

Cognitive impairment in adults

Subject

Instructions for screening clients with possible impaired cognitive functioning (e.g. senile dementia) in the context of the Canadian immigration medical examination (IME).

Goal/Objective

These instructions are provided to ensure that panel physicians (PPs) follow a consistent and appropriate process for the following:

- identification of clients with possible impaired cognitive functioning (e.g. senile dementia);
- further investigation of clients with impaired cognitive functioning; and
- completion and grading of an IME for a client with impaired cognitive functioning.

Instructions

Screening and Testing

It is particularly important to screen and identify clients with cognitive impairment as well as assess their ability to carry out daily tasks and to live independently. Such conditions may have a significant impact on Canadian medical and social services.

During the medical history-taking and physical examination, the PP should be vigilant about the presence of possible impaired cognitive impairment. If an interpreter is used, the PP must select and ensure that the interpreter is unbiased and has no connection to the client. Family members or friends cannot act as an interpreter for a client. The use of a professional interpreter is at the client's expense.

The following information will assist the Regional Medical Office in its assessment of the IMEI :

- duration and progression of symptoms;
- whether the client lives alone/current living arrangements (e.g. with family or in long term care facility; who is paying?);
- need for social services and specialized assistance (e.g. nursing, home care, occupational therapy);
- whether the current caregiver can continue to look after the client;
- coexisting morbidity, e.g., vascular disease (multi-infarct dementia), electrolyte imbalance, other organic cause of cognitive impairment;

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- history of neurological problems or associated conditions (Parkinson's disease, Alzheimer etc);
- medication use; and
- drug or alcohol abuse.

Additional Investigation

- For clients presenting with abnormal cognitive functioning, an assessment of Activities of Daily Living (ADL), a Global Assessment of Function (GAF), and a screening test for cognitive functioning must be included (Refer to the respective IMEIs for more information); and
- The PP should obtain a geriatric or relevant specialist report in order to get further important information on the prognosis and requirement for specific medical/social services for the client if any of the above assessments indicate impairment of cognitive functioning and/or lack of autonomy.

Reporting

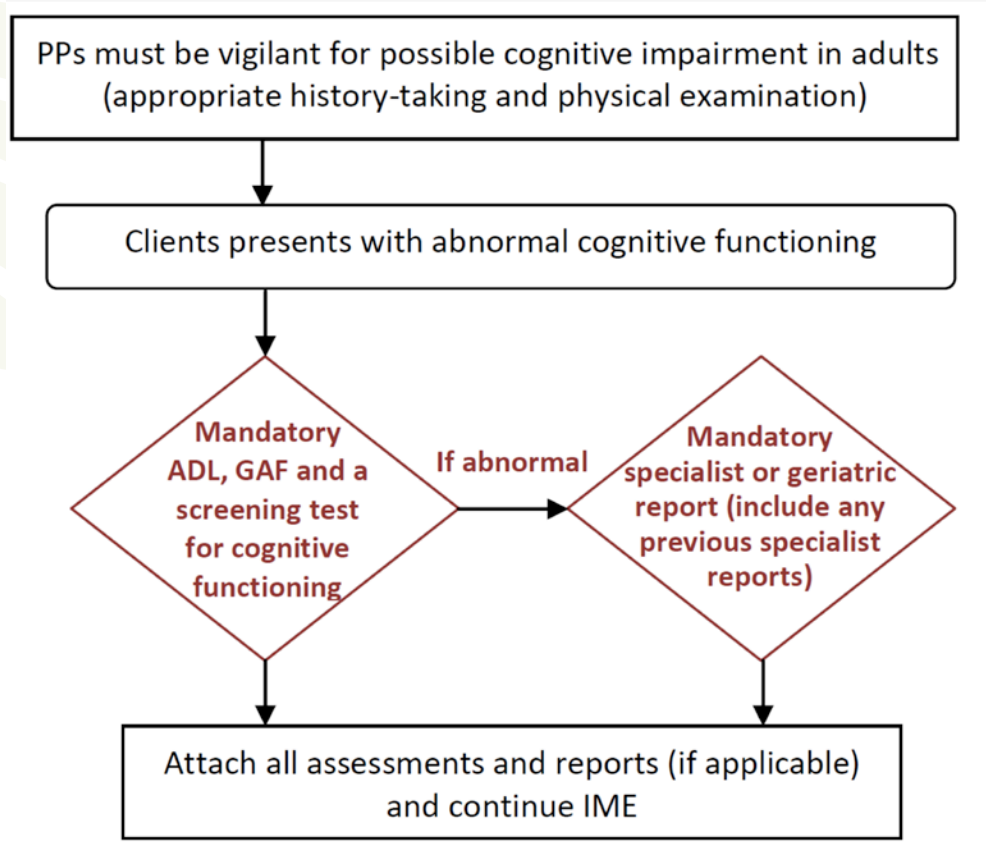
- All additional assessment information (i.e., ADL, GAF, and a screening test for cognitive functioning) must be attached to the IME report.
- Any specialist report that may be available from previous consultations should also be attached.

Grading

All IME's for clients with abnormal cognitive functioning must be graded B.

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Algorithm



HB Approval and Authority

Director General, NHQ, Health Branch, CIC

Implementation Date

2013/06/01

Revision Date(s)

2014/11/01