohol and your health visit:
- Health Service Executive: http://www.hse.ie/go/alcohol
- Alcohol Action Ireland: http://alcoholireland.ie

Road Safety Authority
http://www.rsa.ie

Alcohol Misuse

If you misuse alcohol, you may drift into addiction. There is no clear line between misuse and addiction – one fades into the other. If you experience any of the following, then you may be causing alcohol:

- Disruptions of behaviour;
- Alcohol-related diseases (liver, stomach, mental health problems, and so on);
- Actions that cause you, your family or society harm, now or in the future.

Alcohol Misuse – Driver Responsibilities

Group 1 - Driving a car, motor cycle or tractor

If you are a Group 1 driver, you must inform NDLS if your doctor or other health professional advises you to stop driving because of your persistent alcohol misuse. You must do so until they certify that you have achieved a minimum period of controlled drinking or abstinence. This assessment may also include blood tests.

Group 2 - Driving a bus or truck

If you are a Group 2 driver, you must inform NDLS if your doctor or other health professional advises you to stop driving because of your persistent alcohol misuse. You must do so until they certify that you have achieved a minimum period of controlled drinking or abstinence. This assessment may also include blood tests.

Alcohol Dependence

Alcohol dependence is a condition that develops after repeated alcohol use. People who are alcohol-dependent will have experienced three or more of the following symptoms during the past year:

- Have a strong desire to drink alcohol;
- Have difficulty controlling the use of alcohol;
- Persist in using alcohol despite the harmful consequences;
- Have increased tolerance for alcohol.

Other indicators of alcohol dependence may include a history of tolerance, of hallucination(s) and or alcohol-related issues.

Effects of alcohol use on driving

As a driver, you should be aware that alcohol can impair your driving. For example, using alcohol can make you tired and affect your concentration, which reduces your ability to drive safely. You also need to be aware of how long it takes for alcohol to leave the body. Many people underestimate how long it takes and, as a result, their driving may be impaired and/or they may be over the legal limit.

As a general rule, you should allow at least one hour for each unit of alcohol (for example, a glass of beer) to leave the body. However, it may take longer than that, as other factors – such as body size, or how recently you’ve eaten – can also have an effect.

Never ever drink and drive. Any amount of alcohol impairs your driving.
Alcohol Dependence – Driver Responsibilities

Group 1 – Driving a car, motor cycle or tractor
If you are a Group 1 driver, you must inform NDLS if:

1. A doctor or other health professional confirms that you have an alcohol dependence. In this case, you must stop driving until your doctor confirms that you have achieved 6 months free from alcohol. This assessment may also include blood tests.

Group 2 – Driving a bus or truck
If you are a Group 2 driver, you must inform NDLS if:

1. A doctor or other health professional confirms that you have an alcohol dependence. In this case, you must stop driving until your doctor confirms that you have achieved 3 years free from alcohol. This assessment may also include blood tests. Specialist support may be necessary.

What if I don’t feel that my alcohol intake is a problem?
If you disagree with medical opinion, and don’t believe you have an alcohol misuse or dependence condition, you can get a second opinion. You must stop driving until this second opinion has been completed.

What will happen if I still drive?
It is important to strike a balance between mobility and safety. If you continue to drive against medical advice and evidence is found of this, it will affect your insurance, and the NDLS and An Garda Síochána will take action to remove your licence. It is important to remember that driving over the limit is a statutory offence and you will be prosecuted.

How do I inform the NDLS?
If, following consultation with your GP, your medical condition is one that needs to be notified to the NDLS, you need to complete forms (1) and (2) below and return in person to any NDLS centre.

You need to bring:
1. A completed Driver Licence Application Form;
2. A Medical Report Form (D501) completed by your doctor (a letter from your doctor is not accepted);
3. Proof of your PPSN;
4. Your current licence.

You will then, within a specified time frame, be issued with a new, updated licence.

Please see www.ndls.ie for locations/bookings and forms.

If you have more questions, please email medicalfitness@rsa.ie or telephone 1890 40 60 40.

Please note if you have supplied a medical report form to obtain your existing licence or permit and the terms of licence or permit are not being altered, you may submit your new application together with your medical report form by post to:

National Driver Licence Service
PO Box 858
Southside Delivery Office
Co. Cork.

Further information sources:
1. Your GP or nurse or counsellor – will advise you on the next steps, and direct you on how to seek help.
2. HSE Alcohol & Drugs Helpline 1800 459 459
   This helpline is open Mon – Fri 10am-5pm.
   Email: drugshiv@hse.ie
   (You will receive a reply within 3 working days.)
   Web: www.drugs.ie

Everyone can choose never to drink and drive. You can help yourself and others by remembering the following advice:
1. Before drinking in a group, choose a designated driver – a non-drinking driver.
2. If you’re out drinking, get a lift home with a non-drinking driver, or use a taxi.
3. Don’t let friends drink and drive.
4. Choose not to binge drink yourself, and help others not to do it.
Chapter 6: Alcohol and other Substance Abuse and Dependence

Part 2: Drug misuse and dependence

The non-prescribed use of the drugs listed in this section and/or the use of supra-therapeutic dosage constitutes misuse/dependence for licensing purposes.

The requirements below apply in the context of single-substance misuse or dependence. Multiple substance misuse – including with alcohol misuse or dependence – are not compatible with fitness to drive or licensing consideration for both Group 1 and Group 2 drivers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Drug Misuse and Dependence</th>
<th>Group 1 Entitlement ODL</th>
<th>Group 2 Entitlement ODL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Reference to ICD10 F11 – F19 inclusive is relevant | Car, motorcycle and tractor | *

**Cannabis**

The prescribed use of medicinal cannabis at therapeutic doses (MIMS/BNF/PIL), without evidence of impairment, does not amount to misuse/dependence for licensing purposes (although clinically dependence may exist)*:

Just as there are legal limits for alcohol when driving, there are also (as of April 2017) legal limits for cannabis, cocaine and heroin.

**Persistent use of or dependence on these substances, confirmed by medical enquiry:**

Not permitted to drive until a **minimum 3 month** period free of such use has been attained. Independent medical assessment and drug screen may be required. There should be no evidence of continuing use of illicit substances.

Driver should notify NDLS.

**Cocaine, Amphetamines, Methamphetamine**

Ecstasy, ketamine & other psychoactive substances, including LSD and hallucinogens, psychoactive substances (Head shop products): just as there are legal limits for alcohol when driving, there are also (as of April 2017) legal limits for cannabis, cocaine and heroin.

**Persistent use of or dependence on these substances, confirmed by medical enquiry:**

Not permitted to drive until a **minimum 3 month** period free of such use has been attained. Independent medical assessment and drug screen may be required. There should be no evidence of continuing use of illicit substances.

Driver should notify NDLS.

**Persistent use of or dependence on these substances, confirmed by medical enquiry:**

Not permitted to drive until a **minimum 1 year** period free of such use has been attained. Specialist medical assessment (including accredited Level 2 trained GP) and drug screen may be required. There should be no evidence of continuing use of illicit substances.

Driver should notify NDLS.

*See also Chapter 1, s3.9.2 - The effects of specific medicine classes.

Useful reviews on drug use and driving include:


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Drug Misuse and Dependence Reference to ICD10 F11 – F19 inclusive is relevant</th>
<th>Group 1 Entitlement ODL car, motorcycle and tractor</th>
<th>Group 2 Entitlement ODL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Heroin, Methadone* and other opiates including Codeine</td>
<td>Persistent use of, or dependence on these substances, confirmed by medical enquiry: Not permitted to drive until a minimum 6 month period free of such use has been attained. Independent medical assessment and drug screen may be required. There should be no evidence of continuing illicit use of such substances.</td>
<td>Persistent use of, or dependence on these substances, confirmed by medical enquiry: Not permitted to drive until a minimum 3 year period free of such use has been attained. Specialist medical assessment (including accredited Level 2 trained GP) and drug screen will normally be required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*Applicants or drivers who are complying fully and are stable on a supervised oral methadone substitution programme may continue to drive, subject to favourable assessment and annual medical review.</td>
<td>*Applicants or drivers complying fully with a consultant supervised oral methadone maintenance programme may be considered for an annual review licence once a minimum 3 year period of stability on the maintenance programme has been established, with favourable random drug tests and assessment. There should be no evidence of continuing illicit use of such substances and no evidence of disorders of cognition, attention or insight.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Applicants or drivers on an oral buprenorphine programme may be considered applying the same criteria. There should be no evidence of continuing illicit use of such substances.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Driver should notify NDLS.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*See also Chapter 1, s3.9.2 - The effects of specific medicine classes.*
Benzodiazepines

The non-prescribed use of these drugs and/or the use of supra-therapeutic dosage, whether in a substance withdrawal/maintenance programme or otherwise, constitutes misuse/dependence for licensing purposes.

The prescribed use of these drugs at therapeutic doses (MIMS/BNF), without evidence of impairment, does not amount to misuse/dependence for licensing purposes (although clinically dependence may exist)*

Persistent misuse of, or dependence on these substances, confirmed by medical enquiry: Not permitted to drive until a minimum 6 month period free of such use has been attained. Independent medical assessment and drug screen may be required. In addition favourable consultant or specialist report may be required.

*See also Chapter 1, s3.9.2 - The effects of specific medicine classes.

Driver should notify NDLS.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Drug Misuse and Dependence Reference to ICD10 F11 – F19 inclusive is relevant</th>
<th>Group 1 Entitlement ODL car, motorcycle and tractor</th>
<th>Group 2 Entitlement ODL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Seizure(s) associated with drug misuse/dependence</strong>&lt;br&gt;Seizures associated with drug misuse/dependence are not considered provoked for licensing purposes.</td>
<td><strong>Not permitted to drive</strong> for a minimum 6 month period from the date of the event following a solitary seizure associated with drug misuse or dependence. Should however, the seizure have occurred on a background of substance misuse or dependence, the standards for such conditions will also need to be satisfied before return to driving. Where more than one seizure has occurred, the epilepsy standards will apply (See Appendix Neurology Chapter 2 for full details). Medical enquiry will be required before driving to confirm appropriate period free from persistent drug misuse and/or dependence. Independent medical assessment with urine analysis and consultant reports will normally be necessary. <em>Driver should notify NDLS.</em></td>
<td><strong>Not permitted to drive</strong> for a minimum 5 year period from the date of the event following a solitary seizure associated with drug misuse or dependence. Permitted to drive thereafter provided the following requirements have been satisfied:&lt;br&gt;&lt;ul&gt;&lt;li&gt;No underlying cerebral structural abnormality.&lt;/li&gt;&lt;li&gt;Off antiepileptic medication for at least 5 years.&lt;/li&gt;&lt;li&gt;Maintained abstinence from drugs if previously dependent.&lt;/li&gt;&lt;li&gt;Review by a doctor on the specialist register for General Practice of Psychiatry, who has expertise and experience in the area of substance use disorders.&lt;/li&gt;&lt;/ul&gt;Where more than one seizure has occurred, the epilepsy standards will apply (See Appendix Neurology Chapter 2 for full details).&lt;br&gt;<em>Driver should notify NDLS.</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**N.B.** A person who has resumed driving following persistent drug misuse or dependence must be advised as part of their after-care that if their condition recurs they should cease driving and notify the NDLS.
A licence holder or applicant must meet the standards for visual acuity and fields (assessed by a confrontation visual field test in the first instance) as outlined below, and if there is reason to doubt that these are adequate, the applicant or licence holder should undergo a more detailed examination by a specialist (an ophthalmologist or orthoptist or other medical practitioner with a special interest in defects of eyesight or optometrist) – see Appendix to this chapter, Item A, elements which should be assessed in more detailed assessment.

Group 2 standards are minimum standards and do not preclude employers setting higher standards in terms of the demands of the driving tasks encountered in the course of employment.

Note: Bioptic telescope devices are not accepted for driving by the NDLS.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Visual Disorders</th>
<th>Group 1 Entitlement ODL</th>
<th>Group 2 Entitlement ODL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acuity</td>
<td>Permitted to drive provided the driver has binocular visual acuity, with corrective lens as necessary, of at least 6/12 (0.5 decimal) on a Snellen chart. If the driver has an illness likely to cause progressive loss of visual acuity, on the advice of a competent medical authority, a 1 or 3 year licence may be appropriate.</td>
<td>Permitted to drive provided the driver has a visual acuity, using corrective lenses as necessary, of at least 6/7.5, Snellen (0.8 decimal) in the better eye and at least 6/60, Snellen(0.1 decimal) in the other eye. Where glasses are worn to meet the minimum standards, they should have a corrective power ≤ +8 dioptries. It is also necessary for all drivers of Group 2 vehicles to be able to meet the prescribed and relevant Group 1 visual acuity requirements.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Driver should notify NDLS.

See appendix at end of this chapter
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Visual Disorders</th>
<th>Group 1 Entitlement ODL car, motorcycle and tractor</th>
<th>Group 2 Entitlement ODL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cataract</strong></td>
<td>Permitted to drive provided the driver is able to meet the acuity and visual field requirements, and more detailed specialist examination is indicated if there is concern that these are not adequately met.</td>
<td>Permitted to drive provided the driver is able to meet the above prescribed acuity requirement. In the presence of cataract, glare may affect acuity and visual field requirements, and more detailed specialist examination is indicated if there is concern that these are not adequately met.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>(See Appendix, Item A)</em></td>
<td><em>(See Appendix, Item A)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Monocular vision</strong></td>
<td><strong>Complete</strong> loss of vision in one eye (i.e. if there is any light perception, driver is not considered monocular).</td>
<td><strong>Complete</strong> loss of vision in one eye or corrected acuity of less than 6/60 (0.1 decimal) in the weaker eye:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Includes the use of one eye only for driving)</td>
<td>Permitted to drive when clinically advised by a competent medical authority that driver has adapted to the disability and the prescribed eyesight standard in the remaining eye can be satisfied and there is a normal monocular visual field in the remaining eye, i.e. there is no area of defect which is caused by pathology.</td>
<td><strong>Not permitted to drive.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Driver should notify NDLS if medical advice is to cease driving for 6 months or longer.</em></td>
<td><em>Driver should notify NDLS.</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*See appendix at end of this chapter*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Visual Disorders</th>
<th>Group 1 Entitlement ODL car, motorcycle and tractor</th>
<th>Group 2 Entitlement ODL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visual field defects</td>
<td>Permitted to drive provided it is confirmed that the horizontal visual field is at least 120 degrees, the extension is at least 50 degrees left and right and 20 degrees up and down. No defects should be present within a radius of the central 20 degrees. If the driver has an illness likely to cause progressive loss of visual field, NDLS must be notified and on advice by a competent medical authority, a 1 or 3 year licence may be appropriate.</td>
<td>Permitted to drive provided the horizontal visual field should be at least 160 degrees, the extension should be at least 70 degrees left and right and 30 degrees up and down. No defects should be present within a radius of the central 30 degrees. It is recommended that formal perimetry is undertaken for Group 2 drivers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Driver should notify NDLS.</td>
<td>Driver should notify NDLS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>See item B of the appendix to this chapter for guidance on more detailed assessment of visual fields.</td>
<td>See item B of the appendix to this chapter for guidance on more detailed assessment of visual fields.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>See item C of the appendix for consideration as an exceptional case if not meeting these standards.</td>
<td>See item C of the appendix for consideration as an exceptional case if not meeting these standards.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*See appendix at end of this chapter*
### Visual Disorders

| Diplopia | **Group 1 Entitlement ODL**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not permitted to drive on detection.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Permitted to drive thereafter on confirmation to the NDLS that the diplopia is controlled by glasses (with or without a prism) or by a patch which the licence holder undertakes to wear while driving. (If patching, note requirements above for monocularity).  
**Exceptionally** a stable uncorrected diplopia of appropriate duration (for example, 6 months or more) may be compatible with driving if there is support from a competent medical authority indicating satisfactory functional adaptation. For treated decompensated phoria, driving can resume without informing the NDLS. |
| **Group 2 Entitlement ODL** | Not permitted to drive on detection.  
Driving must be discontinued if diagnosis is of permanent intractable diplopia. Patching is not acceptable.  
*Driver should notify NDLS.* |

| Night blindness | **Group 1 Entitlement ODL**
|---|---|
| Permitted to drive provided acuity and field standards have been met. Cases should be considered on an individual basis by an appropriately qualified medical authority.  
*Driver should notify NDLS.* |  
Permitted to drive provided acuity and field standards have been met. Cases should be considered on an individual basis by an appropriately qualified medical authority.  
*Driver should notify NDLS.* |

| Colour blindness | **Group 1 Entitlement ODL**
|---|---|
| Permitted to drive with no restriction on licence.  
*Driver needn’t notify NDLS.* |  
Permitted to drive with no restriction on licence.  
*Driver needn’t notify NDLS.* |

*See appendix at end of this chapter*
Appendix — Chapter 7
Visual notes

VISION REQUIREMENTS FOR HOLDING OF GROUP 1 LICENCE ENTITLEMENT

A) Elements which should be assessed in a more detailed assessment
Visual acuity, field of vision, twilight vision, glare and contrast sensitivity, diplopia and other visual functions that can compromise driving safety with no elevated risk: adjudication determined by clinical judgement.

B) Guidance on formal field of vision testing
The minimum field of vision for driving safety is defined as “a field of at least 120° on the horizontal, measured using a target equivalent to the white Goldmann III4e settings. In addition, there should be no significant defect in the binocular field which encroaches within 20° of fixation above or below the horizontal meridian”.

This means that homonymous or bitemporal defects which come close to fixation, whether hemianopic or quadrantanopic, are not normally accepted as safe for driving.

If a visual field assessment is necessary to determine fitness to drive, a number of tests are possible: in the UK and Australia, for example, a binocular Esterman field is recommended. Monocular full field charts may also be requested in specific conditions. Exceptionally, Goldmann perimetry, carried out to strict criteria, will be considered. For an Esterman binocular chart to be considered reliable for licensing, the false positive score must be no more than 20%. When assessing monocular charts and Goldmann perimetry, fixation accuracy will also be considered.

Defect affecting central area ONLY
Pending the outcome of current research, the following are generally regarded as acceptable central loss as measured by the Esterman field method:
- Scattered single missed points.
- A single cluster of up to 3 adjoining points.

The following are generally regarded as unacceptable (i.e. ‘significant’) central loss as measured by the Esterman field method:
- A cluster of 4 or more adjoining points that is either wholly or partly within the central 20 degree area.
- Loss consisting of both a single cluster of 3 adjoining missed points up to and including 20 degrees from fixation, and any additional separate missed point(s) within the central 20 degree area.
- Any central loss that is an extension of a hemianopia or quadrantanopia of size greater than 3 missed points.

Defect affecting the peripheral areas – width assessment
The following will be disregarded when assessing the width of field:
- A cluster of up to 3 adjoining missed points, unattached to any other area of defect, lying on or across the horizontal meridian.
- A vertical defect of only single point width but of any length, unattached to any other area of defect, which touches or cuts through the horizontal meridian.
C) Exceptional cases which can be considered for Group 1 drivers only

Drivers who have previously held full driving entitlement, removed because of a field defect which does not satisfy the standard, may be eligible to be considered as exceptional cases on an individual basis by a medical eye doctor, subject to strict criteria:

- The defect must have been present for at least 12 months.
- The defect must have been caused by an isolated event or a non-progressive condition.
- There must be no other condition or pathology present which is regarded as progressive and likely to be affecting the visual fields.
- The applicant has sight in both eyes.
- There is no uncontrolled diplopia.
- There is no other impairment of visual function, including glare sensitivity, contrast sensitivity or impairment of twilight vision.

In order to meet the requirements of European law, to provide a driving licence for 1, 3 or 10 years the NDLS will, in addition, require:

- Clinical assessment of full satisfactory functional adaptation: as there is no current objective measure of adaptation, this should be on the basis of a decision by a consultant neurologist, stroke physician or ophthalmologist with due multidisciplinary support, and with the option of a second opinion from another consultant ophthalmologist, stroke physician or neurologist.
- A satisfactory practical driving assessment, carried out by an appropriately qualified driving assessor, must subsequently be completed.

Note:

- An individual who is monocular cannot be considered under exceptional case criteria.
- D501 (Medical Report) or D502 (Eyesight Report) are only accepted by the NDLS if printed and signed as double-sided documents.
### Renal disorders

Group 2 standards are minimum standards and do not preclude employers setting higher standards in terms of the demands of the driving tasks encountered in the course of employment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Renal Disorders</th>
<th>Group 1 Entitlement ODL car, motorcycle and tractor</th>
<th>Group 2 Entitlement ODL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chronic Renal Failure +CAPD</strong></td>
<td>Permitted to drive unless subject to severe electrolyte disturbance or significant symptoms, e.g. sudden disabling attacks of dizziness or fainting or impaired psychomotor or cognitive function when driving should cease until the symptoms are controlled.</td>
<td>Drivers with these disabilities will be assessed individually by their treating specialist (consultant nephrologist) against the criteria as shown in the Group 1 entitlement. Driver should notify NDLS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Continuous ambulatory peritoneal dialysis)</td>
<td>Hemodialysis patients should not travel distances more than 1–2 days driving time from their home without making arrangements for dialysis at another centre.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haemodialysis</td>
<td>They should not drive for at least 24 hours after missing a dialysis treatment, and resume driving when dialysis resumed and condition stabilised.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Driver should notify NDLS.</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| All other Renal Disorders                     | Driver needn’t notify NDLS unless associated with a relevant disability.                                               | Driver needn’t notify NDLS unless associated with significant symptoms or a relevant disability. |
Chapter 9
Respiratory and sleep disorders

Group 2 standards are minimum standards and do not preclude employers setting higher standards in terms of the demands of the driving tasks encountered in the course of employment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respiratory and Sleep Disorders</th>
<th>Group 1 Entitlement ODL car, motorcycle and tractor</th>
<th>Group 2 Entitlement ODL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sleep Disorders (101-109)</strong></td>
<td>Not permitted to drive until satisfactory control of symptoms has been attained with ongoing compliance with treatment, confirmed by specialist medical opinion.</td>
<td>Not permitted to drive until satisfactory control of symptoms has been attained, with ongoing compliance with treatment, confirmed by specialist medical opinion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Including moderate or severe Obstructive Sleep Apnoea Syndrome causing excessive daytime/awake time sleepiness (while driving).</td>
<td>Periodic Medical review, 1-3 year licence may be granted.</td>
<td>Monitoring of treatment efficacy in Obstructive Sleep Apnoea Syndrome should include a download of the CPAP therapy to ensure adequate compliance (&gt;4 hrs nightly) and adequate control (ideally AHI&lt;5, although &lt;15 is adequate for licensing purposes).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A moderate obstructive sleep apnoea syndrome corresponds to a number of apnoeas and hypopnoeas per hour (Apnoea-Hypopnoea Index) between 15 and 29 and a severe obstructive sleep apnoea syndrome corresponds to an Apnoea-Hypopnoea Index of 30 or more, both associated with excessive daytime sleepiness</td>
<td>Driver should notify NDLS.</td>
<td>Regular, normally annual, licensing review required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Refer to Chapter 2 Neurology re: Narcolepsy</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Driver should notify NDLS.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Including Narcoleptic syndromes</td>
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</table>

Useful reviews include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respiratory and Sleep Disorders</th>
<th>Group 1 Entitlement ODL car, motorcycle and tractor</th>
<th>Group 2 Entitlement ODL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respiratory Disorders</td>
<td>Permitted to drive unless attacks are associated with disabling dizziness, fainting or loss of consciousness. In such instances, please refer to relevant requirements under ‘Transient Loss of Consciousness’, ‘Loss of Consciousness/Loss of or Altered awareness’, in Chapter 2 and ‘Syncope/Cough Syncope’ in Chapters 1 and 9.</td>
<td>Permitted to drive unless attacks are associated with disabling dizziness, fainting or loss of consciousness. In such instances, please refer to relevant requirements under ‘Transient Loss of Consciousness’, ‘Loss of Consciousness/Loss of or Altered awareness’, in Chapter 2 and ‘Syncope/Cough Syncope’ in Chapters 1 and 9.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carcinoma of Lung</td>
<td>Permitted to drive unless cerebral secondaries are present. <em>(See Chapter 2 for Malignant Brain Tumour).</em></td>
<td>Those drivers with non-small cell lung cancer classified as T1N0M0 can be considered on an individual basis. In other cases, driving must cease until 2 years has elapsed from the time of definitive treatment. Permitted to drive providing treatment satisfactory and no brain scan evidence of intracranial metastases. <em>(See Chapter 2 for Malignant Brain Tumour).</em> Driver should notify NDLS.</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Obstructive Sleep Apnoea Syndrome (OSAS) and Driving

This is an overview of the driving risks for drivers with Obstructive Sleep Apnoea Syndrome (OSAS). The complete standards are published in Sláinte agus Tiomáint: Medical Fitness to Drive (MFTD) Guidelines.

Why does OSAS affect driving?

Although you may not realise it, OSAS interrupts your sleep and may result in daytime sleepiness, which could cause you to fall asleep at the wheel. Signs of sleep apnoea include loud snoring, disturbed sleep, fighting for breath during sleep and falling asleep during the day. Researchers have found that drivers with OSAS are three times more likely to have a road traffic crash than the general population, but this increased risk is avoided with effective treatment.

What are the actual rules about OSAS, and do I need to stop driving?

Drivers with moderate or severe OSAS which causes excessive daytime (awake-time) sleepiness, and who do not follow the rules below (while driving), are driving while unsafe to do so and are breaking the law.

Group 1 drivers – driving a car, motor cycle or tractor

- You must not drive until your symptoms are under control and can be kept under control with ongoing treatment. This must be confirmed by a medical professional.
- You must also notify the NDLS.
- After that, a 1-3 year licence may be granted.

Group 2 drivers – driving a bus or truck

- You must not drive until your symptoms are under control and can be kept under control with ongoing treatment. This must be confirmed by a medical professional.
- You must notify the NDLS.
- After that, your licence will be reviewed regularly – usually every year.

How is OSAS diagnosed?

OSAS is diagnosed by combining the results of a sleep study and an assessment of how sleepy the patient is.

What is the treatment for OSAS?

Continuous Positive Airway Pressure (CPAP) is often the treatment of choice for people who have been diagnosed with OSAS. This treatment works by preventing the upper air passage from narrowing or collapsing during sleep. The patient will be fitted with a comfortable, close-fitting nasal mask, which is connected by tubing to the CPAP machine. CPAP is usually very effective in controlling the sleepiness associated with OSAS, and the benefits are usually evident within the first few weeks of treatment.

Be aware of these warning signs:

- Trouble keeping your eyes open or focused
- Continual yawning
- Not being able to remember driving parts of your journey

Should I keep a Sleep Diary?

It may be helpful to keep a record of:

- How many hours you sleep each night.
- How often you awaken during the night and for how long.
- How long it takes you to fall asleep.
- How well rested you feel upon awakening, and
- How sleepy you feel during the day.
As you may not be aware of some symptoms, ask your sleeping partner if you snore loudly, snort or gasp for breath, or have jerking movements. You may also perspire at night or have morning headaches.

If you have the above symptoms, your doctor may refer you to a sleep specialist for further investigation and help.

Ultimately, the onus is on you – the driver – and your sense of social responsibility not to drive if you are sleepy. OSAS is included in the Irish driving licence regulations (as required by Directive 2014/85/EU) and the regulations are set out in Sláinte agus Tiomáint: Medical Fitness to Drive Guidelines available on www.ndls.ie.

Do OSAS and sleep-related crashes have any particular distinguishing features?

Yes. Usually, OSAS and sleep-related crashes have the following features in common:

- They are single-vehicle collisions.
- The driver is alone in the vehicle and does not attempt to avoid the crash.
- The crash is likely to be serious and occur on a high-speed road.
- The crash occurs either late at night, early in the morning, or mid-afternoon.

What if I disagree that my sleep patterns are a problem?

You can get a second opinion. You must not drive until this opinion agrees that your sleep problems are not problematic.

Then, within a specified time frame, you will be issued with a new, updated licence.

If you disagree that your sleep problems are not problematic, you can get a second opinion. You must not drive until this opinion agrees that your sleep problems are not problematic.

If I need to, how do I inform the NDLS?

If, following consultation with your doctor, your OSAS is causing excessive sleepiness and your medical condition is one that needs to be noted on your driver record (but does not change your licence entitlement), or if your licence needs to be changed – for example, valid for a shorter period – you must notify the NDLS. You need to complete forms (1) and (2) listed below and return them in person to any NDLS centre along with your current licence and proof of your PPS number. These forms are available on www.ndls.ie.

- a complete Driver Licence Application Form;
- a Medical Report Form (D501) completed by your doctor (a letter from your doctor is not accepted);
- proof of PPSN; and
- your current licence.

Further information sources:

- Your doctor or nurse
- Your doctor or nurse will advise you on your condition and where and how to seek help.
- Web: Irish Sleep Apnoea Trust: http://www.isat.ie/ 134 340 549
- Sláinte agus Tiomáint: Medical Fitness to Drive Guidelines is available on www.ndls.ie
## Chapter 10
### Miscellaneous Conditions

Group 2 standards are minimum standards and do not preclude employers setting higher standards in terms of the demands of the driving tasks encountered in the course of employment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Miscellaneous Conditions</th>
<th>Group 1 Entitlement ODL car, motorcycle and tractor</th>
<th>Group 2 Entitlement ODL</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Deafness (Profound)</td>
<td>Permitted to drive.</td>
<td>Permitted to drive provided that the driver is assessed. Of paramount importance is the proven ability to be able to communicate in the event of an emergency by speech or by using a device e.g. a MINICOM. If unable to do so likely to be unfit to drive.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Driver needn’t notify NDLS.</td>
<td>Driver should notify NDLS.</td>
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<tr>
<td>All Cancers not already covered in earlier sections</td>
<td>For all tumours, fitness to drive depends upon:</td>
<td>For all tumours, fitness to drive depends upon:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• The prospective risk of a seizure.</td>
<td>• The prospective risk of a seizure.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NDLS does not need to be notified unless there are cerebral metastases or significant complications of relevance (see subsequent bullet points for guidance).</td>
<td>• Specific limb impairment, e.g. from bone primary or secondary cancer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Specific limb impairment, e.g. from bone primary or secondary cancer.</td>
<td>• General state of health.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• General state of health.</td>
<td>• Advanced malignancies causing symptoms such as general weakness or cachexia to such an extent that driving would be comprised.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Advanced malignancies causing symptoms such as general weakness or cachexia to such an extent that driving would be comprised.</td>
<td>For Group 2 entitlement (ODL), specific attention is paid to the risk of cerebral metastasis. For eye cancers, the vision requirements must be met as well as the above.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous Conditions</td>
<td>Group 1 Entitlement ODL car, motorcycle and tractor</td>
<td>Group 2 Entitlement ODL</td>
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| AIDS Syndrome            | Permitted to drive provided medical enquiries confirm no relevant associated disability (e.g. neurological or vision disorders) likely to affect driving. 1 or 3 year licence with medical review.  
**Driver needn’t notify NDLS.** | Cases will be assessed on an individual basis by the supervising consultant.  
**Driver needn’t notify NDLS.** |
| HIV Positive             | Permitted to drive.  
**Driver needn’t notify NDLS.** | Permitted to drive.  
**Driver needn’t notify NDLS.**  
See Section 3.5: Multiple Conditions. |
| Age (Older Drivers)      | Age is no bar to the holding of a licence and physical frailty is not per se a bar to the holding of a licence.  
See Section 3.5 on multiple morbidity, and relevant specific section of these Guidelines for relevant diseases which are more common later in life, such as stroke and dementia.  
See Chapter 1: Table 4. | Age is no bar to the holding of a licence and physical frailty is not per se a bar to the holding of a licence.  
See Section 3.5 on multiple morbidity, and relevant specific section of these Guidelines for relevant diseases which are more common later in life, such as stroke and dementia.  
See Chapter 1: Table 4. |
| Hypoglycaemia From any cause other than the treatment of diabetes | Not permitted to drive if suffering episodes of severe hypoglycaemia. Examples would include after bariatric surgery or in association with eating disorders. | Not permitted to drive if suffering episodes of severe hypoglycaemia. Examples would include after bariatric surgery or in association with eating disorders. |
To view or download driver information leaflets visit www.rsa.ie or www.ndls.ie

Be a responsible driver

It is your responsibility as a driver to:

- follow your doctor’s advice, take your prescribed medication, and monitor and manage your medical condition(s);
- stop driving if any of the medications you are taking, or treatments you are receiving for your injury affect your ability to drive safely. Medications and treatments include—plaster casts, splints, slings, patches, medicines, injections and so on;
- inform the National Driver Licence Service (NDLS) if your doctor or health professional advises you to stop driving;
- comply with the requirements of your licence, including having medical reviews;
- get professional advice on medical fitness to drive if you develop a sudden, serious and/or ongoing medical condition during the term of your licence.

Note: You are committing an offence if you continue to drive after you become aware that you are not fit to do so. ‘Awareness’ can be your own awareness — for example, noticing that you are having dizzy spells or fainting, or knowing that your ability to drive is reduced because of an injury. Or: your doctor might make you aware by warning you not to drive.

When can I get back to driving after an injury?

It depends. After you are discharged from the emergency department, it depends on the road. If you have surgery, your doctor will advise you when it’s safe for you to drive. Be sure to ask him/her. Remember that any pain or stiffness may affect your ability to drive. It is essential that you take care that you can react quickly and effectively to ensure safety on the road. While you may have adequate movement of your legs, your ability to use the vehicle controls safely and effectively could be impaired – for example, missing the brake pedal, losing your grip on the gear stick, and so on.

If you have any numbness or loss of sensation in your arms or legs, your ability to safely control the vehicle would be reduced. Ankle flexion

If you have a ‘soft tissue’ injury, for example, damage to muscles, tendons and so on, it may become stiff and uncomfortable and may affect your driving ability. Be sure to ask your doctor. If you have had surgery, your doctor will advise you when it’s safe for you to drive. Be sure to ask him/her.

If you are protecting a body part with a plaster cast or heavy bandage – or if you cannot bend or move the joint or limb normally, then you should not drive.

Medical Fitness to Drive (MFTD) Guidelines.

Sláinte agus Tiomáint

The complete standards are published in Sláinte agus Tiomáint: Medical Fitness to Drive (MFTD) Guidelines.

Practical self-assessment

The following sections give you some guidance and practical ways you can take to assess your injury and how it affects your driving.

How do I assess lower leg strength, range of motion and balance?

Walk three metres (10 feet), turn around and walk back to where you started. It’ll take you more than nine seconds to do this, your legs may be too weak for you to drive safely.

How can I assess my ability to control and manoeuvre my vehicle?

- Neck rotation – Can you look over either shoulder to look behind you to review your car? Would you be sure to see a child behind you? If not, do not drive.
- Finger test – Can you make fists with both hands strong enough to allow you to hold a steering wheel or handle grips safely?
- Shoulder and elbow flexion – Pretend you are holding a steering wheel. Can you touch the imaginary wheel all the way to the right and then all the way to the left? Could you avoid a child if they ran out in front of you? If not, do not drive.
- Ankle flexion – Pretend you are doing an emergency stop and you are pressing on the brake pedal quickly and hard. Now bring your toes back towards you. Could you brake in time and without hesitation to avoid a child who has run out in front of you? If not, or if you are in any doubt, do not drive.
- Knees – Can you make fists with both hands strong enough to allow you to hold the vehicle’s door or handle grips safely?
- Can you walk three metres (10 feet), turn around and walk back to where you started? If it takes you more than nine seconds, your legs may be too weak for you to drive safely.

If you are protecting a body part with a plaster cast or heavy bandage – or if you cannot bend or move the joint or limb normally, then you should not drive.

If you have any numbness or loss of sensation in your arm or leg, your ability to safely control the vehicle would be reduced. Be sure to ask your doctor. If you have had surgery, your doctor will advise you when it’s safe for you to drive. Be sure to ask him/her.

Sláinte agus Tiomáint

Road Safety Authority

údarás um shábháilteacht ar bhóithre

Road Safety Authority
What if I have been treated with a sedative?

If you have been treated with a sedative:
- you must have a responsible adult to take you home and stay with you for 12 hours after your discharge;
- you must not drive for a minimum of 24 hours, or longer as advised by the medical team;
- for a surgical procedure, your doctor or other treating health professional will advise you when you can drive.

What about other medications?

You must follow your doctor’s and the medication manufacturer’s instructions on the correct dose of any medication you take. You must also understand the possible side effects of the medication, including advice about whether or not it may affect your ability to drive.

If you are aware or suspect that the pain relief or other medications you are taking for the injury affects your ability to think clearly, or affects your reaction time, you should not drive.

What if my injury affects my sleep?

It is important to be aware that not being able to sleep at night due to your injury can affect your coordination, response times and, therefore, your ability to drive safely. Ultimately, the responsibility is on you – the driver – not to drive if you are sleepy or think you will become sleepy on the road.

What if I have suffered a head injury?

You should not drive for a minimum of 24 hours or as advised by your doctor, depending on severity of the head injury.

Group 2 – bus and truck drivers

What do I do if I drive a bus or truck as my job?

If you drive for work, you should inform your employer of your injury. The rules are stricter for you, and you must ask for advice about your medical fitness to drive from your treating doctor. You must let them know your driving duties. If possible, ask your company’s occupational health doctor.

Why is it important that I’m fully fit to drive?

- The safety of you and the safety of your passengers and other road users depends on your ability to safely operate your vehicle.
- If you are involved in an accident or stopped by a member of An Garda Síochána, you may be asked to prove you are in full control. If you have not fully recovered from an injury and this is found to be affecting your driving, you may be charged with an offence and prosecuted in court. A charge can be brought against you even if you don’t have an incident, but, if you cause harm to a person or property, the charge will be more serious.
- Reduced movement in your limbs (arms or legs), or pain as a result of an injury may invalidate your insurance. It is illegal to drive without valid insurance, so you must declare any change in your health to your insurer if you continue to drive.

If I need to, how do I inform the NDLS?

If, following consultation with your doctor, your medical condition is one that needs to be notified to the NDLS and your licence needs to be changed – for example, which is a shorter period – you must notify the NDLS. You need to complete forms (1) and (2) listed below and return them in person to any NDLS centre along with your current licence and proof of your PPS number. These forms are available on www.ndls.ie.

Checklist of what you need to bring:
1) a completed Driver Licence Application Form;
2) a Medical Report Form (D501) completed by your doctor (a letter from your doctor is not accepted);
3) proof of PPS and
4) your current licence.

Then, within a specified time frame, you will be issued with a new, updated licence.

If you have more questions, please email medicalfitness@rsa.ie or telephone 1890 40 60 40.

Further information sources:

Head Injuries
- Independent brain injury support, advocacy and information.
- Web: www.briireland.ie
- Phone: 01 482 4802
- Email: info@briireland.ie

Insurance: A member of the public who holds a valid licence is deemed not fit to drive by a doctor or health professional, they must share this information with their insurance provider straight away.
- Web: www.insuranceireland.eu
- Phone: 01 6761820
- Email: feedback@insuranceireland.eu

Sláinte agus Tiomáint: Medical Fitness to Drive Guidelines is available on www.ndls.ie

If you need to, how do I inform the NDLS?

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3) proof of PPS and
4) your current licence.

Then, within a specified time frame, you will be issued with a new, updated licence.

If you have more questions, please email medicalfitness@rsa.ie or telephone 1890 40 60 40.

Please note if you have supplied a medical report form to obtain your existing licence or permit and the terms of licence or permit are not being changed, you may submit your new application together with your medical report form by post to:
National Driver Licence Service
R8 Box 88
Southside Delivery Office
Co Cork.
Drivers with disabilities

Group 1 Car and Motorcycles
Driving is possible in both static and progressive or relapsing disorders but vehicle modification may be needed.

   e.g. amputation, hemiplegia/cerebral palsy, ankylosing spondylitis, severe arthritis, especially with pain.

2. Neurological Disorders:
   e.g. multiple sclerosis, Parkinson’s disease, motor neurone disease, peripheral neuropathy[111].

Sophisticated vehicle adaptation is now possible and varies from automatic transmission to joy sticks and infra-red controls for people with severe disabilities.

The NDLS requires notification of which, if any, of the controls required to be modified. The driving licence will then be coded to reflect the modifications.

Group 2 Entitlement ODL truck and bus (with or without trailer)
Some disabilities may be compatible with the driving of large vehicles if mild and non-progressive. Individual assessment will be required.

The National Office for Traffic Medicine is reviewing the current situation of assessments of driving and adaptation of vehicles in Ireland.

Useful resources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Available</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RSA and NDLS web resources and email</td>
<td>• D501 Medical Report</td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.rsa.ie/ie">www.rsa.ie/ie</a></td>
<td>• D502 Eyesight Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:medicalfitness@rsa.ie">medicalfitness@rsa.ie</a></td>
<td>• Driver Advisory Form</td>
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<tr>
<td>and <a href="http://www.ndls.ie">www.ndls.ie</a></td>
<td>• RSA Medical Pages – RSA only</td>
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<td>• Road safety statistics – RSA only</td>
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<td>• Certificate in Traffic Medicine (14 CPD), a blended learning course (online and workshop elements) designed specifically for medical professionals.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Certificate in Road Safety, Mobility and Health (14 CPD), a blended learning course (online and workshop elements) for road safety stakeholders.</td>
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<td>• Medical Fitness to Drive On-line Learning Tool (3 CPD).</td>
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<td>• Links to other international Guidelines.</td>
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<td>• Traffic Medicine E-zine.</td>
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<td>• Upcoming Education Events.</td>
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<tr>
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<td>• Traffic Medicine Research.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Summary of national and international research supporting the development of the Medical Fitness to Drive Guidelines.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Traffic Medicine national and international collaborations.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Chapter 1</th>
<th>Chapter 2</th>
<th>Chapter 3</th>
<th>Chapter 4</th>
<th>Chapter 5</th>
<th>Chapter 6</th>
<th>Chapter 7</th>
<th>Chapter 8</th>
<th>Chapter 9</th>
<th>Chapter 10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>Neurology</td>
<td>Cardiovascular</td>
<td>Diabetes</td>
<td>Psychiatry</td>
<td>Alcohol &amp; Drugs</td>
<td>Vision</td>
<td>Renal</td>
<td>Respiratory &amp; Sleep</td>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
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<td>ABCESS (INTRACEREBRAL)</td>
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<td>ACOUTIC NEUROMA/ACHWANNOMA</td>
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<td>ACUTE CORONARY SYNDROMES</td>
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<tr>
<td>ACUTE PSYCHOTIC DISORDERS OF ANY TYPE</td>
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<td>AGE (OLDER DRIVERS)</td>
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<td>AIDS/HIV POSITIVE</td>
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<td>ALCOHOL AND DRIVING (Driver Information Leaflet)</td>
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<td>ALCOHOL MISUSE/DEPENDENCE</td>
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<td>ANEURYSM (AORTIC)</td>
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| BENIGN INFANTERNITAL TUMOUR | | | | | | | | | | 30 |
| BENIGN INFANTERNITAL TUMOUR | | | | | | | | | | 29 |
| BENZO DIAZEPINES | | | | | | | | | | 17,80,86,88 |
| BRAIN TUMOURS | | | | | | | | | | 32 |</p>
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Dear ……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………

Following your assessment today, _____ / _____ / _____, I am advising you that you need to contact your National Driver Licence Service to let them know that you have a condition _____________________ which may impact on your fitness to drive:

I am also advising that:

The philosophy of the NDLS is an enabling one, aiming to maximise mobility of drivers to the greatest extent possible. However, it is important to ensure that an appropriate balance is found between mobility and safety and the NDLS is likely to request you to provide a medical report clarifying your medical fitness to drive once you have notified them. The conditions that require reporting to your NDLS are outlined in the declaration made by you when you applied for, or renewed, your driving licence (see below) and also in the official RSA guidelines for medical fitness to drive, Sláinte agus Tiomáint. You should also clarify with your insurer as to whether or not this condition needs to be reported to them as well. A record of this notification will be held in your medical file here.

Yours sincerely ……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………

Medical conditions requiring declaration at application for and renewal of driving licence

And recommend a further specialist opinion

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The above list is not exhaustive.

Please note if you are the holder of an EU licence from a country other than Ireland, or hold a licence from a recognised country for licence exchange purposes, you should contact the NDLS to arrange for a licence exchange and medical report.
SUMMARY OF MEDICAL AMENDMENTS
Edition April 2017 v October 2018
SUMMARY OF AMENDMENTS 2018 Edition

Medical changes throughout document

The Sláinte agus Tíomáint Medical Fitness to Drive Guidelines (7th ed.) 2018 have been updated to reflect all the relevant EU Directives which have become enshrined in Irish Law by the time of publication.

Minor changes have been made to the wording throughout this document to improve uniformity and to increase clarity.

Chapter 1 - Introduction

Change to the status of NOTM is detailed.

The Guidelines are supported by an increasingly comprehensive base of evidence. The current review of the evidence can be accessed using this link; Literature Review for the 2018 Guidelines

Chapter 2 - Neurological disorders

Transient Ischaemic Attack (TIA): Based on current clinical evidence the period of driving cessation for Group 1 drivers has been reduced from 4 weeks to 1 week.

Epilepsy: Clarification of guidelines for Group 1 drivers with Epilepsy.

Chapter 3 – Cardiovascular disorders

Guidelines have been updated in line with EU Directive 2016/1106. This document can be accessed HERE.

New guidelines added for Long QT syndrome, Brugada syndrome, valvular heart disease, and cardiac assist devices. Guidelines related Group 1 drivers with Heart Failure updated.

Chapter 4 – Diabetes Mellitus

Guidelines updated in line with EU Directive 2016/1106 with respect to hypoglycaemia and medications which can potentially induce hypoglycaemia. This document can be accessed HERE.

Chapter 5 – Psychiatric disorders

Additional guidance provided for Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) for Group 1 and Group 2 drivers.

Chapter 6 Alcohol and other substance misuse and dependence

Some terminology standardised as per the American Psychiatric Association’s DSM-5 – see American Psychiatric Association (2013). Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5) (5th ed.). Arlington, VA: American Psychiatric Publishing or click HERE.

Clearer definitions provided for Drug Misuse and Dependence, including reference to medicinal cannabis at therapeutic doses.
Chapter 7 – Visual disorders
Additional guidance provided in relation to functional adaptation in Group 1 drivers.

Chapter 8 – Renal disorders
No substantial changes.

Chapter 9 – Respiratory and sleep disorders
Obstructive Sleep Apnoea Syndrome: Guidelines added for CPAP therapy for Group 2 drivers.

Chapter 10 – Miscellaneous conditions and drivers with disabilities
No substantial changes.
Working To Save Lives

Údarás Um Shábháilteacht Ar Bhóithre
Road Safety Authority

Páirc Ghnó Ghleann na Muaidhe, Cnoc an tSabhaircín, Bóthar Bhaile Átha Cliath, Béal an Átha, Co. Mhaigh Eo.
Moy Valley Business Park, Primrose Hill, Dublin Road, Ballina, Co. Mayo.
locall: 1890 50 60 80  fax: (096) 25 252  email: medicalfitness@rsa.ie  website: www.rsa.ie

October 2018