Medical Fitness & Aging Drivers

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AAA National
About AAA…

• Not-for-profit

• Over 52 million members

• 25 percent of U.S. households

• Over 100 years of public service
Road Map...

• Overview: Senior Driver Safety & Mobility

• Driver Medical Review: Policies & Practices

• Tools/Resources for DMVs

• Tools/Resources for Consumers
Shifting Demographics

Older Population by Age: 1950 - 2050

Source: U.S. Administration on Aging based on data from U.S. Census Bureau
22 Percent by 2030

Number of US Licensed Drivers by Age Category, 1980 and 2004

- 1980: 145.2 Million
- 2004: 198.9 Million

Source: Cambridge Energy Research Associates.
Note: 2005 driver licensing data not available at time of publication.
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Referral & Review of Potential Medically At-Risk Drivers
Project Goals

• Provide evidence-based guidance for improving state driver medical review processes and outcomes

• Maximize safety and mobility for older, medically at-risk drivers
Target Audiences

• Policymakers and Practitioners
  – **Primary**: state driver licensing agencies (DMVs)
  – **Secondary**: health professionals, law enforcement, other stakeholder groups

• Disseminators / Informants / Instigators
  – AAA National and AAA Clubs
  – Research community (partnership with TRB Joint Subcommittee on Driver Medical Review)
Why focus on driver medical review?

• Importance of driver medical review in light of growing population of older drivers

• DMV mandate to ensure persons licensed possess basic qualifications needed for safe operation of their vehicle

• Considerable state-to-state variation in driver licensing policies and practices
  – “Standard licensing requirements”
  – Procedures and requirements for more formal review of potential medically at-risk drivers
Two Key Assumptions

• The target population for driver medical review is drivers *of any age* who are at increased risk of crashing due to medical-related functional impairments.

• Licensing decisions should not be determined by disease diagnoses, but by an individualized assessment of fitness to drive.
Research Approach

- Identification of relevant research publications
- Circulation of detailed outline and reference list to TRB Subcommittee members
- Preparation of draft document
- Circulation of document for TRB review
- Completion of “living document”
- Planning for next steps (ongoing)
Evidence-based Policy and Practice Recommendations

• Works – Evidence is sufficient to warrant a recommendation

• Likely to work – Evidence is weak or lacking, but the practice has been successfully applied by one or more DMVs and/or recommended in national/international consensus documents

• Does NOT work – Evidence is sufficient to recommend NOT adopting a particular policy/practice

• Unclear – Evidence is mixed, so that no clear recommendation can be made at this time
Topic Areas

• Identification and referral of potential medically at-risk drivers
  – by DMVs
  – by physicians and other health professionals
  – by law enforcement
  – by family members or friends

• Assessment of potential medically at-risk drivers

• Post-assessment options for medically at-risk drivers (balancing safety and mobility)
Some Examples

Improving **DMV Identification** of Potential At-risk Drivers

- **What Works**
  - In-person license renewal
  - Visual acuity testing at license renewal

- **What is Likely to Work**
  - Medical self-report at license renewal
  - License examiner observational training
  - Review of driver crash/violation data
Some Examples

Improving **DMV Identification** of Potential At-risk Drivers (continued)

- What is NOT Likely to Work
  - General age-based license renewal and testing requirements

- What is Unclear
  - Shorter license renewal cycle
  - Age-based road testing
More Examples

Improving **Assessment** of Potential At-risk Drivers

- **What** is Likely to Work
  - Physician/Healthcare provider input to review process
  - Comprehensive standards for driver medical review
  - DMV access to medical expertise (e.g., MABs)
States with Medical Advisory Boards

37 states have Medical Advisory Boards
13 states and D.C. have no MAB
A Final Example

Policies & Practices Related to Case Disposition

- What Works
  - Restricted licensing

- What is Likely to Work
  - Driver rehabilitation / remediation
  - Counseling on meeting transportation needs / driver medical review case managers
Considerations for Moving Forward

• A look at state policies and practices
  – State-specific needs, state-specific goals

• Informed (re)action

• Stronger emphasis on mobility needed to compliment safety

• Adding to the evidence base

• TRB Joint Subcommittee
  - Final report with recommendations
  - Partner with AAMVA to find right balance
Tools & Resources for State Licensing Authorities (DMVs)
• Synthesize State of Knowledge

• Develop Consensus-based Recommendations

• Identify Gaps & Research Needs
Welcome to the searchable database showing each state and province’s Driver Licensing Policies and Practices affecting older and medically-at-risk drivers. Click on the drop-down list to see how each state addresses the topic of interest to you. For a more detailed description of each item included in the database, mouse your cursor over the individual column headers.

After searching here, you may also be interested in the complementary Noteworthy Initiatives database.

This project was funded by the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, Transport Canada, and the Ontario Neurotrauma Foundation.

Table Selection
Please Select a License Policy or Practice

Variable Sorting
To sort on one variable, simply click on the column heading. To sort on two variables at once, select from the following list:
Please Select Two-Column Sorting Criteria (optional)

• Print Version (new window) • State/Prov Abbreviation Key (new window)

1. Vision Requirements for Licensure

Tools

• State Driver Licensing Policies & Practices

• Noteworthy Initiatives Database
Evaluating Noteworthy Initiatives

Initiatives to Evaluate
• Local drive test option for older drivers

Initiatives to Promote
• Raising Awareness of Senior Driver Resources
• CarFit Training for DL Examiners
• State Older Driver Safety/Mobility Coalitions
• Aging Sensitivity Training DLE and DMV staff
- “How to” design/develop a network of services
- Training materials for staff
- Leveraging DMV referrals upon license revocation
• Identify variety of programs and services available

• Outline major challenges faced by providers of these services

• Great source of information on “what’s out there”
• National forum to share information about senior transportation options
• Offers technical support and networking opportunities
• Locate community services
Tools & Resources for Senior Drivers & their Families
Launched in 2005

- Easy-to-use self-screening tool
- Shows how age-related changes in visual, mental, and physical abilities affect driving
- Delivers immediate and confidential feedback
- Results are user-specific
Launched in 2007

- Free, community-based edu/outreach program
- Designed to enhance comfort and safety while behind the wheel
- 12-point checklist/review
- Involves brief consult with an OT/CDRS
Launched in 2008

- Identifies vehicle features that can assist drivers with age-related changes
- Addresses diminished vision, arthritic hands, hip/leg pain and limited upper-body range of motion
- Lists vehicles exemplifying those features
Up & Coming…

• Roadwise Review Rx
  - Web-based medical review program
  - OTC, prescriptions and foods

• National Senior Driver Expo Tour
  - Community health fair/expo
  - Keeping the Keys
  - Touring 2010-2012
Other Tools & Resources

- Drivers 65+
- Mature Operators Courses
- STP Exchange
- Straight Talk for Mature Drivers
- The Older Wiser Driver
- How to Help an Older Driver
- Getting Around
- SeniorDriving.AAA.com
Helping the Senior Driver in Your Life

Driving is a function of ability, not age. However, driving ability is affected by natural changes to our bodies over time. AAA is dedicated to keeping seniors driving as long as safely possible.

The decision to drive or not to drive for a senior will often involve many people. The earlier you discuss the inevitable consequences of aging, the better you and your loved one can agree to a plan of action. This Web site will help you and the senior driver in your life create such a plan.

1. Early Planning  
2. Communication  
3. Skills Assessment

Use these tools to help you assess a mature driver’s skills.

Expert Advice
Seniors expert Alexis Abramson, PhD, offers advice to help you discuss safe driving with the seniors in your life.

How Aging Affects Driving
With age comes experience, and there’s no substitute for the decades of behind-the-wheel time accrued by senior drivers. But as we age,
QUESTIONS?