Florida as a Model State for Older Drivers

Kezia D. Awadzi, PhD
March 7, 2008
CMS Annual Student Conference
Gainesville, Florida
Background

- Death rate per 100 million vehicle miles travelled (2006)
  - Florida: 1.65
  - Nation: 1.42

- 2,699,322 FL licensed drivers 65 years and older (2006 data)
Crash rate for FL drivers by age groups

Age group

Rate per 10,000 licensed drivers

15-19
20-24
25-29
30-34
35-39
40-44
45-49
50-54
55-59
60-64
65-69
70-74
75-79
80-84
85-89
90+
Crash rate for FL drivers by age groups

Age group

Rate per 10,000 licensed drivers

Older Drivers
Crash rate for FL drivers by age groups

Rate per 10,000 licensed drivers

Age group

Older Drivers

85-89
Model States for Older Driver Safety

- Model States (GAO, 2007)
  - State age-related license renewal policies
    - In-person renewal
    - Reduced renewal cycle
    - Vision, medical or road test
    - Reporting unsafe drivers
    - Medical Advisory Boards
  - Transportation activities
  - Older driver mobility programs
Licensing Policies for Older Drivers in Florida

- Mandatory vision test for drivers 80+ years
  - On-site (in-person renewal)
  - Electronically/by mail (physician or optometrist)

- Authorized reporting of unsafe drivers
  - Florida Statute 322.126
    - Healthcare professionals
    - Members of public

- Medical Advisory Board
Older Driver-Related Activities in FL

Older driver coordination group
  - Florida At-Risk Driver Council
    - Primary focus areas
      - Prevention
      - Assessment
      - Remediation
      - Alternative transportation
Older Driver-Related Activities in FL

- Florida GrandDriver Program
  - www.floridagranddriver.com
  - Alternative transportation
  - Information for caretakers
    - Reporting unsafe driving
    - The Hartford/MIT AgeLab report
  - Driving assessment
    - Self-assessment questionnaire
Older Driver-Related Activities in FL

- Florida GrandDriver Program
  - Driving Education
    - Body exercises
    - Driving refresher courses
      - AARP & AAA
    - Report on effects of aging
Older Driver-Related Activities in FL

- Florida GrandDriver Program
- Resources
  - AOTA
  - Certified Driving Rehabilitation Specialists
  - Florida Senior Resource Centers
    - Program description, services provided, contact information
    - The National Older Driver Research & Training Center (UF)
    - Assessing driver knowledge & behavior (43 questions)
      http://www.fssrc.phhp.ufl.edu/
Driver Knowledge Assessment Results

Section 1
Score: 8 correct out of 8 (100%)

Section 2
Score: 7 correct out of 8 (88%)

If you answered fewer than 6 correct (75%) for either Section 1 or Section 2, you should consider contacting your local Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles for a copy of the most recent drivers handbook for your state. Reviewing the handbook will provide you with a summary of current state laws, as well as provide helpful safety tips. For additional information about roadway safety, you may wish to sign up for a driver safety class in your area.
Driver Behavior Assessment Results
Based on your responses to questions 17-21, we suggest:

- **Make an appointment for a vision exam.** Your doctor may determine that corrective eyewear or a change to your current eyewear prescription may improve your vision. Remember to also discuss with your doctor any medications you are currently taking, both prescribed and over-the-counter, to ensure that their effects or combined effects aren't responsible for your impaired vision.

- **Consider adaptive devices for your vehicle.** Examples include: glare resistant mirrors, additional side mirrors, and oversized, wide-angle rearview mirrors.

- **Consider daytime driving only.** If you have difficulty driving at night, you may consider letting friends or family members drive you places after dusk.

- **Remember routine car maintenance.** Smudges on the windshield or improperly functioning headlights can affect your ability to see while driving under certain conditions.
Older Driver-Related Activities in FL

- Florida’s Safe Mobility for Life Program
  - Florida Department of Transportation
  - Five target areas
    - Collaboration with stakeholders
    - Improving roadways
    - Providing assistance
    - Training personnel at local and state levels
    - Educating the public
- Car-Fit Program
Florida is considered a model state for older driver safety by the GAO

Florida has vision test requirements for drivers 80 years and older

Healthcare professionals and the public may report unsafe drivers

Florida has an older driver coordinating group

Programs for older drivers exist on state and local levels
References

- General Accounting Office. (2007). Older driver safety: Knowledge sharing should help states prepare for increase in older driver population.
- Hartford Insurance Group. (2004). We need to talk: family conversations with older drivers. The Hartford, Hartford, CT.