

## **AWARENESS AND ADHERENCE TO DRIVING GUIDELINES OF PSYCHOTROPIC MEDICATION PRESCRIPTION: A BRIEF SURVEY OF CLINICAL PRACTICE (UK)**

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**Introduction:** In many European countries, doctors and patients are required to inform their respective driving authorities of their condition and treatment. However, in the UK, there is no means to monitor performance and check if such advice is given during the treatment.

**Aims:** The purpose of the survey was to evaluate the awareness and adherence to the DVLA (UK) guidelines about psychiatric diagnoses and the impact of psychotropic medications on skills such as driving.

**Method:** A questionnaire on clinical practice and advice given to patients about driving to mental health diagnoses and medication was sent out to psychiatrists working in the local hospital. The responses were collated and analysed for trends.

**Results:** Out of 42 doctors, 36 responded and 34 responses were eligible. The survey revealed that though all the doctors were aware of the guidelines only 38% discussed this with their patients. 50% of the doctors did not refer to guidelines and admitted of giving superficial advice to their patients. 50% of the doctors did not discuss the effect of medication on their motor abilities, concentration and sedation.

About 60% of the times the advice was only verbal and not documented.

**Conclusions:** Psychiatrists have a duty of care to inform the patients and document the advice on driving when they newly diagnose and start treatment. The survey suggests that the current practice needs further improvement. Psychiatrists should be aware of guidelines and realise the need to check the patients' driving status and document the advice given.