



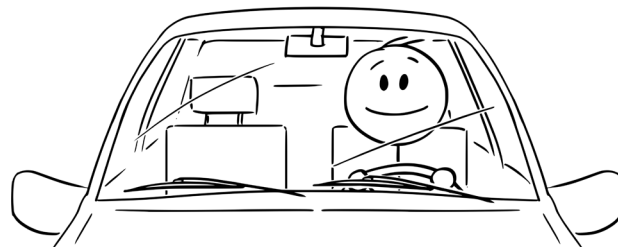
MediScene

Keeping You Up-to-Date with the Industrial Commission's Medical Services

Driving Question #3 Home

"For Industrial Commission PTD examinations, question #3 asks the independent specialist examiner to summarize the injured worker's residual functional capacity resulting from the impairment associated with the allowed condition(s). The specialist is then asked to complete a form indicating what work limitations would be reasonable, based solely on impairment due to the allowed condition(s) in the claim." (*MediScene*, October 2022, https://www.ic.ohio.gov/for-examiners/mediscene-pdfs/MediScene_2022_Issue4.pdf)

In this issue, we'd like to further explore some points about question #3, and provide some examples which might help examiners pack up their response, bring it home, pull up the driveway, into the garage, and shut the door- with a feeling of accomplishment and relief, glad to be home.



First, the question asks for a summary. Yes, we know you've already provided a detailed report. And yes, we are asking you to now summarize elements of that report which support your opinion. This summary rightly draws from three essential elements of a medical examination. (See *Medical Examination Manual*, page 6, "Residual Functional Capacity".) These include the reports of your:

1. review of pertinent medical records. This provides the reader with an idea of the severity of the allowed conditions- based upon prior medical testing results, intensity of care needed for treatment, and response to treatment.
2. interview with the injured worker. This provides the reader with a view of the injured worker's perception of the symptoms they are experiencing, and the impact of those symptoms on their daily activities.
3. objective physical findings, or lack thereof, arising from the allowed conditions. In Mental and Behavioral Health examinations, this would include results of psychological testing, and observations made during the mental status examination. Note, a specialist must rely on objective findings when considering an estimate of impairment. (See *AMA Guides, 5th Edition*, page 2, Section 1.2a, "Impairment".)

Next, the very nature of this examination requires the response to question #3 be a professional specialist examiner opinion. Regurgitating another professional's opinion from the record, repeating the injured worker's perception of their own residual capacity, or failing to provide analysis of what objective examination findings are reasonably related to the allowed condition(s) do not constitute an adequate professional specialist examiner opinion.

Continued on page 2.



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Below are examples of brief summaries we hope will help you navigate your response to question #3, color-coded, according to the following legend:

RED:
review of
records

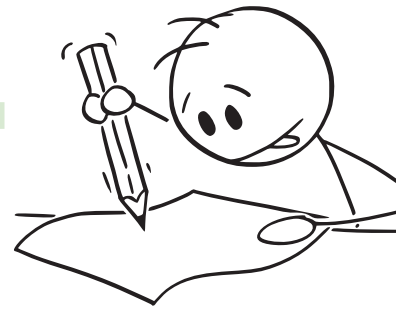
GREEN:
IW subjective
report

BLUE:
objective
examination
findings

ORANGE:
your professional
opinion

EXAMPLE #1

"The IW experienced a lifting injury at work. MRI demonstrated a herniated disc at L4-5, compressing the left L5 nerve root. Despite low back surgery and extensive rehabilitation, the IW reports continued low back pain, left leg pain, numbness and weakness, requiring an ankle brace. The IW reports sitting tolerance of 15 minutes, and walking tolerance of 15 minutes. On examination, decreased sensation in the left L5 distribution, and weakness in left ankle dorsiflexion was noted. These findings, and the IW's subjective complaints are consistent with what one would reasonably expect to arise from the allowed conditions in this claim. It is my opinion this IW is able to work at a physical demand in the sedentary category, with the further limitation of being able to change position from sit to stand as needed for comfort, and no use of foot controls with the left leg."



EXAMPLE #2

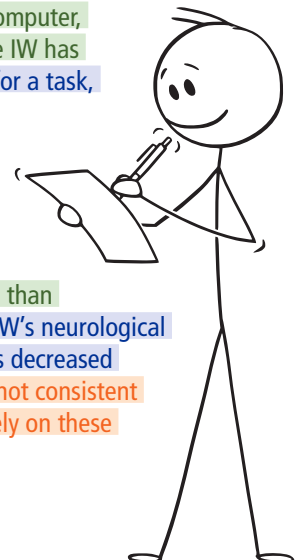
"The IW experienced a lifting injury at work, required low back surgery and extensive physical rehabilitation, but because of persistent pain and weakness, has been unable to return to work. The record reports the IW began to experience symptoms of anxiety and depression two years after surgery and attempts of physical rehabilitation. The IW has been treated with psychotropic medication and counseling but still reports a significant effect of symptoms in all four functional areas, to a moderate degree. The mental status examination and psychologic testing today show signs of persistent anxiety and depression, which are consistent with the IW's subjective report, and consistent with what one would reasonably expect to arise from the allowed psychological conditions in this claim. It is my opinion the impairment arising from the allowed psychological conditions precludes return to work."

EXAMPLE #3

"The IW experienced a lifting injury at work, which was treated with chiropractic care, pain medication, and physical therapy. Because of persistent reported pain and distress, the IW has not returned to work. The record reports the IW began to experience symptoms of anxiety and depression two years after the injury. The IW has been treated with psychotropic medication and counseling. Considering only the psychological impairment due to the allowed psychological condition of "anxiety and depression," it is my opinion the IW is capable of working, without limitations. Indeed, the IW reports the capacity to cook, clean, do laundry, drive, shop, manage his medications and schedule, use a computer, play online games, and travel. The IW is very active with his church, and he is able to sing, and play three instruments. The IW has good relationships with his family and friends, socializing with them regularly. He demonstrated sustained concentration for a task, appropriate judgment, and appropriate behavior, without significant signs of anxiety or depression."

EXAMPLE #4

"The IW experienced a lifting injury at work 7 years ago. MRI was reported as showing mild to moderate degenerative change, without neural impingement. EMG test was normal. Review of previous examinations revealed no significant neurological findings. After six months of physical therapy the IW returned to work for two years with lifting restrictions, however then stopped working due to reported continued low back pain and leg pain. The IW reports inability to lift more than 8 lbs. occasionally, stand or sit for more than 15 minutes at a time due to severe back and leg pain. On examination, the IW's neurological examination is normal, with some signs of give-away weakness, non-dermatomal sensory disturbances, and demonstrates decreased range of motion in all planes. In my opinion, though the IW reports significant pain and functional impairment, these are not consistent with or due to the allowed conditions of "lumbar strain and aggravation of lumbar degenerative disease", and based solely on these conditions, is able to return to work without restrictions."





MediScene Review Questions

DIRECTIONS AND SUBMISSION

After reviewing the material in the newsletter, please fill in your name, date, time spent on the activity, and your answers to the review questions.

When completed, you may print this page and fax it to 614-466-1051, attention Medical Services, subject "MediScene Review Questions", to be placed in your file and held for your future reapplication. Alternatively, you may save your completed form to your computer by choosing "Print", and then choose "Destination" as "Save to PDF". Please email the saved document as an attachment to medical.services@ic.ohio.gov, subject line "MediScene Review Questions".

Your Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Time Spent on CME Activity: _____ (Maximum 30 minutes)

MEDISCENE REVIEW QUESTIONS, JANUARY 2025

1. You will find Question #3 language:
☐ A. in the text of the referral letter uploaded to your ICON account upon scheduling.
☐ B. embedded in the report templates.
☐ C. on slide 6 of the report template instructions.
☐ D. All of the above.
2. The three essential elements we ask you to summarize in Question #3 are (Select all that apply):
☐ A. review of pertinent medical records.
☐ B. objective physical findings arising from the allowed conditions.
☐ C. previous work history.
☐ D. interview with the injured worker.
3. Regurgitating another professional's opinion from the record constitutes an adequate professional specialist examiner opinion for Question #3.
☐ A. True
☐ B. False
4. In Question #3, you can consider objective physical findings arising from the allowed conditions and co-morbidities.
☐ A. True
☐ B. False
5. "On examination, the IW's neurological examination is normal, with some signs of give-away weakness, non-dermatomal sensory disturbances, and demonstrates decreased range of motion in all planes" is a summarized example of the:
☐ A. review of pertinent medical records.
☐ B. objective physical findings supporting your opinion regarding impairment arising from the allowed conditions in the claim.
☐ C. previous work history.
☐ D. interview with the injured worker.



NOTE: This activity is not a certified AMA category 1 activity, and so it cannot be used as credit toward medical board licensure in Ohio. However, it can be used toward the Ohio Industrial Commission requirement for continuing education credit specific to impairment rating at the time of your five-year application for reappointment to the specialist examiners' panel.