



Fitness for Duty Assessment

There are times where a healthcare organization or practice partners will have concerns regarding patient safety due to a physician's physical or cognitive health. These dilemmas are complex. It is never easy to share with a physician that there may be concerns about their fitness to practice medicine in their current practice environment without risk to patients, self, or others. The Fitness for Duty Assessment is an individualized, multi-disciplinary assessment of a physician's fitness for occupational functioning. Results will indicate the presence of a physical or cognitive concern that may interfere with the physician's ability to safely perform their duties, or results may indicate a physical or cognitive concern that does not interfere with the physician's ability to safely perform their duties.

WHAT TO EXPECT

LifeGuard's Fitness for Duty Assessment is an unbiased, independent assessment conducted by a multi-disciplinary team designed to provide information regarding a physician's ability to perform his or her duties as they relate to their practice. The assessment consists of the following components:

Neurocognitive Screening or Assessment: The neurocognitive screening and/or assessment provides an extensive and varied evaluation of cognitive functioning, including attention, learning and memory; language skills; spatial skills, construction skills; and mental flexibility and problem solving, as well as personality variables, if indicated. The battery of tests identifies generally intact cognitive functioning or possible areas of concern. The battery is administered and interpreted by a clinical neuropsychologist.

Functional Capacity Examination (FCE): An occupational therapist will conduct a three (3) to four (4) hour examination to measure the physical and functional capabilities of the physician in relation to job specific work demands. The FCE is an objective evaluation used to identify the physician's ability to meet the daily work requirements including the capability to work on a full- or part-time basis or in a modified or full duty capacity with or without any reasonable accommodations.

Independent Medical Exam (IME): the independent medical exam and functional capacity evaluations are designed to evaluate whether the physician has the physical capacity, dexterity, motor skills and coordination needed to perform the procedures and evaluations that are most pertinent to his or her duties.

All evaluations are based on individualized circumstances and situations. Additional assessment options are available based on the concerns identified by the referral source. When assessment findings indicate a change in ability to practice, LifeGuard works extensively with the referral source to identify and suggest modifications in practice that allow the physician to function at their highest level of skill and at the same time ensure patient safety.

WHO SHOULD CONSIDER A LIFEGUARD FITNESS FOR DUTY ASSESSMENT

Any hospital or medical group that is committed to patient safety and ensuring the mental and physical well-being of its physicians can benefit from LifeGuard's services. Individuals can self-refer to LifeGuard. Often fitness for duty concerns are related to a physical, cognitive or accident-related change such as:

- A physician is involved in an automobile accident and suffers extensive injuries.
- On the way to work a physician slips on the ice and a head injury occurs.
- Central tremors begin to emerge that interfere with the provision of care in an emergency room.

While the physician may physically recover and be medically cleared or managed, at times the safety of a patient may still be compromised and this is when a physician fitness for duty examination can be a resource.

WHY CHOOSE LIFEGUARD

A nationally-recognized program, LifeGuard has been a vanguard for addressing clinical competency assessment needs for physicians and other healthcare professionals. Conceptualized by doctors for doctors; LifeGuard provides comprehensive assessment services and recommendations for remediation tailored to the individual needs of physicians and other eligible healthcare professionals. Through carefully customized evaluation programs we aim to facilitate higher performing physicians, promote patient safety, and enhance the quality of medical care provided to ensure complete clinical competence. LifeGuard is not associated with any health system and as a core tenant utilizes a team of independent evaluators who have an explicit goal to fairly evaluate the physician.

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