

# Resource Document on the Role of Psychiatrists in Assessing Driving Ability

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–*APA Operations Manual*.

### Prepared by the Council on Geriatric Psychiatry

Changes that occur with aging may be associated with a person’s ability to drive safely. Physical and mental health conditions, as well as the medications used as treatment, may also impact a person’s driving skills. Psychiatrists may have a role in advising patients, caregivers, and family members about the potential impact that psychiatric illness symptoms and/or their treatments may have on driving ability. Like all physicians, psychiatrists can suggest a formal driving evaluation supervised by a qualified professional when driving safety concerns exist. Psychiatrists should be prepared to advise patients and their caregivers on options for alternatives to driving. Psychiatrists should be familiar with and follow the laws in their state regarding reporting their patients’ impaired driving ability to the appropriate authority. Many resources are available to inform clinicians on driving safety and to share with patients and their caregivers.

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