



Supporting you on your driving journey

Fitness to Drive Assessment

A fitness to drive assessment may be indicated for various reasons:

- ✔ You may have been referred by your doctor or specialist for a comprehensive driving evaluation,
- ✔ You or a loved one may have some concerns about your driving.
- ✔ You wish to return to driving after an injury or illness
- ✔ You would like to pursue and learn how to drive but have a medical condition that may affect your driving.
- ✔ You may require vehicle adaptations following an injury or condition.

Various medical conditions may affect driving and the effect of the condition on driving skills may need to be determined. Sometimes e.g. after a stroke the person may not have driven for some time and would like to return to driving. An evaluation and possible driver training may assist in facilitating this process.

Driving is a complex skill and requires the combination of visual and motor coordination as well as the ability to quickly react to road conditions. Many people that come for evaluations have been driving for many years and driving has become second nature. Due to the complex nature of driving, decreases in cognitive and motor skills can at some point start to affect driving skills. Not all people become aware of these changes and this can potentially be dangerous.

Driving is an important part of many people's lives and enables people to be independent. Driving retirement can be a difficult process to go through and many people are worried about losing their independence.

It is however important to assess whether a person is still fit to drive and whether they pose a greater risk for accidents on the road.

The Assessment

The Occupational therapy Fitness To Drive Assessment consists of a clinical evaluation as well as an on-road practical assessment.

The Clinical Evaluation consists of:

- ✔ An interview to obtain information regarding your driving history and needs.
- ✔ Vision screening
- ✔ Visual perception (visual skills) assessment
- ✔ Cognition
- ✔ Reaction speed/Response time
- ✔ Motor skills and strength

- ✔ Movement in arms, neck (neck stiffness) and legs
- ✔ Coordination

The findings of the off-road evaluation will determine whether the therapist considers it safe to proceed with the on-road assessment.

The on-road assessment entails:

Driving through a predetermined route in the person's own vehicle or in a driving school vehicle in certain cases. The route will start in a quiet area and the person given time to adjust to driving. The route becomes progressively more challenging and is also adjusted according to the person's driving needs (e.g. not all people are taken on the highway if they normally only drive in town areas)

To participate in the on-road driving assessment you will need:

- ✔ A valid driver's licence.
- ✔ Valid insurance on your vehicle, in the event that your vehicle is used in the on-road assessment.

Recommendations

Based on the assessment findings the therapist will make a recommendation as to whether:

- ✔ **You are fit to drive** - you may continue driving and no further intervention is required.
- ✔ **You are fit to drive with restrictions** - restrictions may include only driving during daytime, only driving in local areas, no driving on the high-ways etc.
- ✔ **You are fit to drive but require further intervention** - you may need a vehicle adaptation, driver training or further rehabilitation.
- ✔ **You are unfit to drive until you have received further intervention** - you may need to continue with rehabilitation following e.g. stroke until you have had more time to improve.
- ✔ **You are unfit to drive and driving retirement is recommended** - you are unfortunately not fit to drive and will most likely not be able to return to driving.

The therapist will provide feedback to you as well as any other relevant person e.g. family member, etc.

Even though the information discussed and obtained in the evaluation will be treated as confidential, driving a vehicle requires responsibility and the therapist has a responsibility towards public safety. For this reason she may have to disclose the information to family members/referring doctor/licensing authorities, should you be deemed unfit to drive and continue to do so.

Due to the inherent risk of driving and the dangers all drivers are exposed to, being considered fit to drive does not preclude you from being involved in a motor vehicle accident.