

Dear Doctor:

Re: Guide to Drive Updates

March 14, 2006

The British Columbia Medical Association (BCMA) and the Office of the Superintendent of Motor Vehicles (OSMV) are pleased to provide the enclosed updates to the "*Guide for Physicians in Determining Fitness to Drive a Motor Vehicle*" and to update you on further changes planned.

We ask that you replace the relevant pages in your copy of the "Guide". If you do not have the "Guide", you may request one from OSMV at the address below. The "Guide" is also available online at www.drivesafe.com.

An invitation for feedback on the draft changes appeared in the BCMA Journal Pulsimeter section in April 2005. These changes appeared concurrently on the drivesafe website. The updates took into consideration the feedback we received. We would like to express our thanks to those who sent us comments.

For your ease of reference, an overview of the updates follows:

Section 2 - Vision

The Vision section is replaced in its entirety, and is based on recommendations from the Canadian Ophthalmological Society in 2000. The new BC standards are consistent with the National Safety Code (NSC) and Canadian Medical Association (CMA) standards and are used by physicians and regulators in other Canadian provinces. The visual acuity standards have been modified and binocular testing is now the recommended standard for testing vision for driving purposes.

Section 4 - Cardiovascular Diseases

The Cardiovascular diseases section changes are based on recommendations from the 2003 Canadian Cardiovascular Society Consensus Conference on Medical Fitness to Drive and Fly. The largest change in this section is the removal of the requirement for regular stress testing of professional drivers with cardiac conditions.

Sections 3, 6 and 7

There are minor changes to the sections on hearing, aortic aneurysm and epilepsy, to bring the BC Guide in line with the NSC and CMA guidelines used in other Canadian jurisdictions.

Guide to Drive Project

The BCMA and the OSMV are partnering to develop a new guide to driving fitness. The project is in its early days and is expected to take at least a year to complete, so we do not have many details to share at this time. We can tell you the Guide will have an evidence-based focus. We have a professional researcher on the project team to conduct a review and critical appraisal of scientific literature on medical conditions and driving, and to review current protocols for identifying and assessing medically at-risk drivers.

The Guide will have an emphasis on the functions needed for driving, and how people can compensate for their deficits. Consultation with the medical community will be a fundamental component of this project. If you have any questions or feedback at this time or in the future about the Guide or the Guide project, we welcome you to contact us at OSMVMedicalConsultant@gov.bc.ca or iangillespie@telus.net.

Yours truly, J McCracken MD

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