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### Author reply

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## Author reply

### **Abstract**

We thank Regal[1] for his interest and his kind comments regarding our paper.[2] Our principal aim was to highlight several key ethical issues faced by Australian physicians (e.g. reporting obligations, negative consequences of driving cessation). Regal raises a challenging, yet unresolved, dilemma: which test best determines safe driving capacity? Although an in-depth appraisal of existing tests was beyond the scope of our paper, we did refer to two seminal reviews. The Australian and New Zealand Society of Geriatric Medicine (ANZSGM)[3] and the American Academy of Neurology (AAN)[4] have comprehensively reviewed the existing literature regarding assessment of fitness to drive of individuals with dementia. Neither organisation supports sole reliance upon occupational therapy assessments in determining driving safety. As quoted in our paper, the AAN systematic review concluded that 'there is no test result or historical feature that accurately quantifies driving risk'.

### **Disciplines**

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## Authors' reply

We thank Dr Regal<sup>1</sup> for his interest and his kind comments regarding our paper.<sup>2</sup> Our principal aim was to highlight several key ethical issues faced by Australian physicians (e.g. reporting obligations, negative consequences of driving cessation). Dr Regal raises a challenging, yet unresolved, dilemma: which test best determines safe driving capacity? Although an in-depth appraisal of existing tests was beyond the scope of our paper, we did refer to two seminal reviews. The Australian and New Zealand Society of Geriatric Medicine (ANZSGM)<sup>3</sup> and the American Academy of Neurology (AAN)<sup>4</sup> have comprehensively reviewed the existing literature regarding assessment of fitness to drive of individuals with dementia. Neither organisation supports sole reliance upon occupational therapy assessments in determining driving safety. As quoted in our paper, the AAN systematic review concluded that 'there is no test result or historical feature that accurately quantifies driving risk'.<sup>2,4</sup> Additionally in relation to driving simulators, the ANZSGM notes that 'most evidence indicates that performance in driving simulators is not strongly related to on road driving performance'.<sup>3</sup>

In an attempt to ease the transition to driving retirement by individuals with dementia, we are currently testing a novel Decision Aid booklet in a randomised controlled trial (HREC 12/016) in Australia and New Zealand.<sup>5</sup> It is hoped that this novel approach will assist drivers with dementia planning for driving retirement. Early discussion of this issue may negate the need for abrupt and potentially distressing licence withdrawal at a later date. Potential participants or interested clinicians are welcome to contact Dr Carmody (+61 2 4253 4430 or [john.carmody@sesiahs.health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:john.carmody@sesiahs.health.nsw.gov.au)) to enrol or learn more.

J. Carmody,<sup>1,2</sup> V. Traynor,<sup>2,3</sup> D. Iverson<sup>2,4</sup> and E. Marchetti<sup>5</sup>

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