

## Aging, Dementia & Older Driver Safety: A Curriculum for Driver Examiners & Patrol Officers

Tom Meuser, PhD, Project Coordinator  
Washington University, St. Louis  
New e-mail: [meusert@umsl.edu](mailto:meusert@umsl.edu); 314-402-8638 (cell)

### Curriculum Validation Results Summary

Our educational team pilot tested the curriculum with two groups in 2007:

- ~40 Missouri State Highway Patrol Driver Examiners & Guests (6/14/07)
- ~160 Missouri Municipal Police and State Highway Patrol Troopers (7/11/07)

Pre- and immediate post-test questionnaires measuring demographics and knowledge (20 true/false questions) were administered to both groups. The results are summarized below.

### Sample Characteristics

A total of 166 individuals (~83% of trainees) completed one or two questionnaires in support of the validation study. Most respondents were male (77%) and employed as either municipal police officers or state troopers (72%) with ten or more years of professional experience (73%). Three quarters of respondents reported that at least 20% of those they served were adults aged 65 or older.

### Traditional Quality Indicators

Overall quality of the program was rated 4.5 (SD = 0.65) on a 1-5 Likert scale (5 = Excellent). Fifty-five percent of respondents rated the program as excellent in this regard. Other indicators received similar grades: comprehensiveness (4.5, SD = 0.61), applicability to personal learning needs (4.4; 0.69), and quality of handouts (4.5, 0.6). Sixty-four percent of respondents reported that they were "very likely" to use the *Cited Driver Worksheet* in their professional work.

### Change in Knowledge

The majority of trainees (86%) demonstrated increased knowledge between pre- and post-testing. The mean knowledge score across the full sample increased from 13.3 (SD = 1.9) to 16.6 (SD = 2), a statistically significant improvement ( $p < .01$ ). Driver examiners and patrol officers improved to similar degrees, and there were no differences in knowledge scores based on reported years of experience or exposure to older adults on the job.

## Qualitative Responses

Half of respondents listed at least one aspect of the program that they appreciated, and 27% made comments on improving the curriculum. The majority of comments praised the curriculum, particularly the quality of the videotaped case example and the breadth of medical information covered during the session. A number suggested providing answer sheets to the knowledge questions (i.e., once collected all questionnaires are collected) and adding more time for Q&A discussion.

## Summary

Overall, the curriculum was well received by both main groups of trainees and motivated a significant improvement in knowledge, at least in the short-term. The vast majority (86%) reported that they were "somewhat likely" or "very likely" to use the Cited Driver Worksheet, an important tool covered by the curriculum, in future law enforcement work.