

Aging Driver Task Force

Appendix: Summary of the joint AAMVA/CCMTA Aging Driver/Driver Fitness Forum March 4-6, 2006

- The Canadian Council of Motor Transport Administrators (CCMTA) and American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators (AAMVA) regularly hold joint conferences. Their first-ever aging driver forum was held March 4 – 6, 2006, in Austin Texas.
- The first two days of the forum, March 4 and 5, drew 150 participants, including motor and licensing administrators from North American jurisdictions, CCMTA and AAMVA personnel, health care practitioners, and representatives from research institutes, universities, the insurance and health care industries, the American Association of Retired Persons, the legal profession, and the Canadian and American automobile associations.
- The March 6 day was organized by CCMTA, and focused on the evolution of their Aging Driver Strategy. The 70 attendees included a mix of Canadian and American participants, and featured facilitated discussion identifying and building on lessons learned in the first two days of the forum.
- See the attached Aging Driver Forum Agenda.

IV. Highlights from Days 1 & 2:

- Jurisdictional concerns regarding older drivers include:
 - increasing numbers of older drivers who are more car-dependent,
 - lack of clarity and consistency around roles/responsibilities for reporting unfit drivers,
 - shortage of evidence-based standards for screening and assessment,
 - limited awareness in medical and enforcement community,
 - lack of consistent licensing and enforcement practices within and across jurisdictions,
 - the need for solutions targeted to small/remote communities, and
 - how to fund the efforts that will be needed to keep the growing driver population safely mobile in their senior years and prepare them for driving cessation.
- Licensing issues: Because people become more dissimilar as they age, shorter renewal periods, restricted or conditional licensing and in-person renewal become useful tools to distinguish between the aging driver and the medically at-risk driver. In particular, decreased crash rates are associated with a shorter renewal period. (Dr. Bonnie Dobbs, University of Alberta)
- Individualized functional assessment is the key to avoiding charges of discrimination. Many factors affect an individual's ability to drive, including general level of health and fitness, medications taken, acute, chronic and progressive conditions such as stroke, heart disease, diabetes and Alzheimer's (conditions can be multiple and cumulative), the severity of the disease, the level of medical care and patient compliance with and

response to treatment. Because of this, functional assessment carries the weight in court. (Dr. Jamie Dow, Quebec)

- Assessment knowledge is changing: Useful Field of View (UFOV) and Contrast Sensitivity tests may be of more value in assessing vision as it affects driving than visual acuity tests.
- Crash predictability: Initial results of the Maryland Study showed cognitive measures were most strongly related to crash risk. Measures included UFOV, Motor Free Visual Perception Test, and tests measuring visual search and sequencing, information processing and attention switching. Drivers who failed were 2-3 times more likely to have a crash over the next two years, a relationship even stronger for drivers 75 or over.
- Remediation tools include occupational therapists, certified driver rehabilitation specialists, adaptive equipment and driver education and training.
- We will outlive our driving life: men by 6 years, women by 10 years. Who pays for rehabilitation is a huge issue – from an insurance standpoint, driving isn't considered a medical necessity." (Elin Schold-Davis, American Occupational Therapy Association)
- Licence removal has negative consequence for an individual, so licensing authorities often don't want to be associated with it. Keeping people licensed means keeping them plugged into the system. Authorities can provide older drivers with information on resources to help them stay safely mobile longer and make good transportation choices. Florida has seen instances of dementia patients having spent their life savings on driver education, trying to get their licence back. (Selma Sauls, Florida Granddriver Program)
- Partnerships and multi-disciplinary efforts will be needed to deal with future resource requirements of aging drivers. Partners can include DMVs, seniors' ministries, departments of veterans' affairs, transit authorities, seniors' organizations, community groups, automobile associations, health care practitioners, medical associations, support organizations, e.g., Alzheimer's Association.

V. Highlights from Canada Day facilitated sessions:

- Key learnings from the first two days were identified as the need for:
 - individual assessment
 - partnerships, and engaging target groups
 - data and research to support evidence-based practices
 - education and training for health care practitioners, enforcement officers and driving examiners
 - sharing information
 - identification of funding sources and legal issues
 - clarity around whose role it is to discuss when it's time to stop driving, and who is responsible
- Questions still to be resolved include:
 - can we develop cessation guidelines
 - why not more emphasis on alternative transportation
 - what evidence is there that retesting is effective
 - who is educating driving educators about older drivers
 - what is the role of licensing authorities and medical examiners
 - who will fund individual assessments

- A national aging driver strategy should:
 - be practical, actionable, acceptable to seniors, and sustainable
 - present an overall vision, supported by common goals and clear objectives
 - have benchmarks and targets
 - include an educational component and a communication strategy
 - address the needs of urban communities and small/remote communities
 - provide for flexibility in different jurisdictions
 - encompass multiple areas: fitness, transportation infrastructure, licensing, etc.
 - address funding issues.
- Suggested strategies include:
 - DMVs to lead in developing multi-disciplinary partnerships
 - seek buy-in at senior levels
 - develop a national clearinghouse for materials on older drivers, supported by evidence-based research
 - develop measures for program evaluation

VI. Next Steps

The CCMTA Aging Drivers Task Force will continue to meet through 2006 to:

- Review the information learned at the forum with a view to developing the next draft of the CCMTA Aging Driver Strategy.
- Participate in a ½ day workshop with the Road Safety and Research Policy standing committee, at the fall CCMTA meeting to develop the next iteration of the national aging driver strategy.

Date: *May 2, 2006*