

2022

Re: Occupational Therapist Driving Assessment Services:

If a person living with cognitive deficit and/ or other functional deficit appears to be of concern regarding their ability to drive a motor vehicle, one option is to have an independent driving assessment undertaken at cost to the patient. The client/ family/ whanau have two choices and can confirm costs on enquiry.

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What the driving assessment involves

Driving assessments are carried out by registered occupational therapists.

There are two parts to a Medical Driving Assessment an **off-road assessment** and an **on-road assessment**.

The off-road assessment

This part of the assessment will take up to one hour. The occupational therapist will carry out a thorough check of:

- your vision (basic screening)
- your physical functions (such as range of movement, strength, sensation and coordination)
- your judgement
- your memory
- your directional orientation
- your movement and decision making times
- how your mind understands what you see
- your knowledge of road rules and signs.

The therapist may use a computer-based tool for part of this assessment.

The on-road assessment

Occasionally, a driver's off-road assessment suggests the person should not be driving. If this happens, the occupational therapist may still want you to proceed with the on-road assessment, to confirm the off-road assessment results.

The on-road assessment further assesses the impact that any disability or illness, or aging, might be having on your ability to drive safely. During the on-road assessment, you'll be accompanied by the occupational therapist. A specially trained driving instructor will be there as well.

You'll tackle a range of driving situations - for example:

- driving on both the open road and urban roads
- driving through controlled and uncontrolled intersections
- parking
- manoeuvring

The on-road assessment may involve approximately 45-60 minutes of driving.

If you don't have a current driver licence, make your assessor aware of this at least one week before the assessment, so they can get one on your behalf. Without a temporary licence, you'll be unable to complete the on-road assessment.

What happens after the driving assessment?

When you've finished both parts of the driving assessment, the occupational therapist will write a report outlining their observations and providing a professional recommendation.

This report will be sent back to the Doctor who asked for you to be assessed.

The Doctor will read the report then decide whether or not they consider you medically fit to drive the classes or endorsements that you wish to apply for or renew.

If the Doctor signs the medical certificate confirming you are fit to drive, you can continue with your driver licensing application.

Driving assessments may be a stressful event for the person living with a dementia and their family/ whanau when the outcome is not favourable. Please ensure the person does have supports during this process.