

DRIVING AND DEMENTIA

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Why is this such an important topic?

- ▶ Driving represents freedom and independence
- ▶ Enables us to get from place to place
- ▶ For various reasons, there may be only one person in a household who drives
- ▶ But it is a complex skill that can be compromised by changes in our physical, emotional, mental and cognitive conditions.

How does dementia affect driving?

- ▶ Needing more help than one used to with directions
- ▶ Trouble learning a new driving route or a new car
- ▶ Trouble remembering where you are or where you left your car
- ▶ Confusion over traffic signs (2-way / 4-way stops).. Or highway entrance/exit
- ▶ Stopping at green lights / breaking inappropriately
- ▶ Drifting out of one's lane
- ▶ Less control of muscles or possibly less strength
- ▶ Unexplainable dents or scrapes in car
- ▶ Others may question your driving
- ▶ Trouble controlling emotions that can affect driving.

ILLINOIS LAW REGARDING DRIVING AND DEMENTIA

Secretary of State Driver Services Department determines whether or not individuals are functionally able to drive safely. The larger aspects of the statute MAY include the interest of clinicians and researchers. (for example vision).

All limitations are subject to the medical review board which is comprised mainly of physicians and some other health care providers.

DEMENTIA GUIDELINES

- ▶ Severe dementia is INCOMPATIBLE with safe driving
- ▶ Mild to Moderate Dementia may be COMPATIBLE with safe driving which requires assessments to determine one's fitness to drive that should be reassessed every 6-12 months
- ▶ Insufficient evidence to recommend countermeasures such as restricted DL for dementia... concerns by experts is that issuing restricted DL may falsely give the impression they are safe to drive, when in fact they are deemed not safe without the restrictions. (such as driving in daytime only or w a co-pilot).

The Driver Services Dept. can require cognitive assessments by a health care provider if two of the following are present:

- ▶ Age 80 or older
 - ▶ Hx of recent crash or moving violation
 - ▶ Self-report or caregiver report of impaired skills
 - ▶ Use of certain medications (Eg: seizure/AD/anti-psychotic)
 - ▶ Hx of active alcohol abuse
 - ▶ History of falls
 - ▶ Inability to hear or understand instructions while interacting at the driver services dept. Simple screening tools while there that may indicate possible cognitive deficits
 - ▶ Inability to complete the driver services dept. knowledge test
- ▶ (although greater risk is present with greater number of risk factors, relative risks are not necessarily additive)

So what do we do if we are concerned about driving safety among patients with dementia?

- ▶ If it is unknown if the person is getting lost or having issues, ask questions of the family or caregivers (do you ride with them/do you drive/would you let this person drive a baby or toddler around).
- ▶ Request that the SOS test the persons driving. When filling out this form, you must say "yes" when asked if you think the person is capable of driving and then request all three tests (driving, vision, and written) in the comments section. * person has 30 days from the time they receive notice of this from the SOS to take tests and has 6 tries to pass them. (if they do not come in the DL will be revoked).
- ▶ The notice received by the patient states that the SOS has been notified that they may be a risk for driving from : Law Enforcement / Administrative Hearing / Provider
- ▶ If you do not think person should drive make "no" in this section and add a request to revoke the DL in the comments section. "person will be sent notification and given a chance to contest this decision if desired. If contested, it will go to the medical review board to decide what to do from there

- ▶ If you are unsure and reluctant to say "yes" when asked if the person is capable of driving, you can state that you are "unsure" on the form. In the comments section, you would request a rehabilitation driving assessment. If the comments section is left blank, it will automatically go to the medical review board. In these cases, the person will still be required to have a driving assessment at a certified drivers rehabilitation center.
- ▶ These assessments are NOT covered by insurance and are all private pay. They range anywhere from \$400-800 dollars. This is true even if the evaluator is an occupational therapist and there is an order for the evaluation.
- ▶ Evaluation consists of: Vision/memory/cognition/motor function/reaction time/strength/and a one - two hour behind the wheel driving test once the previous assessments have been passed.
- ▶ Depending on outcome of assessment, restrictions may be placed on DL, such as miles away from home one is allowed to travel.

DRIVER REHABILITATION SPECIALISTS:

Marianjoy Rehabilitation Center
 26 W 171 Roosevelt Rd
 Wheaton, IL 60189
 630-909-6084

Carterville High School
 1454 Morningglory Road
 Carbondale, IL 62902
 618-457-6480

Mr. Roger A. Kelsch, CDRD
 10004 Mulberry Avenue
 Oak Lawn, IL 60453
 708-424-6082

Presence St. Joseph Medical Center
852 A Sharp Dr.
Shorewood, IL 60404
815-741-7416

Community Mobility, INC
PO BOX 423
Medinah, IL 60157
630-307-8733

Southern Illinois University Carbondale
500 C Lewis Lane
Carbondale, IL 62901
618-453-4324

VA Hospital
5000 South 5th Ave (117C)
Bldg 228/Rm 5012
Hines, IL 60141
708-202-8387 x24382

Therapy Group
PO Box 123
Frankfort, IL 60423
630-922-1600

OSF Healthcare
6501 N. Sheridan Road
Peoria, IL 61614
(309) 621-4111

Northshore Univ. Health Systems
1000 Central Ave Suite 101
Evanston, IL 60201
847-570-1260

Miss Sally Sullivan, CDRS
907 West Avenue
Woodstock, IL 60098
815-236-9568
