Panel 4
Enhancing Driving Performance

Rehabilitating Drivers

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Concerns about Driving:

- Are not about Age, they are **about Function**
- Require assessing a minimum skill set
- Challenge one’s role as “driver”
- Challenge critical roles involving others
  - Transporting grandchildren and peers

- **Require an evaluation option that looks at that driver as an individual**
  - **Potential to over or under restrict**
Concerns about Driving:

• What *can I do?*
Driving Rehabilitation

- Originated to address driving for persons with disabilities
- Evolving to address the needs of seniors and persons with medical conditions

Franklin D. Roosevelt used Hand Controls

Elin Schold Davis  www.aota.org/olderdriver
Purpose for Evaluation & Tx

Readiness & the potential to drive safely?

- **Novice driver …at any age!**
- **Education, self-awareness guiding self-limiting behaviors**
- **Resume driving following a medical event**
- **Restrictions**
- **Adaptive equipment and vehicle modification**
- **Lessons and training**

Progressive decline, **when to stop?**

- **Warning signs, screening, evaluation**
- **Caregiver Training**
- **Transitioning and guidance toward appropriate transit options**
Who Administers a Driving Evaluation?

- **DMV / licensing authority**
  - Knowledge and basic vehicle control
  - Structured, usually pass/fail and binding
- **Physician**
  - Clinical
  - Recommendation to the licensing authority
- **Driving Schools**
  - Rules and vehicle control on the road
- **Driver Rehabilitation Specialist**
  - Comprehensive Driving Evaluation:
    - Clinical assessment of sub-skills
    - Performance in context - On the Road
The Comprehensive Driving Evaluation Includes:

- Client History
  - Diagnoses
    - Secondary Diagnosis
  - Medications
  - Driving Experience
  - Type of Vehicle
  - Goals
Physical Assessment

- UE & LE Strength and Range of Motion
- Reach
- Diagnosis related considerations such as pain or arthritis
Physical Assessment

• Ability to get in and out of the Vehicle
Vision and Perception

- Acuity
- Contrast Sensitivity
- Peripheral vision
Cognition

- Attention and Concentration
- Direction Following
- Judgment
- Insight
- Memory, Planning
- Decision making and Organization
Behind the Wheel Assessment

- Vehicle entry & exit
- Operates controls
- Maneuvers, turns, backing and parking (& Highway)
- Response speed
- Judgment & decision making
- Safety & rules of the road
Several Possible Interventions

• Those who can resume or continue...
  – Remediate sub-skills
    • Referral to clinical setting to improve strength, stamina, attention, etc.
  – Build awareness
  – Develop compensation strategies
  – Prescribe and train in the use of adaptive equipment or modifications

A few examples
Steering, acceleration & braking

- Hand controls
- Extended foot pedals

Photos courtesy of The National Mobility Equipment Dealers Association (NMEDA)
Several Possible Interventions

• Those who cannot...
  – Mobility Counseling
    • Engage family / support system
  – Transition to safe alternatives
    • Possible referral
  – Cessation strategies (Dementia)
  – Support and educate client and family
A Spectrum

Act to Maximize → Act to Promote Driving Retirement

Safe Drivers

Fully Able to Drive

Specific Functional Impairments

Serious Impairment of Mobility, Vision or Cognition

Unsafe Drivers

Unable to Continue Driving

From The Drivewell Speaker’s Toolkit www.asaging.org/drivewell
Thank you!

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AOTA Older Driver Initiative

- To increase the capacity to address driving and community mobility
  - Program development
  - Define emerging practice domains
- To advocate for the mobility needs of persons aging with medical conditions
- To build networks and community collaborations
  - CarFit
www.Car-Fit.org

- Safe, positive, applicable education about person-vehicle fit
- Fosters a collaboration:
  - Occupational therapy and Rehab professionals
  - Physicians / providers
  - Agencies serving seniors
  - Local programs, community providers, senior residences, faith communities, etc

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