

DRIVER REHAB PROGRAM

The Driver Rehab Centre offers an all-inclusive program consisting of in-clinic assessments, on-road assessments, on-road treatment rehab, vehicle assessments (car, truck and van), vehicle modification assessments and commercial driver assessment for clients with all types of disabilities, from BC, Western Canada and the North West USA. The Centre is recognized by the Superintendent of Motor Vehicles as an Assessment and Training Centre for clients with disabilities. Physicians often rely on the program to provide more information when having to provide an opinion on a client's fitness to drive. It is in these cases that the Driver Rehab Centre is able to provide physicians with objective information, which they can use to provide an informed opinion. We have a qualified staff and experienced staff, consisting of a Certified Driver Rehab Specialist (CDRS), several licensed driving instructors (with specialized training regarding clients with disabilities), an administrative clerk, as well as access to occupational therapy, physical therapy and psychological services. The Driver Rehab Centre operates on a fee for service basis. A doctor's referral is required to access the program.

Driver Rehab Program Descriptions

Physical Driving Assessment: Includes vision screening for acuity near and far, primary color vision, lateral and vertical Phoria, depth perception, fusion and contrast sensitivity. Night vision, glare vision and glare recovery are also screened for potential concerns. The client undergoes testing for functional range of motion, functional strength, motor coordination, standing and sitting balance, and reaction time. A driving simulator is used to assess equipment needs. Knowledge of road rules, driver perception, processing speed and roadway signage is also determined. Typical assessment length is 2.5 hours + report.

Cognitive Driving Assessment: Includes all components of the physical assessment (above) together with testing of visual perception, cognition, central vision, processing speed, attention, divided attention and selective attention. In addition, behavior, initiation and impulsivity are also considered. Typical assessment length is 3.5 hours + report.

Driver Rehab On-Road Assessment: The client is assessed behind the wheel of a dual controlled vehicle (annually government inspected) and accompanied by a certified driving instructor and certified driver rehab specialist. The assessment involves travel on a standardized route, which includes a large variety of driving environments. The route may be adapted and/or individualized based on client factors (fatigue, distractibility, inexperience and equipment). On-Road assessment length is 2.0 hours.

Rehab Driver Training: The centre also provides specialized driving instruction to clients with disabilities who require individualized remedial driver training due to physical, cognitive, behavioral or emotional factors. Clients may receive instruction regarding compensatory strategies and /or use of modified driving controls for primary (steering, accelerator and braking) and secondary (signals, mirrors, lights, highbeams, horn, wipers etc) functions. The program offers two dual controlled sedans modified with different driving equipment and a full sized dual controlled (wheelchair/scooter) accessible van that is equipped with manual and electronic controls for primary and secondary functions. These vehicles and modifications are government inspected and serviced on a regular basis or as specified by the manufacture. Our Insurance liability standard through Vancouver Coastal Health is five million dollars. Each lesson is usually 2.0 hours.

ICBC Road Test: This type of evaluation involves a “points based” test that scores the individual (pass/fail) on specific driving maneuvers and errors. The ICBC road test is standardized and there is no flexibility to adapt to client factors. Often needs to be completed after the on-road assessment and/or rehab driver training.

Vehicle Assessment: This assessment provides an individual (or funding agency) with an independent recommendation for the suitability of her/his current vehicle or possibly recommending a different type or model of vehicle. The assessment includes evaluation regarding the size of the individual and/or mobility device, adaptive driving equipment, access path to the drivers seat, wheelchair, walker and/or scooter storage, considering the client as a passenger or driver, size of his/her family, where will the vehicle be parked (height and width clearances) & driven. Typical assessment length is 2.0 hours + research and report.

Vehicle Modification Assessment: This assessment typically occurs after a client has finished a driving assessment and has met licensing requirements, but may also be applicable in cases where the person will never be a driver. In some situations a vehicle modification assessment is needed to recommend a vehicle for attendant transportation only. In other cases this service is provided prior to a driving assessment, to facilitate transportation by caregivers during rehabilitation or until the person is suitable for a driving assessment.

The assessment includes analysis of multiple factors including the weight and height of the individual, as well as the weight and dimensions of the person’s wheelchair. Weight and size information is essential in determining a client’s ability to enter and exit a motor vehicle (most often a mini-van or full-size van), as these factors have implications for recommending specific modifications (e.g. raised roof, lowered floor, lift, ramp, raised doors, side vs. rear entry). The access path to the driver’s seat from inside the van must be considered, as well as whether the wheelchair has been crash tested to meet WC 19 crash test standards. The CDRS analyzes how the client enters the van and how their wheelchair will be secured while the van is in motion. The evaluation process also determines a client’s appropriate driving position including eyellipse (this ensures the client has full field of view of both outside and inside the vehicle).

In addition, the Vehicle Modification Assessment also considers factors such as parking (garage or outside) as the height and space requirements around the vehicle often determine where the vehicle can be parked (which can significantly impact on independent usage of the vehicle). Vehicle specifications and modifications must also be determined based on client needs and functional ability; sometimes this includes the ability of the client to use either a manual or a power wheelchair. Information regarding where the individual lives (climate, terrain, types of roads traveled on) must also be considered. The suitability of primary and secondary controls must be determined for the specific vehicle. Advice is also provided to assist the client with resources, such as where to find certified mobility vendors that meet the National Mobility Equipment Dealers Association (NMEDA) and Transport Canada guidelines for installation and warranty. Typical assessment length is 2.0 hours + research and report.