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Introduction to Driver Rehabilitation

Occupational Therapy Roles in Driver Rehabilitation

Learning Outcomes

- Describe how occupational therapists are uniquely positioned to address the driving and mobility needs of individuals with disabilities and older adults.
- Describe the expertise required to be a driver rehabilitation specialist and a CDRS.
- Describe the collaborative relationship of occupational therapy practitioners and driver rehabilitation specialists.
Driver Rehabilitation
Multi-disciplinary profession, includes:

- Medical professionals
  - Occupational therapy
  - Physical therapy
  - Kinesiotherapy
- Trained specialists
  - Driving instructors
  - Driving educators

Occupational Therapy

- Driving is an IADL – to be addressed by all practitioners.

*Occupational therapy practitioners with specialized education/training in driver rehabilitation*

- Evaluate functional abilities essential to driving
- Recommendations in regards to fitness to drive
- Recommend modifications to vehicles
- Provide intervention
ADED: The Association for Driver Rehabilitation Specialists

- A professional association dedicated to driving rehabilitation.
- Network of Professionals
  - Includes OTs, PTs, KT, driver educators/trainers, equipment manufacturers, mobility equipment dealers, educators and researchers
  - Mission includes promoting excellence in the field of driver rehabilitation, including advocacy and leadership.

Practice is Guided by:

- Best Practice Guidelines for the Delivery of Driver Rehabilitation Services
- Code of Ethics / Standards of Practice
In order to promote the best outcome for clients, prudent clinical judgment should be used at all times, including consideration of applicable laws and other guidelines or resources that may exist regarding the delivery of driver rehabilitation services. Keep driver evaluations

- standardized
- formalized
- objective

It is ADED’s position that any person involved in the delivery of driver rehabilitation services (including but not limited to driver rehabilitation specialists [DRS], driver educators, allied health professionals, mobility equipment vendors, manufacturers, and clients) will conduct themselves in an ethical and professional manner. Driver Rehabilitation Specialists possessing the CDRS™ (Certified Driver Rehabilitation Specialist) certification are committed to such compliance.
Why do you need to know this?

Definition:
Planning and moving around in the community and using public or private transportation, such as driving, walking, bicycling, or accessing and riding in buses, taxi cabs, or other transportation systems.

The Importance of Driving

- Independence
- Identity
- Connections to others

Cessation of driving can lead to poor health outcomes, increased health care costs, and decreased access to care (Marottoli, 2000).

Driving is the most meaningful IADL for 27 out of 30 individuals with stroke and caregivers (Dickerson, Reistetter, & Gaudy, 2013).
What Client Populations?

ALL – clients need this IADL addressed!

Referrals for the specialized skills of the DRS:
- Clients recovering from medical condition
- Drivers with progressive diseases
- Novice drivers who need specialized equipment and/or learning
- Community mobility for the client as a passenger (equipment)

Models of Delivery

- Broad range of occupational therapy contexts
  - Across the lifespan
  - Across medical conditions /disabilities
- Unique value – of occupational therapy
  - Use occupational therapy skills applied to complex, demanding and high level IADL - driving
  - Consider the needs of that person at that time
- Identify the needs of the client for driving
  - Role of generalist
  - Role of specialist in driver rehabilitation
Spectrum of Driver Services

Developed to describe the whole range of services

- Pathways from general practice to specialized services.
- Pathways from community based to medically based services.
- The diverse types of driving programs.

Types:
- Community Based
- Medically Based
- Specialized Evaluation & Training

Descriptions of:
- Program type
- Providers & Credentials
- Provider’s Knowledge
- Provider’s services
- Outcome
# Range of Services

**Spectrum of Driver Services: Right Services for the Right People at the Right Time**

A description of services and health care providers can be used to distinguish the type of services needed for an older adult.

## MEDICALLY-BASED ASSESSMENT, EDUCATION AND REFERRAL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Type</th>
<th>Driver Safety Programs</th>
<th>Driving School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type of Providers and Credentials</td>
<td>Program-specific, trained driving instructor (USA), certified by ADL licensing agency or Dept. of Education.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupational Therapy Services Include:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health care professional (e.g., physician, social worker, neuropsychologist).</td>
<td>Occupational Therapy Practitioner (generalist or Driver Rehabilitation Specialist).</td>
<td>Other health professional degree with expertise in instrumental activities of daily living (IADL).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Driver Screen</td>
<td>Clinical IADL Evaluation</td>
<td>Driver Rehabilitation Programs (Includes Driver Evaluation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge of relevant medical conditions, assessment, referral, and/or intervention processes.</td>
<td>Knowledge of medical conditions and the implications for community mobility including driving.</td>
<td>Applies knowledge of medical conditions with implications to driving.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understands the limits and value of assessment tools, including simulation, as a measurement of fitness to drive.</td>
<td>Understands the limits and value of assessment tools, including simulation, as a measurement of fitness to drive.</td>
<td>Assesses the cognitive, visual, perceptual, behavioral and physical limitations that may impact driving performance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Integrates the clinical findings with assessment of on-road performance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Synthesizes client and caregiver needs, assist in decisions about equipment and vehicle modification options available.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## SPECIALIZED EVALUATION AND TRAINING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Driver Rehabilitation Programs (Includes Driver Evaluation)</th>
<th>Driver Rehabilitation Specialist, Certified Driver Rehabilitation Specialist, Occupational Therapist with specialty certification in driving and Community Mobility.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

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**Continued**
How can the spectrum document assist in how to make recommendations for:

- A 75 y.o. male who had a stroke and wants to know if he can drive again
- The wife of a stroke survivor who has not driven often since retirement and a move to Florida
- A teen on the spectrum who wants to get their permit

**Spectrum of Driver Rehabilitation Program Services**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Type</th>
<th>Basic</th>
<th>Low Tech</th>
<th>High Tech</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provider</td>
<td>Senior Rehabilitation Specialist®, Certified Rehabilitation Specialist®, Occupational Therapist with Specialty Certification in Driving and Community Mobility®</td>
<td>Occupational Therapy Practitioner (Generalist or Driver Rehabilitation Specialist)</td>
<td>Certified Driver Rehabilitation Specialist®, Occupational Therapy Practitioner with Specialty Certification in Driving and Community Mobility®</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Driving School</td>
<td>Clinical IADL Evaluation</td>
<td>Driver Rehabilitation Programs (Includes Driver Evaluation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providers</td>
<td>Licensed Driving Instructors, certified by state licensing agency, Dr. Ed.D. in Education.</td>
<td>Health care professional (e.g., physician, social worker, neuropsychologist).</td>
<td>Other health professional degree with expertise in instrumental activities of daily living (IADL).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credentials</td>
<td>Program-specific credentials (e.g., AAA and AADAD)</td>
<td>Program-specific qualifications (e.g., AADAD and ADA).</td>
<td>Program-specific qualifications (e.g., AAA and AADAD).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Basic – Individuals with cognitive impairment; not equipment based
- Low tech – Need of modifications to vehicle
- High Tech – Specialty vehicles
Occupational Therapy Generalists & Driver Rehabilitation Specialists

Occupational Therapists with Expertise in Driver Rehabilitation

- Experts at evaluating fitness to drive
- Comprehensive driving evaluation
  - Clinical assessment in motor, sensory, perceptual and cognitive
  - On the road evaluation
- Vehicle adaptation, modification, & training
Driver Rehabilitation Specialists (DRS)

DRS signifies one who “plans, develops, coordinates and implements driver rehabilitation services for individuals with disabilities.”

- Requires additional training and education
- Typically does:
  - Driver Evaluations (Clinical and On-Road)
  - Assessment for equipment or vehicle modification
  - Provide documentation
  - Provide training
  - Inspect vehicles and modifications

Certified Driver Rehabilitation Specialist  CDRS®

A CDRS® is an experienced practitioner in the field of driver rehabilitation who, through successful completion of a formal certification examination, has proven their capacity to provide services within the full spectrum of driver rehabilitation services.

- Benchmark for quality in driver rehabilitation services
- Must pass a written exam
- Obligated to follow ADED’s Best Practice Guidelines and attests they will adhere to the ADED’s Code of Ethics
- Must maintain focused education to retain certification
- Only ADED can grant the CDRS® certification

ADED is the only organization solely dedicated to the professional educational needs of the driver rehabilitation specialist.
Role of the Occupational Therapy Generalist

Two primary objectives:

- Mobility: Determine what the client wants and needs
- Collaborate with team members to facilitate the best individualized plan for immediate needs and future goals

As occupational therapy practitioners, you are equipped to provide a range of strategies.

Step 1. Start the Driving Conversation
Step 2. Identify driving goals of the client

Step 3. Do a Comprehensive OT Evaluation with Driving Goals in Mind
Step 4: Intervention Strategies

Step 5. Recommendation Options
Lead discussion of driving with the medical team

Collaborate with DRS

- Build a relationship with your local DRS
- Learn more about specific DRS services
- Learn referral procedure
Referrals to Driver Rehabilitation Specialists

Pathway Between Generalist & Specialist

- Build a working relationship, so time and effort can be reduced
- DRS uses the results from occupational therapy sessions (i.e., found in discharge note) instead of retesting the client with the assessment tools
- If possible, when you know there will be a referral, use resources to assist the DRS in understanding the client’s functional level
When is the Right Time to Refer to a DRS?

How is the client doing with other complex IADLs? (cooking, medication management, finances)

- No apparent deficits - probably does not need a referral
- Needs a lot of assistance or supervision – probably not ready yet
- I have questions, not sure – have the conversation with the DRS or refer

Occupational Therapist Role: Explain Specialty Evaluation to the Client

- Describe the two major components of the evaluation (clinical and on-road)
- Introduce the specialist by name and program, generally describing his or her experience and expertise
- Inform the client about costs with a clear explanation of the important skills level of a medical professional with specialized training.
- Specify the information the DRS will require for the appointment (e.g., MD referral, current driver’s license, glasses)
DRS/CDRS Comprehensive Evaluation

- Clinical Assessment
  Visual Screening
  Perceptual –Coordination/Reaction Time
  Cognitive-Judgment and Decision Making
  Physical Abilities-ROM, Flexibility, Muscle Strength
  Rules of the Road
- Behind the Wheel Evaluation
  Ingress/Egress/Positioning/Equipment stowage
  Vehicle handling
  Traffic management
  Planning and Safety Awareness

BTW Evaluation

- Licensing agencies place a major focus on testing the operational and tactical driving skills
- Comprehensive Evaluation BTW are more comprehensive, focusing on operational, tactical and strategic behaviors
- Considerations/recommendations based on performance as well as disease process
- The outcome of behind the wheel assessments (pass/fail) is determined by the subjective judgment of the evaluator, not by a quantifiable driving score.
How to Find a Driver Rehab Specialist

- ADED Homepage [www.aded.net](http://www.aded.net)
  - Listing of current ADED members
  - Delineates programs (Basic, Low Tech, High Tech)
  - Allows search options for DRS versus CDRS

Timing is Everything!

Generalist can never start the conversation with the specialist too early.
Practitioners Must Understand

- Statutes regarding eligibility to drive
- Medical clearance to drive varies by state
- Occupational therapy practitioners are the resource for clients and their families

Requirements for Licensing

- Minimum Visual Acuity
- Horizontal Visual Fields
- Optional: Seizure & Reportable Medical Conditions
- Optional: Devices & Equipment
Licensing Agencies and Medical Conditions

Each state has a process for driver licensing related to medical conditions, the practitioner should:

- Determine if there is a Medical Advisory Board
- Become familiar with the process
- Become an advocate for the process

For best practice, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration recommends the presence of a Medical Advisory Board at the state level, including occupational therapists as members

Reference: Highway Safety Guideline #13, Older Drivers

References:

Questions?

- Elizabeth Green, OTR/L, CDRS, CAE
  - Elizabeth.green@driver-ed.org