

Proposed legal change to support medical licensing applications

- Public consultation reveals strong support for measures allowing different types of healthcare professionals to complete medical questionnaires as part of the medical licensing process
- Move will result in a speedier process to complete medical questionnaires
- Delays caused by coronavirus (COVID-19), and industrial action continue to be reduced for medical licensing applications, with normal turnaround times expected by September 2022

Measures have been brought forward to change the law to allow more healthcare professionals like specialist nurses to complete DVLA medical questionnaires. This will help speed up the return of medical information needed to make a licensing decision following the pandemic and industrial action.

By law, all drivers must meet the medical standards for fitness to drive and each year DVLA makes over 500,000 medical licensing decisions. To help make these decisions, DVLA often requires questionnaires to be completed by a driver's doctor or consultant.

Currently, the Road Traffic Act 1988 only enables registered medical practitioners (doctors who are registered with the General Medical Council) to complete DVLA medical questionnaires.

This has contributed to delays to medical applications throughout COVID-19, particularly as DVLA medical checks were understandably deprioritised at times during the pandemic and in December 2021/January 2022 where NHS resources were needed to support the booster vaccination programme.

[This proposed change in the law](#) will enable more people – who must be registered with certain professional bodies – to join the list of those able to complete medical questionnaires required as part of the medical licensing process.

DVLA Chief Executive Julie Lennard said:

We were pleased to see that the consultation responses supported the idea of increasing the range of medical professionals who are able to complete DVLA medical questionnaires. This is in line with the way GP practices and hospital teams increasingly work and will improve the process for those notifying DVLA of a medical condition. This will also ease the pressure on hard-working doctors by widening the number of medical experts who can provide the necessary information.

Today's announcement follows a public consultation launched on 8 November 2021, the response to which has been published today. The consultation received over 400 responses, including from the general public and medical professionals, with 82% of respondents strongly agreeing or agreeing with the proposals.

The proposed law change will mean that any healthcare professional registered with the following Councils will be legally authorised to complete DVLA's medical questionnaires:

- The General Chiropractic Council
- The General Medical Council
- The General Optical Council
- The General Osteopathic Council
- The Nursing and Midwifery Council
- The Health and Care Professions Council

Reasons expressed for supporting the change included the provision of more flexibility and that it may result in quicker licensing decisions by DVLA.

Transport Minister Baroness Vere said:

Changing this law makes sense. Doing so will safely improve the application process for hundreds of thousands of motorists across the country, whilst easing the pressure on our doctors and consultants. It's great to see these important proposals progress into law.

DVLA handles millions of transactions every year and there are no delays with online services, which have been working as normal throughout the pandemic. Customers are encouraged to use these services where possible.

The vast majority of transactions are back to normal processing times. There are also no delays to HGV applications, with straight forward applications being processed within around five working days.