



MINUTES OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR TRANSPORT'S HONORARY MEDICAL ADVISORY PANEL ON DRIVING AND DISORDERS OF THE CARDIOVASCULAR SYSTEM Meeting held on Thursday 6th March 2025

Present:

Panel Members:

Dr Kim Rajappan (Chair)	Consultant Cardiologist
Dr Shahid Aziz	Consultant Cardiologist
Dr Richard Bogle	Consultant Cardiologist
Dr Nigel Brown	Consultant Cardiologist
Dr Francis Murgatroyd	Consultant Cardiologist
Dr Robert Anthony Greenbaum	Consultant Cardiologist
Dr Sern Lim	Consultant Cardiologist
Mr Amar Vara	Lay Member

Observers:

Dr Mark Cairns	Civil Aviation Authority
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EX-OFFICIO:

Dr Nick Jenkins	Senior DVLA Doctor
Dr Aditi Kumar	Deputy Senior DVLA Doctor
Dr Aaron Chan	DVLA Doctor
Dr Agnieszka Siekacz	DVLA Doctor
Leigh Andrew Bromfield	Driver Licensing Policy Lead
Emma Lewis	Driver Licensing Policy
Dewi Richards	Driver Licensing Policy
Karen Hughes	Driver Licensing Policy
Danielle Theophilus	Service Management
Phil Hickmott	Senior Lead, Drivers Medical Business Support and Change
Emma Nelson-Jones	Doctors Casework Management and Support
Siân Taylor	DVLA Panel Coordinator/PA to the Senior DVLA Doctor

SECTION A: INTRODUCTION

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from:

Mrs Linda Samuels	Lay member
Dr Sue Stannard	Chief Medical Advisor, Maritime and Coastguard Agency
Clare Forshaw	Principal Strategy Implementation Manager

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2. CHAIR'S REMARKS

The Panel Chair welcomed all attendees.

Panel Chair shared insights from the Panel Chairs' meeting which was held in November 2024. The Chair highlighted ongoing DVLA work.

The Panel Chair reported a positive meeting held with the charity "Aortic Dissection Awareness" in December 2024.

Aortic aneurysm:

- The Panel Chair provided clarification regarding the agreed Group 2 threshold aortic diameters in the forthcoming change to the medical standard which is awaiting operationalisation.
- Gender differentials in the acceptable diameters of abdominal aortic aneurysms had been proposed by the Vascular Society and is currently being considered by DVLA.

3. ACTIONS/MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

i. Proposed new standard for Transient Loss of Consciousness (TLoC)

The Panel Chair provided an update on the proposed new standard for TLoC, regarding Group 2 standard for isolated episode of unknown cause. In the absence of sufficient evidence to support an increase in the current period required off Group 2 driving following such an episode, it is proposed that this period remain at 12 months.

SECTION B: TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

4. Functional Testing Frequency

Dr Kumar presented a review of exercise tolerance test (ETT) for cardiac functional assessment in Group 2 license holders with history of ischaemic heart disease and/or peripheral vascular disease. The data analysis on the sample indicated common characteristics in a subgroup which could potentially be identified as requiring less frequent ETT as part of cardiac functional assessment.

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Hence the proposal was put forward to panel whether consideration could be given to increase the interval between tests from three to five years for this low-risk subgroup.

The panel congratulated Dr Kumar on the review as being very thorough and interesting.

The proposal was discussed, the general idea of increasing the interval from 3 to 5 years for specific drivers was considered, with some members expressing concerns about the potential risks of extending the interval without analysing a bigger sample. It was suggested that further statistical analysis and possibly a larger sample size review might be needed.

Dr Kumar asked for panel advice if there were any published literature relevant to ETT and its predictability of sudden disabling cardiac events over a period of time. This would help to explore whether a time period of 5 years vs 3 years was acceptable for repeating ETT for Group 2 licence assessment in individuals with ischaemic heart disease and/or peripheral vascular disease.

It was agreed that a subgroup would be formed to further investigate the proposal, including a potential systematic review of the literature and additional data collection to support any changes to the current standards and offers were made by several panel members to be part of that subgroup.

5. Fascicular heart blocks and risk of adverse cardiovascular outcomes

Dr Bogle presented a published study regarding fascicular heart block on ECG¹. Panel discussed the implications of the study findings on driver licensing and concluded that the situation of left anterior fascicular block (LAFB) or left posterior fascicular block (LPFB) combined with Right Bundle Branch Block (RBBB) and first-degree atrioventricular block in some individuals is associated with a risk of sudden disablement that would preclude Group 2 licensing until treated with a pacemaker.

Panel advised that the published standards should include this requirement and emphasised the need for accurate and clear terminology.

6. Arrhythmogenic right ventricular cardiomyopathy

The Panel Chair provided a presentation and proposed amendments to the medical standard for arrhythmogenic right ventricular cardiomyopathy. The panel discussed the proposals including:

- a proposed change in nomenclature

¹ "Fascicular heart blocks and risk of adverse cardiovascular outcomes: Results from a large Primary Care population". Nyholm et al. Heart Rhythm 2022; 19 252-259, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.hrthm.2021.09.041>

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- amended Group 1 standards to recognise the risk that may exist, even when the condition is asymptomatic
- the possible inclusion of specific named conditions in the standard

Further work will be undertaken with a view to further consideration by panel.

7. Update from other Panels

Panel's attention was directed to the minutes of the Autumn 2024 meetings and the agendas of the Spring 2025 meetings of all advisory panels.

SECTION C: ONGOING AGENDA ITEMS

8. Tests, horizon scanning, research, and literature

DVLA reminded all panel members as part of the terms and conditions of the requirement to update panel about any information/tests/research that could impact on standards or existing processes.

It was acknowledged that future work will be required to address the issue of medical standards for fitness to drive and autonomous vehicles.

The Panel Chair advised that a subgroup would further discuss the issue of resting invasive pressure wire measurements of ischaemia that was initially discussed at the Autumn 2024 meeting.

Wearable cardioverter defibrillator (WCD): Dr Kumar enquired about the current clinical practice regarding wearable cardioverter defibrillators (Life Vest).

Panel advised that consideration of guidance in Assessing Fitness to Drive was required and will be discussed at a future meeting.

9. AOB

Recruitment Update

Driver licensing policy provided an update on the recruitment of new expert members and a lay member for the cardiology panel pending ministerial approval.

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Driver licensing policy mentioned that a new round of recruitment is planned for spring/summer 2025 and asked panel if any further specialist members were required.

The panel discussed the need for additional specialisms, including Inherited Cardiovascular Conditions (ICC) experts, Vascular and Cardiothoracic surgeons, and Adult Congenital Heart Disease (ACHD) specialists, ideally with an interest in pulmonary hypertension.

10. Date and time of next meeting

Thursday 9th October 2025

Original draft minutes prepared by:

Sian Taylor
Note Taker
Date: 06/03/25

Final minutes signed off by:

Dr Kim Rajappan
Chairperson
Date: 27/03/25

**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.**

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