

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF
THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR TRANSPORT'S HONORARY
MEDICAL ADVISORY PANEL ON DRIVING AND DIABETES MELLITUS**

HELD ON TUESDAY 22 MARCH 2016

Present:

Dr A E Gold
Dr M D Feher
Dr I Gallen (by teleconference)
Dr D Flanagan
Dr D J C Flower
Dr P Mansell

Lay Members:

Dr M L Shaw
Mr K Clinton

Observers:

Dr G Roberts National Programme Office for Traffic Medicine, Dublin

Ex-officio:

Dr S Rees Panel Secretary/Medical Adviser, DVLA
Dr Sally Bell Chief Medical Officer, Maritime and Coastguard Agency
Mr Jason Donovan Medical Licensing Policy, DVLA
Mrs Sue Charles-Phillips Business Change and Support, DVLA

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Dr Mark Evans, Dr Stuart Mitchell, Dr Colin Graham, Mr Andrew Burrows and Dr Wyn Parry.

2. Minutes of the last meeting held on 6 October 2015

The minutes were accepted as a true account of the proceedings on 6 October 2015.

3. Severe hypoglycaemia in Group 1 drivers

Member states of the European Union have approved the proposals made by the Diabetes Working Group but these are still subject to a 3 month scrutiny process. As long as there are no issues, member states then need to put in place any national laws along with the administrative procedures by 1 January 2018. The provisions shall then apply from this date. This means that for Group 1 drivers with recurrent severe hypoglycaemia during waking hours a licence shall not be issued or renewed until 3 months after the most recent episode. It will also include exceptional cases provided they are justified subject to authorised medical opinion and regular medical review.

4. Blood glucose testing in diabetes managed by tablets which carry a risk of inducing hypoglycaemia (this includes Sulphonyureas and Glinides)

The Panel had advised that Group 2 drivers on the above medication should test at least twice daily and at times relevant to driving. At times relevant to driving was defined as “no more than 2 hours before the start of their first journey and every 2 hours while driving”.

The Panel also advised that for Group 1 driving it is appropriate to offer self monitoring of blood glucose and the new DVLA publication “Assessing fitness to drive – a guide for medical professionals” will be updated.

5. Assessors of Group 2 drivers on insulin

There are now 62 assessors of Group 2 drivers on insulin. The Panel identified areas where there are insufficient assessors and DVLA will try to recruit assessors in these areas.

6. Literature search

The Panel considered the paper “Hypoglycaemia, diabetes therapies and driving categories in type 2 diabetes”. Current Medical Research and Opinion
DOI:10.1185/03007995.2016.1155981

7. Any Other Business

7.1 Assessment of Group 2 drivers on insulin

The Panel discussed the current process of an annual declaration from the applicant, then an examination by the clinician (GP or Consultant) followed by an examination by the independent Consultant Diabetologist. They agreed to a change in the process so that on alternate years DVLA would accept the applicant’s self declaration followed by an examination by the independent Consultant Diabetologist.

7.2 The Panel considered a query about a driver who pulled on to the hard shoulder of a motorway to treat an episode of hypoglycaemia and had been criticised by the Police. The Panel advised that this is an issue for the driver to take up with the Police.

However the Panel agreed that an episode of impending hypoglycaemia while driving is a medical emergency and should be promptly treated.

7.3 The Panel considered a letter regarding asleep severe hypoglycaemia and provided an update to the author.

7.4 The Panel discussed continuous glucose monitoring systems (CGMS) which measure interstitial glucose. The Panel advised that drivers using CGMS must also

monitor blood glucose levels as advised in the DVLA publication “Assessing fitness to drive – a guide for medical professionals”.

7.5 The Panel was asked to advise regarding ambulance drivers notifying a GP or other medical professional regarding episodes of severe hypoglycaemia without consent. The Panel advised this was not an issue for DVLA.

8. **Date of next meeting**

Tuesday 1 November 2016

DR S REES BSc MBBS

Medical Adviser and Panel Secretary to the
Honorary Medical Advisory Panel on Driving and Diabetes Mellitus
24 March 2016