Update: Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA)

Everything You’ve Ever Wanted to Know and More

Mid-Atlantic Equipment Management Association
Baltimore, MD
March 13, 2013

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Agenda

- Overview of the Commercial Motor Carrier Industry and FMCSA Medical Programs
- National Registry of Certified Medical Examiners
- Medical Exemptions and Variances
- OSA
- Online tools
Overview of the Commercial Motor Carrier Industry and FMCSA Medical Programs
Truck and Bus Driver Statistics

- 7 million active interstate drivers
- Approx. 535,000 active interstate companies (2011)
U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT)
Interstate Traffic Crash Crash Statistics 2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Persons</th>
<th>Large Truck Crashes</th>
<th>Bus Crashes</th>
<th>Large Truck and Bus Crashes</th>
<th>All Vehicle Crashes</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fatalities</td>
<td>3,675</td>
<td>276</td>
<td>3,944</td>
<td>32,885</td>
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<tr>
<td>Injuries</td>
<td>80,000</td>
<td>27,000</td>
<td>106,000</td>
<td>2,239,000</td>
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Medical Program Activities

- Rulemaking/Guidance Development
- Research
  - Medical Review Board
  - Medical Expert Panels
  - Evidence Reports
- Compliance Assistance
- Medical Exemptions/Variances
  - Vision, Diabetes, Hearing, Seizure
  - Skill Performance Evaluation (SPE)
  - Agency has requested public comment on exemption applications for seizure conditions and hearing loss
Purpose of the Medical Certification Examination

“The purpose of this examination is to determine a driver's physical qualification to operate a commercial motor vehicle (CMV) in interstate commerce according to the requirements in 49 CFR 391.41-49.” *

* Medical Examination Report
Who are the Medical Examiners (MEs)?

- Medical examiners are:
  - Medical professionals who make medical determinations based on FMCSA regulations and guidance
  - Licensed, certified, and/or registered in their State

- Includes, but not limited to:
  - Doctors of Medicine and Osteopathy
  - Physician Assistants
  - Advanced Practice Nurses
  - Chiropractors
Medical Examiner Responsibilities

- Knowledgeable about:
  - Physical and mental demands of CMV driver job duties
  - FMCSA regulations, including guidance

- Use of medical protocols

- Make medical determinations based on FMCSA regulations and advisory criteria
National Registry of Certified Medical Examiners
National Registry Background

- New regulation - Published April 20, 2012
- Requires medical examiners:
  - Complete training
  - Pass a test
  - Periodic training and testing
  - Maintain licensure
- Compliance Date – May 21, 2014
  - All MEs must be listed on the National Registry
  - All CMV drivers must use a ME on the National Registry
  - Medical certificates issued prior to May 21, 2014 are valid until the expiration date
Medical Exemptions and Variances
Medical Exemptions and Variances

- For interstate drivers; intrastate drivers must contact their State Driver’s Licensing Agency (SDLAs)

- Application for exemption to the regulation
  - 49 CFR 381 Exemptions

- Application for a Skill Performance Evaluation (SPE)
  - 49 CFR 391.49(b)(i)(ii) Alternative physical qualification, standards for the loss or impairment of limbs
49 CFR 381.300(a) provides:

- Regulatory relief for up to 2 years
  - Diabetes, Vision, Hearing, Seizure
- May be renewed
- May be revoked
- Terms and conditions:
  - Achieves a level of safety that is equivalent to, or greater than the level that would be achieved absent such exemption.
Federal Diabetes Exemption Program

- Exemptions for drivers who have insulin-dependent diabetes mellitus
- Drivers submit application
  - Medical information showing their diabetes is under control
- To maintain exemption, drivers submit quarterly monitoring reports
- Diabetes exemption application can be found at:
  https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/rules-regulations/topics/medical/exemptions.htm or call (703) 448-3094
Federal Vision Exemption Program

- One eye does not meet the minimum vision requirements
- Better eye must meet the minimum vision standard
- Drivers submit application
  - Medical information showing driver is able to meet all other physical requirements
  - Experience driving with vision deficiency
  - Crash/violation history
  - Vision exemption application can be found at
    https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/rules-regulations/topics/medical/exemptions.htm
    or call (703) 448-3094
Federal Hearing Exemption Program

- Driver must perceive forced whisper in better ear at not less than 5 feet with or without hearing aid or no hearing loss in better in greater than 40 decibels at 500, 1,000 and 2,000 Hz with or without hearing aid

- Driver may apply for an exemption by contacting the Medical Programs Division at FMCSA (202) 366-4001
Federal Seizure Exemption Program

- Disqualified from operating in interstate commerce
- 49 CFR 391.41(b)(8)
- May be considered for exemption based on number of years:
  - Since last seizure, stable on anti-seizure medication, medical history
- Exemption determinations are based on a case-by-case review
- Driver may apply for an exemption by contacting the Medical Programs Division at FMCSA (202) 366-4001
Statistics

- Diabetes Exemptions
  - Currently 1655 exemptions

- Vision Exemptions
  - Currently 1967 exemptions

- Hearing Exemptions
  - Currently 40 exemptions

- Seizure Exemptions
  - Currently 22 exemptions
Skill Performance Evaluation (SPE)

- Driver with loss or fixed limb impairment
- Evaluation of driving skills
- Driver completes application process including
  - Assessment and evaluation by an Orthopedic Surgeon or Physiatrist
  - Medical examination certification that designates he is otherwise qualified except for completion of the SPE
Obstructive Sleep Apnea (OSA)
Untreated OSA

- 12 – 20 million Americans suffer from OSA and 85% go undiagnosed

- Untreated Impacts:
  - Overall health
  - Ability to obtain adequate rest
    - Can lead to fatigue-related crashes
  - Greater risk for other serious near and long-term medical conditions
    - Coronary heart disease
    - Hypertension
    - Stroke
    - New discoveries of negative impact on health
OSA

- Normally, muscles of the upper part of the throat help keep the airway open

- Relaxation of these muscles can cause the airway to close completely and become obstructed

- Loud snoring and labored breathing occur

- Breathing can stop for short periods of time (often more than 10 seconds) = sleep apnea
Sleep Apnea

Chin

Nose

Throat

Tongue

Blocked airway
Sleep Apnea Patterns

- **Snoring:**
  - Begins heavily right after falling asleep
  - Continues at a regular pace, becoming louder
  - Interrupted by a long silent period when there is not breathing
  - Followed by a series of loud snorts and gasps
  - Snoring returns

- **Pattern repeats itself, resulting in:**
  - Poor sleep quality
  - Daytime drowsiness
  - Headaches
More Sleep Apnea Signs/Symptoms

- Memory difficulties
- Morning headaches
- Personality changes
- Poor concentration
- Restless sleep
Risk Factors You Can’t Control

- Family History
- Anatomy
  - Narrow airways
  - Large tongue with normal or small mandible
  - Nasal obstruction - deviated septum, Large turbinates
  - Neck Circumference
- Age 65 Years and Older
- High Blood Pressure
Risk Factors You Can Control

- **Weight**
  - Overweight/obese
  - Recent weight gain
  - Neck Circumference

- **Medications**
  - Use of Sedatives & Tranquilizers

- **Smoking**

- **Alcohol Use**
Sleep Disorders: Treatment/Devices

Treatment Options

- Lifestyle changes
- Mouthpieces
- Breathing devices
- Surgery
Untreated OSA - Complications

- Possible complications may include:
  - Abnormal heart rhythm (arrhythmia)
  - Excessive carbon dioxide levels in the blood
  - Heart disease
  - High blood pressure
  - Sleep deprivation
  - Stroke
So what’s the problem?

- 28% CMV drivers have mild or higher levels of OSA*
  - 5.8% - moderate OSA  4.7% - severe OSA

- Discovering OSA
  - Important for both driver health and road safety

- OSA can be treated and safely managed with cost-effective programs
  - Screen, Diagnose, Treat, Track

- Drivers don’t have to be taken off the road

* Research sponsored by FMCSA and ATA reported in “Get on the Road to Better Health – Recognizing the Dangers of Sleep Apnea” Conference co-sponsored by FMCSA and the National Sleep Foundation
MRB/MCSAC Recommendations

- MRB/MCSAC Joint Meetings
  - December 2011
  - February 2012

- Recommended two-pronged approach
  - Interim - guidance
  - Long-term - rulemaking
MRB/MCSAC Recommendations
Interim Guidance to MEs

- Issue new guidance for MEs
  - Drivers with a BMI $\geq 35$
- Drivers diagnosed with OSA
  - Maintain certification
- Driver Disqualification
- Conditionally certify based on CPAP compliance
- Recertification depends on continued compliance with treatment
Online Tools
Online Tools

- You may access the following on the FMCSA website:
  - Evidence Reports
  - Medical Expert Panel Reports
  - Medical Review Board (MRB) Recommendations
  - Medical Examiner’s Handbook
Contact Information

Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, Medical Programs Division
U.S. Department of Transportation
Washington, D.C.

E-mail: fmcsamedical@dot.gov
Phone: (202) 366-4001
Fax: (202) 366-8842

Medical Programs
www.fmcsa.dot.gov/rules-regulations/topics/medical/medical.htm

National Registry Website
www.nationalregistry.fmcsa.dot.gov
Summary

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