

# Why Improve Medical Oversight of Commercial Truck and Bus Drivers?

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# Why is the National Registry Needed?

## Medical Considerations

- **Size of program.**
- Medical examiner training.
- Aging workforce.
- Inconsistent use of resources by medical examiners.



# Commercial Driving Statistics

- **Active Interstate Truck and Bus Companies (2004)**

- 662,392

- Between 2000 and 2010:

- 20 % increase truck and bus miles traveled.
- Increase in new carriers.

- **Total Number of CDLs Issued**

- 6-7 million



*Source: Motor Carrier Safety Progress Report  
(September, 2004)*

# FMCSA Certification Examination

An estimated 3-4 million FMCSA certification examinations for commercial motor vehicle drivers are performed annually.



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# Medical Examiner Concerns

- Unknown number of medical examiners.
- Undetermined knowledge regarding regulations and guidelines.
- Varied understanding of commercial drivers' job requirements and their physical condition.
- Diverse medical backgrounds.
  - Advanced practice nurses, doctors of chiropractic and osteopathy, medical doctors, physician assistants.



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# Aging Population

50% of current workforce is 40 years of age and older.

| <b>Predicted Labor Growth Rates<br/>2002-2012</b> |                      |
|---|----------------------|
| <b><i>Age</i></b>                                 | <b><i>Growth</i></b> |
| 16-24   | 9%                   |
| 25-54   | 5%                   |
| 55+   | 94%                  |

*Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics*





# Certification and Age

- **Young Population**
  - Sudden incapacitation.
  - Fixed deficit.
- **Aging Population**
  - Chronic disease.
    - Increased risk of sudden incapacitation.
    - Increased effect on safe driving.



# Chronic Disease

## Employee on Duty Fatalities

|                                     | <i><b>2003</b></i> | <i><b>2004</b></i> | <i><b>1/05-4/05</b></i> | <i><b>Total</b></i> |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| <i><b>Cardiovascular Deaths</b></i> | 16                 | 12                 | 9                       | 37                  |
| <i><b>Total Deaths</b></i>          | 31                 | 31                 | 16                      | 78                  |

# Chronic Disease

## Chronic Medical Conditions 45 to 64 Years of Age

|               |     |
|---------------|-----|
| Heart Disease | 51% |
| Arthritis     | 53% |
| Hypertension  | 58% |
| Orthopedic    | 61% |
| Hearing       | 62% |

*Source National Academy on an Aging Society, 8/2000*

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# Certification Resources for Medical Examiners



- Medical Standards.
- Medical Advisory Criteria.
- Medical Guidelines.
- National Registry website.
  - In progress.

# Medical Standards (Regulations)

## CFR Title 49, Part 391.41

- Statutory.
- Must be followed.



# Medical Standards (Regulations)

- **13 standards directly related to medical requirements.**
  - 4 standards are specific.**
    - Medical examiner cannot interpret or alter.
    - Vision, Hearing, Epilepsy, Insulin use.
  - 9 standards are general.**
    - Medical examiner decides if medical condition affects driver's ability to safely operate a CMV.



# Medical Advisory Criteria

**Medical advisory criteria under CFR 49 Part 391.41 provides the medical examiner with:**

- Recommendations.
- FMCSA interpretations of medical standards.
- Assistance in determining whether or not the driver is medically qualified to drive a CMV.



# Medical Guidelines

- Provide recommendations.
- Establish best practices for medical examiners.
  - Medical examiner should document reason(s) for not following guidelines.

Reflect expert review and current medical literature and technology.

- Provide basis for certification of drivers with specific conditions.
- Standardize certification.
  - Establish consistency.
  - Decrease risk of inappropriate certification.



# Outdated Guidance

## Guidelines and Dates of Publication

|  |      |
|--|------|
| Conference on Diabetic Disorders and Commercial Drivers              | 1988 |
| Visual Disorders and Commercial Drivers                              | 1991 |
| Conference on Psychiatric Disorders and Commercial Drivers           | 1991 |
| Conference on Pulmonary/Respiratory Disorders and Commercial Drivers | 1991 |
| Hearing Disorders and Commercial Motor Vehicle Drivers               | 1993 |
| Anticoagulation Treatment and Commercial Drivers                     | 1996 |
| Visual Requirements and Commercial Drivers                           | 1998 |
| Requirements for the Diabetes and Waiver Program                     | 2001 |
| Cardiovascular Advisory Panel Guidelines                             | 2002 |



# Areas to Improve

- Complex driver health issues, including aging population.
- Outdated guidance.
- Medical examiner training/certification.
- Establish partnership with medical community (and all stakeholders).



# The National Registry Mission

To improve highway safety by producing trained, certified medical examiners who can effectively determine if a commercial motor vehicle operator's health meets Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration standards.



# The National Registry

- **Meets concerns regarding driver certification program.**
  - Failure to remove unfit drivers.
  - Examiners lack knowledge.
  - Medical information provided not current.
  - Medical conditions not reported by medical providers.
- **Establishes procedures to meet coming changes.**
  - Medicine.
  - Workforce.
- **Promotes FMCSA and medical collaboration.**
  - Medical examiner program “mainstream” medicine.

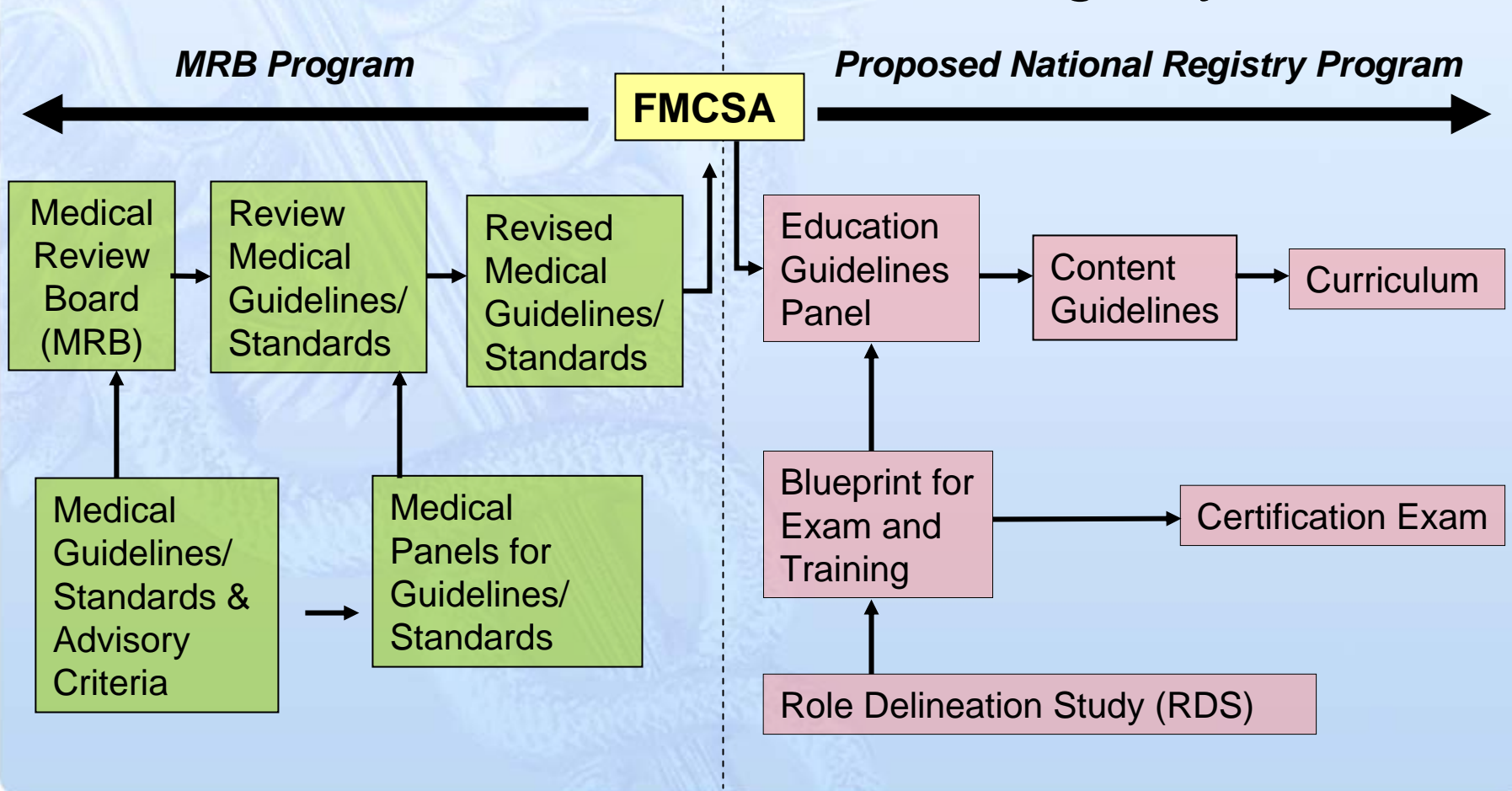


# Medical Review Board

- **Provides ongoing medical expertise to FMCSA.**
- **Provides current medical information.**
  - Creates panels to review certification criteria:
    - Guidelines/standards. Advisory criteria.
    - Medical information relevant to drivers.
    - Scheduled review.
    - Focus on physical and mental demands on drivers.
- **Recommendations for research.**



# Relationship Between MRB & The National Registry



# MRB and National Registry Partnership

- **FMCSA Standards/Guidelines are source of curriculum.**
  - Promotes continuity, consistency.
- **Recommends medical examiner training and certification.**
  - Medical skill requiring training.
- **Helps assure relevant core curriculum.**





# How do ABC diseases affect CMV operators?

Question considered by FMCSA and MRB.

Guidelines Panel formed



MRB reviews / edits guidelines.

(Based on other regulations and guidelines.)



FMCSA reviews.

(Based on Policy and legal considerations.) Publishes



National Registry incorporates new guidelines into curriculum and testing.



ABC guidelines are placed into regular MRB review cycle.



# **MRB - National Registry**

Linking FMCSA – Medical Community

- **Supports all medical examiners.**
  - Medical organizations present courses.
  - Core curriculum + add to meet needs.
- **Holds down cost.**
  - Promotes participation.
  - FMCSA provides core curriculum.



# The National Registry

## FMCSA – Medical Partnership

### Increases Medical Input

#### Current

Cardiology/Cardiovascular

Endocrinology/Diabetes

Neurology

Ophthalmology

Otorhinolaryngology

Psychiatry

Pulmonary

#### New

Nephrology

Occupational Medicine

Orthopedic Surgery

Pharmacology

Physical Medicine and

Rehabilitation

Sleep Medicine



# For More Information

Visit the National Registry website at  
<http://www.nrcme.fmcsa.dot.gov/>.



# Summary

## ***We have discussed:***

- The need for the National Registry.
- Medical perspective of the National Registry.

## ***Next:***

- Overview of National Registry program.