

**DRIVING**  
**Professional Issues Forum**  
**26 July 2006**  
**WFOT 2006 Congress**

This forum was co- facilitated by Lynnette Kay and Jan Smead from Australia. Jan and Lynnette prepared the following notes as a summary of the forum.

Issues:

**1. Mental Health and Driving**

Issues:

- not too different from other medical problems
- lack of awareness of mental health issues and when to refer
- fluctuating nature of mental health issues
- temporary nature of illness and not driving whilst medical condition active
- paying for assessment, which is a cost to those already on benefits
- duty of care issues

Future Directions

- education of consumer carers and health professionals
- documentation of recommendations about licence and driving
- undergraduate information and training
- accessing and using driving schools
- links with treating teams
- pamphlets on driving issues, consistent information
- promoting image of driving assessments

**2. Networking**

Issues

Local, national and global mechanisms for  
Sharing information and resources  
Professional development  
Lobbying for change  
Problem solving

Future Directions

National network through WFOT website and interest group to download information  
Pre-congress forum in Chile  
National teleconferences to discuss key issues of national importance  
Open website available to members and non-members

**3. Challenges Facing Clinicians**

Issues

- Ethical dilemmas when clients pay and then fail
- OT registered in one state and not another
- Lack of medical support for OTs in rural areas
- VRST cumbersome to take out to homes

Future Directions

- Pay up front to clerical staff
- Qualifications to be recognized nationally

#### **4. Current practices and Setting Up Services**

Issues

- Variety of funding
- Different booking systems
- Workplace demands to shorten assessment
- Modification to driving Ax processes following training
- Variety of referral sources
- Significant costs for rural areas for travel

Future Directions

- National support for competencies
- Refresher courses

#### **5. What happens to the Unfit Drivers?**

Issues

- Conflict within clinicians re limiting independence
- Insight vs no insight
- Options and lack of options for transport
- Who to refer on to
- Role of GP and commitment to be involved

Future Directions

- Community education program
- Education for alternatives to driving
- Local and community organizations aware of options supporting and providing information

#### **6. Standardized off-road assessments**

Issues

- No battery of off-road screening tests

Future Directions

- More research around tests used
- OT tests with specific patient populations
- Tighter methodology for research

#### **7. Funding**

Issues

- Cost of Ax and inequity across centres

#### Future Directions

- Reclassify driving as IADL (Canada) to obtain Medicare funding
- Small tax on vehicle to fund Ax for functionally impaired drivers (Sweden)
- Medicare has Item # for Driving Ax
- Enhanced Primary Health Care (5 visits = \$100 pa rebate)
- Private provider number and divide Ax on both sections
- DVA funding for Driving Ax?

#### Action

- AAOT proposal for funding
- Bring stakeholders together

### **8. Standardized on-road assessments**

#### Issues

- Need more objective data to support decision making

#### Future Directions

- Develop standardized on-road Ax with minimum requirements
- Graded with cut-off criteria and a rating scale