Assessing Fitness to Drive
Information Sheet for the Specialist Doctor

This sheet guides the specialist doctor in the steps to take when a patient is referred by their treating doctor for a more detailed assessment of the patient’s medical condition.

1. Patient referral

It is important that the specialist doctor establishes the type of motor vehicle the patient is authorised or is intending to drive and whether or not they intend to carry public passengers or bulk dangerous goods.

If the treating doctor has concerns about their patient’s medical condition and its impact on their ability to drive, or the condition is not precisely covered in the Assessing Fitness To Drive 2012 (AFTD), they may refer the patient to a specialist doctor. The specialist doctor is only responsible for providing an opinion to the patient’s treating doctor on the condition/s they are qualified to manage.

Additionally, if the patient has a medical condition and drives or is intending to drive a commercial vehicle, the opinion of a specialist doctor is generally required.

What if there is a delay before a specialist can be seen?

In the case of a commercial vehicle driver or an applicant for a commercial vehicle licence, who is assessed by a general practitioner as not meeting the criteria to hold an unconditional licence for one or more conditions, but who may meet the criteria to hold a conditional licence, the Department of Transport and Main Roads may permit the person to drive or to continue to drive a commercial vehicle pending assessment of the person by an appropriate specialist or specialists if:

- the person has an appointment to see the relevant specialist(s) at the earliest practicable opportunity
- in the opinion of the general practitioner the condition is not, or the conditions are not, likely to lead to acute incapacity or loss of concentration before the assessment or assessments occur.

Examples of such conditions include early peripheral neuropathy, early rheumatoid arthritis or diabetes treated by diet and exercise alone.

Examples of conditions that could lead to acute incapacity or loss of concentration include ischaemic heart disease, sleep apnoea, or blackouts other than vasovagal.

In applying this section, the department may impose conditions on the licence. Licence conditions imposed by the department will depend on the advice of the treating doctor until such time that specialist advice can be considered.

What if there are difficulties in seeing a specialist?

If access to a specialist doctor is difficult, the department may agree to a process in which:

- initial assessment and advice for the conditional licence is provided by a specialist
- ongoing periodic review for the conditional licence is provided by the treating general practitioner, with the cooperation of the specialist.

Where appropriate and available, the use of telemedicine technologies such as videoconferencing is encouraged as a means of facilitating access to specialist opinion.

2. Private and Commercial Motor Vehicle Driver’s Health Assessment (form F3195) publication

This form is to help specialist doctors assess whether the patient has a mental or physical incapacity (a medical condition) that is likely to adversely affect their ability to drive safely.

- The patient should complete the Health Questionnaire and give the form to their specialist doctor at the assessment.
- The specialist doctor should then complete the Clinical Examination section and retain the form for their records.

3. Assessing Fitness to Drive for Commercial and Private Vehicle Drivers 2012 (AFTD)

This publication provides consolidated standards that are supported by all Australian driver licensing authorities. The AFTD assists the specialist doctor (and other health professionals) to assess patients’ fitness to drive in a consistent and appropriate manner.

Note: Two sets of medical standards exist – private and commercial vehicle driver standards – both of which are outlined in the AFTD.

The patient must be assessed against the commercial standards set out in the AFTD if they hold or are applying for a licence to drive the following categories of vehicles:

- vehicles with a gross vehicle mass (GVM) of more than 8 tonne (driver licence class MR, HR, HC, MC and UD)
- public passenger vehicles such as buses, taxis or limousines (driver authorisation)
4. **Medical Certificate for Motor Vehicle Driver (form F3712)**

The **Medical Certificate for Motor Vehicle Driver (form F3712)** is used by the patient’s treating doctor to provide an opinion on whether or not a patient meets the medical and/or visual standard for a driver licence.

- **Part 1** is to be completed by the patient.
- **Part 2** is to be completed by the patient’s treating doctor.
- **Part 3** is to be completed by the patient’s optometrist or ophthalmologist if applicable.

The specialist doctor is not required to complete the **Medical Certificate for Motor Vehicle Driver (form F3712)**; however, they should report back to the patient’s treating doctor on the results of their assessment.

If the specialist doctor recommends a driver licence be granted or renewed subject to conditions, details of recommended conditions must be included in the report. There is no specific format this report should take. Recommended conditions that may enhance driving competency or safety must be enforceable by the Queensland Police Service. For example, ‘no night driving’, ‘additional mirrors’, ‘only drive within a 20 km radius of place of residence’.

If the specialist doctor believes that vehicle modifications are necessary, details of these recommendations should also be included in the report. For example, ‘the vehicle must be fitted with hand controls or a left foot accelerator’.

For more information about the conditions that can be placed on the **Medical Certificate for Motor Vehicle Driver (form F3712)**, please refer to the AFTD.

The patient’s treating doctor should then provide the completed **Medical Certificate for Motor Vehicle Driver (form F3712)** to their patient for lodgement with the department.

5. **Encourage patients to notify the department**

All Queensland driver licence holders and persons applying for a Queensland driver licence have a legal obligation to notify the department if they have a permanent or long term medical condition, or a change to an existing medical condition that is likely to adversely affect their ability to drive safely.

6. **Notifying the department about a patient**

If the specialist doctor thinks their patient will not make an appointment with their treating doctor, will not notify the department, will not comply with recommended treatments and/or will continue to drive despite advice not to, they are strongly encouraged to voluntarily notify the department. They can do this by completing the **Health Professional Medical Condition Notification eForm**.

Additionally, the specialist doctor can also print and complete the **Health Professional Medical Condition Notification (form F4842)** or write to the department. These notifications should be posted, emailed or faxed to:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Post</th>
<th>Department of Transport and Main Roads Locked Bag 2000 Red Hill Rockhampton Qld 4701</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Email</td>
<td><a href="mailto:mcr@tmr.qld.gov.au">mcr@tmr.qld.gov.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fax</td>
<td>07 4931 1624</td>
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For written notifications, sufficient information must be provided to effectively identify the person, their medical condition, and how it is likely to adversely affect their ability to drive safely. The specialist doctor should also provide sufficient information to identify themselves as a health professional.

7. **Indemnity against liability**

Section 142 of the **Transport Operations (Road Use Management) Act 1995** provides indemnity against liability, both civilly and under an administrative process, for health professionals who give information in good faith to the department about a person’s medical fitness to drive.

8. **Links**

- **Assessing Fitness to Drive for Commercial and Private Vehicle Drivers 2012 (AFTD) publication**
- **Private and Commercial Motor Vehicle Driver’s Health Assessment (form F3195)**
- **Medical Certificate for Motor Vehicle Driver (form F3712)**
- **Health Professional Medical Condition Notification (eForm)**
- **Health Professional Medical Condition Notification (form F4842)**