

## Assessing Senior Drivers

### Senior Driver Renewal Process

Ontario's senior driver programs aim to keep seniors driving for as long as they can do so safely. Once drivers reach 80 years of age, every two years they need to:

- Take a vision test
- Undergo a driver record review
- Participate in a 45-minute group education session and complete two in-class screening assignments
- If necessary, take a road test

#### Medical referral resulting from a driver's licence renewal session

Depending on the outcome of the group education session you may be referred to the ministry's Medical Review Section for further assessment. Based on that referral you will be required to file a medical report.

#### What type of medical information will be required?

If you have been referred as a result of your group education session, you will receive a letter from the ministry, including a *Cognitive Assessment* form. You will need to have the *Cognitive Assessment* form completed by your physician or nurse practitioner. Please submit this form by the due date provided in the letter, or your licence will be suspended.

Your physician or nurse practitioner may conduct a variety of tests, including pencil and paper tests and memory tests, to help determine if you are okay to continue driving. If the report submitted by your physician or nurse practitioner confirms that you do not meet the required medical standards, your driver's licence may be suspended.

However, if the report shows that you would benefit from an independent on-road assessment, you may need to undergo a functional assessment with an occupational therapist.

#### What is a Functional Assessment?

A functional assessment, also called a Driving Evaluation, is completed by an occupational therapist and a driving instructor. It includes an in-clinic medical assessment and an on-road driving evaluation. The assessment can take up to 3 to 4 hours to complete at one of the ministry's approved Functional Assessment Centres. Occupational therapists who work at these centres have training and expertise to assess your medical condition's effect on your ability to drive safely.

The **in-clinic assessment** includes

- A basic visual screening to assess your visual acuity, peripheral vision, depth perception, night vision and glare recovery
- A physical evaluation to assess your range of motion, joint movement, strength, sensation, balance, reaction time and mobility
- A cognitive & visual attention evaluation to assess your attention span, concentration, memory and response to distractions

The **on-road assessment** includes

- Basic driving manoeuvres to help determine if your medical condition affects your ability to drive safely

Once the evaluation is complete a report will be sent directly to the ministry and your case will be reviewed.

**Note:** The ministry is not responsible for any costs relating to the assessment process.

A complete list of Approved Functional Assessment Centres is available on the Medical Review web page. Visit the site noted below and click on 'Approved Functional Assessment Centres'

For more information on the medical review process and the national medical standards, please visit us at <http://www.mto.gov.on.ca/english/safety/medical-review.shtm>