

# Your health and driving: Sláinte agus Tiomáint Medical Fitness to Drive Guidelines 2014 (Group 1 and Group 2)

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## **1. What is Sláinte agus Tiomáint Medical Fitness to Drive Guidelines 2014 (Group 1 and Group 2)?**

These are national guidelines that help doctors and other healthcare professional assess the medical fitness to drive of their patients. Group 1 standards were first published in the present format in 2013 and have been updated in this latest edition which now also contains the standards for Group 2 drivers. This means that the 2010 RSA document *Medical Aspects of Driver Licensing* is no longer the reference for the assessment of either Group 1 or Group 2 drivers. All doctors and other professionals should keep informed of any changes in health care and health technology that may affect their assessment of drivers and in an effort to assist with this the RSA plan to update and renew these Guidelines on an annual basis.

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## **2. Why are the medical fitness to drive guidelines important?**

For most people, being able to drive a motor vehicle is a very important part of their daily life for maintaining social contact, for getting to and from work, and for assessing their everyday needs such as food and services. Driving can also be essential to employment. But with the benefits of being able to drive also come certain responsibilities and one of these responsibilities is to make sure you are well enough to drive safely. Certain health conditions can affect your ability to drive safely, either in the short term or more permanently. These guidelines help doctors and other medical professionals keep you

mobile where possible but where there is a risk to you or other road users it helps identify this risk.

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## **3. Your health and your responsibilities as a driver are:**

- ✓ To report to the National Driver Licence Service (NDLS) and their insurance provider any long-term or permanent injury or illness that may affect their ability to drive safely: if holding a licence from an EU country other than Ireland, or a recognised country for licence exchange, and developing a condition which could affect safe driving, the driver must contact the NDLS to arrange for an exchange of their licence.
  - ✓ To respond truthfully to questions from the health professional regarding their health status and the likely impact on their driving ability.
  - ✓ To adhere to prescribed medical treatment and monitor and manage their condition(s) and any adaptations with ongoing consideration of their fitness to drive.
  - ✓ To comply with requirements of their licence as appropriate, including periodic medical reviews.
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## **4. How can I access the Guidelines?**

*Sláinte agus Tiomáint* Medical Fitness to Drive Guidelines 2014 (Group 1 and Group 2) are available to view or download at [www.ndls.ie](http://www.ndls.ie) or [www.rsa.ie](http://www.rsa.ie).

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## **5. Who makes the rules about whether you are fit to drive?**

The rules about health and driving are developed by experts and include the standards

required under EU Directive/Regulations. The publication of such standards by the Road Safety Authority and the adoption of EU law into Irish legislation provide the overriding legal basis for driver medical fitness in Ireland.

**Your doctor does not make the rules but provides advice about how your particular health condition might affect your ability to drive safely and how it might be managed.**

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## 6. Who uses the Guidelines?

Doctors and health professionals who are involved in assessing fitness to drive and drivers or family members with medical conditions may also wish to review the Guide which is available universally at [www.rsa.ie](http://www.rsa.ie) or at [www.ndls.ie](http://www.ndls.ie)

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## 7. How will the Guidelines be used?

- ✓ To assist doctors assess the medical fitness to drive of their patients in a consistent manner, based on current medical evidence and international practice.
  - ✓ To aid doctors to complete the drivers D501 Medical Report and or Optometrists to complete the D502 Eyesight Report form for the NDLS.
  - ✓ To promote management and planning for mobility among drivers with progressive health conditions.
  - ✓ Provide information on decisions that will inform shorter licensed periods of 1-3 years.
  - ✓ Promote legal responsibility of drivers to report certain medical conditions to the National Driver Licensing Service (NDLS).
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## 8. How will your doctor assess your medical fitness to drive?

When assessing your ability to drive safely for licence application or renewal, your doctor will consider your physical and psychological health and will complete a D501 Medical Report form for you to present to the NDLS with your other documentation including the [self declaration](#) made on your complete D401 application/renewal form.

Where a relevant condition emerges mid licence your doctor will complete the D501 Medical Report which you should post with accompanying [self declaration](#) made on a D401 Application/Renewal form to the Road Safety Authority (see Q13 below or click here for further details).

If you are making a driving application or renewing your licence or where your doctor provides you with a completed D501 to support your [self declaration](#) of a relevant medical condition mid licence. He or she will refer to guidelines of medical standards Sláinte agus Tiomáint which is used by all doctors throughout Ireland and which describes specific requirements for various diseases and conditions. You can view these standards on the internet on [www.ndls.ie](http://www.ndls.ie) or [www.rsa.ie](http://www.rsa.ie). Sometimes it can be difficult to make an assessment and your treating doctor may refer you for a consultant opinion, and where appropriate and available, for a practical driver assessment.

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## 9. Categories of Vehicles

Vehicles are divided into two groups, however, for the purpose of assessing medical fitness of drivers the groups are based on the mental and physical demands placed on the driver of the vehicle and on the potential danger in the event of loss of control by the driver. The grouping of vehicle categories for driver fitness purpose is:-

**Group 1 categories** AM, A1, A2, A, B, BE, or W i.e. motorcycles, cars and tractors (with or without trailer)

**Group 2 categories** C1, C, C1E, CE, D1, D, D1E, DE i.e. trucks and buses (without trailer)

The vehicles in Group 2 are regarded as higher-risk vehicles which require a higher standard of physical and mental fitness on the part of the driver. Group 2 standards are minimum standards and do not preclude employers setting higher standards in terms of the demands of the driving tasks encountered in the course of employment.

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## 10. What medical conditions require declaration on your D401 application/renewal form under the Section 5 Health and Fitness?

This is required at 1) application or 2) renewal or 3) mid licence where a listed medical condition has emerged.

A range of medical conditions, as well as treatments, may affect your driving ability

- ✓ Diabetes treated by insulin and or sulphonylurea tablets (your doctor can advise whether you are on these or not) no need to tell us if managed by other tablets and or diet.
- ✓ Epilepsy.
- ✓ Stroke or TIAs (minor strokes) with any associated symptoms lasting longer than one month.
- ✓ Fits or blackouts.
- ✓ Any type of brain surgery, brain abscess or severe head Injury involving in-patient treatment or brain tumour or spinal injury or spinal tumour.
- ✓ An implanted cardiac pacemaker.
- ✓ An implanted cardiac defibrillator (ICD).
- ✓ Repeated attacks of sudden disabling dizziness.
- ✓ Any other chronic neurological condition such as multiple sclerosis, motor neurone disease, Parkinson disease and Huntington's disease.
- ✓ A serious problem with memory or periods of confusion.

- ✓ Persistent alcohol misuse or dependency.
- ✓ Persistent drug misuse or dependency.
- ✓ Serious psychiatric illness or mental health problems.
- ✓ Parkinson's disease.
- ✓ Sleep Apnoea syndrome.
- ✓ Narcolepsy.
- ✓ Any condition affecting the drivers peripheral vision.
- ✓ Total loss of sight in one eye.
- ✓ Any condition affecting both eyes or the remaining eye if driver only has one eye (not including colour blindness or short or long sight).
- ✓ A serious hearing deficiency.
- ✓ Any persisting problem with arm(s) or leg(s) which needs driving to be restricted to certain types of vehicle or those with adapted controls.
- ✓ Adaption of the driver's vehicle because of a physical disability to enable you to drive.
- ✓ Severe learning disability.

**This list is not exhaustive**  
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## 11. When will group 1 (car or motorcycle) licensed drivers be medically assessed?

### A. Requirements to submit an Eyesight Report form (D502) to NDLS

When you apply for a learner permit to drive a car and motorcycle licences you must submit an Eyesight Report form (D502). A further Eyesight Report (D502) is also required if in the past you answered 'Yes' to the question do you wear glasses or lenses and are now answering 'No' (due to laser or cataract surgery) you must provide an Eyesight Report form (D502) with your application. An Eyesight Report form is also needed in certain cases when exchanging a licence from another country outside of the EU. A driving licence Eyesight Report form (D502) is not generally required where a Medical Report D501 is provided unless indicated by the doctor.

## **B. Requirements to submit a Medical Fitness Report form to NDLS at application or renewal of driver licence**

Any driver who answers “yes” to any question under Health and Fitness in Part 5 of the application form as well as every driver over the age of 70 applying for or renewing a driving licence must provide a Medical Report (D501) completed by their doctor.

## **C. Requirements to submit a Medical Fitness Report Form (D501) to NDLS while holding a valid licence**

You are in some cases required to self declare a medical condition that emerges mid licence by [contacting the NDLS directly](#). If your doctor has not advised you to contact the NDLS about your medical condition, we advise that you consult with your doctor beforehand and where the declaration is necessary you should ask them to complete a Medical Report (D501) to accompany this [self declaration](#). This is required by the NDLS to assess if there should be a change to your licence.

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## **12. When will group 2 (bus or truck) licenced drivers be medically assessed?**

### **A. Requirement to submit an Eyesight Report form (D502) to NDLS**

When you apply for a learner permit to drive a car and motorcycle licences you must submit an Eyesight Report form (D502). A further Eyesight Report (D502) is also required by NDLS if in the past you answered ‘Yes’ to the question do you wear glasses or lenses and are now answering ‘No’ (due to laser or cataract surgery) you must provide an Eyesight Report form (D502) with your application. An Eyesight Report D502 is also needed in certain cases when exchanging a licence from another country outside of the EU. A driving licence Eyesight Report form (D502) is not generally

required where a Medical Report (D501) is provided unless indicated by the doctor.

## **B. Requirements to submit a Medical Fitness Report Form to NDLS at application or renewal of driver licence**

Whether you are making a Group 2 application for a learner permit or making an application for your first full licence or a renewal of your licence your Driving Licence Application Form (D401) must be accompanied by a Medical Report (D501) completed by your doctor.

## **C. Requirement to submit a Medical Fitness Report Form (D501) to NDLS while holding a valid licence**

You may also [self declare a medical condition](#) that emerges mid licence by contacting the NDLS directly. If your doctor has not advised you to contact the NDLS about your medical condition, we advise that you consult with your doctor beforehand and ask them to complete a Medical Report (D501) to accompany the [self declaration](#). This is required by the NDLS to assess if there should be a change to your licence.

*Driving licence Medical Report form (D501), Eyesight Report form (D502) and D401 Driver Licence application and renewal form can be downloaded from <http://www.ndls.ie/> or you can get copies in your nearest NDLS centre.*

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## **13. How to contact NDLS to make a self declaration**

To make a [self declaration you should answer yes” to the relevant question\(s\) under Health and Fitness in part 5 of the D401 licence application form](#) and attach a D501 Medical Report form completed by your doctor. This should be done when making either a declaration at application or renewal stage or mid licence when suffering from an emerging

condition. Declarations should be sent to:

**Road Safety Authority  
Driver Testing  
Medical Fitness to Drive  
Moy Valley Business Park  
Primrose Hill  
Ballina  
Co. Mayo  
Ireland**

For further information you can contact us by email: [medicalfitness@rsa.ie](mailto:medicalfitness@rsa.ie)

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#### **14. Will your doctor notify the NDLS if you are not well enough to drive?**

As the relationship between you and your doctor is confidential, your doctor will not normally communicate directly with the NDLS. He or she will provide you with advice about your ability to drive safely as well as completing a D501 Medical Report form to take to the NDLS. Doctors also have an obligation to public safety so your doctor may notify the NDLS directly if he or she feels your condition poses a significant threat to public safety, and there is evidence that you are continuing to drive despite professional advice to stop driving.

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#### **15. What happens if you don't follow your doctor's advice?**

If you continue to drive despite your doctor's advice and you do not report your condition to the NDLS, you are not fulfilling your legal responsibility. If you are involved in a crash under these circumstances and it is found that your health condition was a contributing factor, you may be prosecuted and your insurance may not be valid.

If your doctor is aware that you are continuing to drive and feels that your driving is a serious risk to you and other road users, he or she may feel obliged to notify the NDLS directly.

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#### **16. Can I appeal a licensing decision?**

Yes, the NDLS/Driving Licence Authority will inform drivers of the appeals process when informing them of the licensing decision. For further information contact us:

**Road Safety Authority  
Driver Testing  
Medical Fitness to Drive  
Moy Valley Business Park  
Primrose Hill  
Ballina  
Co. Mayo  
Ireland**

Email: [medicalfitness@rsa.ie](mailto:medicalfitness@rsa.ie)

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#### **17. Forms referred to in this leaflet are hyperlinked below:**

[D501 Medical Report Form](#)

[D502 Eyesight Report Form](#)

[D401 Driver Licence Application/Renewal Form](#) (Section 5 Health and Fitness)