



MINUTES OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR TRANSPORT'S HONORARY MEDICAL ADVISORY PANEL ON DRIVING AND DISORDERS OF THE NERVOUS SYSTEM

Meeting held on Thursday 4th March 2021 10:00am

Present:

Panel Members:

Dr Paul Cooper (Panel Chair)
Dr Emer McGilloway
Dr Ralph Gregory
Dr Jeremy Rees
Professor John Duncan
Mr Richard Nelson
Mr Robert Macfarlane
Mrs Natalie Tubeileh (Lay Member)

OBSERVERS:

Dr Sally Bell	Maritime and Coastguard Agency
Dr Colin Graham	Occupational Health Service, Northern Ireland
Dr Norman Delanty	National Programme Office for Traffic Medicine

EX-OFFICIO:

Dr Nick Jenkins	Senior DVLA Doctor
Dr John Evans	DVLA Doctor
Dr Iñigo Perez-Celorrio	DVLA Doctor
Dr Amanda Edgeworth	DVLA Doctor
Dr James Galletly	DVLA Doctor
Mrs Claire Hughes	Driver Licensing Policy
Mr Edward Foxell	Driver Licensing Policy
Miss Keya Nicholas	Driver Licensing Policy Lead
Mr Jason Donovan	Head of Driver Licensing Policy
Mrs Sharon Abbott	Drivers Medical Operational Delivery & Support
Mrs Suzanne Richards	Service Management
Miss Katy Richards	DVLA Panel Support
Mrs Siân Taylor	DVLA Note-taker/Panel Coordinator

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SECTION A: INTRODUCTION

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from:
Professor Peter J A Hutchinson
Mrs Jane Gregory
Professor Catrin Tudur-Smith
Dr Ewan Hutchinson
Dr Paul Reading

2. CHAIR'S REMARKS

The Chair welcomed panel members. The Chair advised attendees regarding the etiquette of digital meetings. Although they were not in attendance at the meeting, the Chair thanked Dr Reading and Professor Rustam Salam for their valuable contribution and service over the years to panel.

3. ACTIONS FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

DVLA provided an update on the status of the actions arising from the previous panel meeting.

SECTION B: TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

4. Brain Tumours

Panel discussed the ongoing work to redefine the medical standards for brain tumours, taking into account the new World Health Organisation (WHO) molecular classification.

i. Brain Tumour Standards

DVLA provided an update of the work that has been undertaken in relation to the proposed brain tumour standards. Dr Edgeworth confirmed that she had presented the draft standards to the DVLA doctor group, who were able to identify a number of points that would assist them with operational case management. Dr Edgeworth talked panel members through the proposal and sought clarification on some of the questions raised. Panel thanked Dr Edgeworth for her excellent work in developing the proposed standards and approved the draft document. DVLA confirmed that the next steps would be to engage with the appropriate stakeholders for their views.

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ii. **ALK Positive lung cancer and developments in molecular targeted treatments**

Panel discussed ALK Positive lung cancer, the developments in molecular targeted treatments and the driver licensing requirements when a patient has experienced a seizure. The DVLA advised that it has reviewed the brain tumour standards and will be engaging with the relevant stakeholders over the coming months for their views.

iii. **Arachnoid and colloid cysts**

The medical standards for arachnoid and colloid cysts have been reviewed to ensure that they align with the proposed brain tumour standards and are also evidence-based. The standards have been redrafted with helpful advice provided by Professor Cruickshank, Mr Macfarlane and Mr Nelson.

Panel discussed the proposal and approved the changes.

5. **Provoked Seizures – discussion regarding episodes of cardiovascular cause**

Provoked seizures has been a discussion point for the panel in previous meetings where a reduction in the time required off Group 2 driving for provoked seizures of non-central nervous (CNS) system origin was agreed.

Panel discussed the pathophysiology of episodes of cardiovascular origin, noting that true seizures might be provoked by anoxic brain insult, although in some cases the observed “seizure activity” reflected myoclonic jerks. Panel advised that it can be difficult for clinicians to differentiate between these events. It was agreed that those episodes reflecting true seizure activity should attract the same time off driving required following other provoked seizures of non-CNS origin (6 months off Group 1 driving, 2 years off Group 2 driving). Should the episodes be considered to represent myoclonic jerks then the medical standard appropriate to syncope of cardiovascular origin would apply.

Panel agreed that should it prove difficult to differentiate the pathology in such episodes then either a panel, or panel member opinion would be appropriate.

6. **Peripheral neuropathy**

The Panel Chair provided information about some of the difficulties that are experienced by clinicians when completing DVLA forms in cases where an individual has peripheral neuropathy.

Panel agreed that it may be more appropriate to review the topic following the forthcoming panel recruitment campaign, as new Panel members might have expertise in this area, the Chair

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thanked those existing members of Panel who offered to participate in future discussions. It was suggested that objective measurements, such as I-RODS score, may provide a useful basis for the development of standards.

7. Update from Policy

i. **Epilepsy Standards**

DVLA asked Panel to consider the period for which a driver who has experienced an epileptic seizure must remain seizure free before being re-licensed. This request was made following a coroner's report sent to the Panel Chair in October last year.

Panel noted that the time required off driving following a seizure reflected the risk of a further seizure occurring and considered that the risk of having another seizure falls to an acceptable level after 12 months. Panel also confirmed that this length of time is stipulated in legislation and do not believe that there is evidence for change. Panel agreed that most individuals with epilepsy are already under regular annual review, with those who have been seizure free for 12 months or more being devolved to primary care.

i. **Ongoing Seizure Activity Following Epilepsy Surgery (possible permitted seizures).**

Panel have previously discussed the medical standards for patients who had a history of other types of unprovoked seizure, but following surgery now only had residual seizures which did not impair consciousness or ability to act. The legislation presently does not allow such seizures to be considered permitted for licensing purposes because of the nature of the pre-surgical seizures.

DVLA will work with Professor Duncan and Dr Cooper to explore future legislative changes that might allow such seizures to be considered as permitted seizures.

ii. **Amyloid spells**

Panel were asked to consider where this medical condition should be represented in the medical standards.

It was agreed to defer the discussion until after the forthcoming panel recruitment process concludes, in which cerebrovascular expertise will be sought.

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iii. Cases for Discussion

One case was brought to panel for discussion. The issue of concussive provoked seizures was raised. Panel advised as to the requirement for a reliable witness account of such episodes before they might be considered to represent a concussive seizure.

SECTION C: ONGOING AGENDA ITEMS

10. Tests, Horizon Scanning, Research and Literature

DVLA reminded all panel members as part of the Terms and Conditions and of their obligation to update panel about any information/tests/research that could impact on standards or existing processes.

DVLA discussed two research articles with panel, and the possible implications for DVLA practices;

ⁱCognitive Impairment Is Best Predictor of Poor Driving by Patients

ⁱⁱDriving in Parkinson's disease; a retrospective study of driving and mobility assessments.

Panel advised that Parkinson's Disease is assuming increasing significance with regard to patients' ability to drive and maintain their independence. The articles will also be discussed in the Psychiatry panel.

Panel advised that no changes in current DVLA practice was required on the basis of these two articles.

11. AOB

There was no AOB.

12. Date and Time of next Meeting

Thursday 30th September 2021

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Original draft minutes prepared by:

**Sian Taylor
Note Taker
Date: 5th March 2021**

Final minutes signed off by:

**Dr P Cooper
Panel Chair
Date: 6th April 2021**

**THE DVLA WILL CONSIDER THE ADVICE PROVIDED BY THE PANEL
AND NO CHANGES TO STANDARDS WILL TAKE EFFECT UNTIL THE
IMPACT ON INDIVIDUALS AND ROAD SAFETY IS FULLY ASSESSED.**

ⁱ DECEMBER 8, 2020 by Joana Carvalho, PHD Parkinsons News Today

ⁱⁱ By Katherine Lloyd¹, Daisy Gaunt¹, Victoria Haunton², Rob Skelly³, Helen Mann⁴, Yoav Ben-Shlomo¹, Emily J. Henderson¹

1. Population Health Sciences, University of Bristol, Bristol, UK
2. Department of Cardiovascular Sciences, University of Leicester, Leicester, UK
3. Department of Medicine for the Elderly, University Hospitals of Derby and Burton, Derby, UK
4. Driving and Mobility Centre (West of England), The Vassal Centre, Bristol, UK

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