



MediScene

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

“All our knowledge begins with the senses, proceeds then to the understanding, and ends with reason.”

Immanuel Kant, German philosopher, 1724-1804

Why Zero? (Please Comment)

This article is intended to help examiners understand the importance of providing a rationale when determining a zero percent impairment estimate for an allowance and how best to present that rationale efficiently and effectively. Within this context, let's break down Mr. Kant's quote.

“Beginning with the senses” refers to collecting objective findings (or lack thereof) to be evaluated by the trained examiner. Objective findings are measurable and observable data that can be verified by an examiner.

“Proceeding to understanding” refers to the skilled examiner's ability to attribute, through training and experience, an association between those findings and the allowed condition(s) and to assign a degree of severity (or lack thereof). This is the impairment rating.

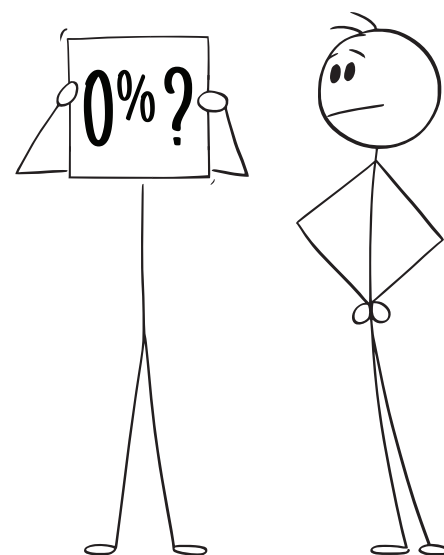
“Reason” can have a dual meaning. It can refer to the examiner's ability to think through to a logical conclusion (which is a must) or an explanation for the conclusion, a why. If this is not expressed unequivocally in the report, those without the same medical training, experience, and certification as the examiner are left wondering, “How did they get there? What is their logic?”

Question number two in our referral letter states, “Based on the AMA Guides, Fifth Edition, and with reference to the Industrial Commission Medical Examination Manual, provide the estimated percentage of whole person impairment arising from each allowed condition. Then, **provide a combined whole-person impairment. If there is no impairment for an allowed condition, indicate 0%.**”

Why zero? How do I account for it? It's simple.

There are two common reasons why an allowance would be assigned a 0% impairment:

1. There are no objective findings of impairment due to the allowed condition at the time of the examination.
2. There are multiple allowances to be evaluated within one body part or body system. In this case, the AMA Guides instruct us to rate those allowances together as a group by first choosing and rating the allowance with the greatest degree of impairment and assigning 0% to the others, as they are “superseded” by the highest-rated allowance. To do otherwise would be “double dipping”.



Continued on page 2.



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When presenting your estimates of impairment of physical conditions, choose from one of the following sample formats:

ALLOWED CONDITION	TABLE/FIGURE/ PAGE NUMBER	COMMENTS	WHOLE PERSON IMPAIRMENT %
Lumbar strain		Superseded by radiculopathy	0%
Aggravation of lumbar spondylosis		Superseded by radiculopathy	0%
Lumbar radiculopathy S-1	Table 15-3, page 384	DRE category III	12%
Scalp laceration		No objective findings of impairment	0%
	Combined Values Chart, pgs. 604-606	Combined whole person impairment:	12%

OR:

ALLOWED CONDITION	TABLE/FIGURE/ PAGE NUMBER	COMMENTS	WHOLE PERSON IMPAIRMENT %
Lumbar strain; Aggravation of lumbar spondylosis; Lumbar radiculopathy S-1	Table 15-3, page 384	DRE category III for lumbar radiculopathy; all others are 0%, superseded by radiculopathy	12%
Scalp laceration		No objective findings of impairment	0%
	Combined Values Chart, pgs. 604-606	Combined whole person impairment:	12%

OR:

"For the allowed condition of lumbar radiculopathy, there is a 12% impairment, DRE category III, Table 15-3, page 384. All other conditions in the lumbar spine are 0%, superseded by the radiculopathy. There are no findings of impairment due to the allowed scalp laceration, which is assigned 0% impairment."



If, for whatever reason, your office needs an examination rescheduled, let us know! Please do not attempt to contact the injured worker yourself. All examinations **must** be rescheduled through Medical Services at the Industrial Commission.



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, APRIL 2025

1. We would really appreciate it if you'd reschedule your examinations instead of calling us.
☐ A. True
☐ B. False
2. Allowances from the same body part or body system should always be rated together, even if they are from different claims.
☐ A. True
☐ B. False
3. What are common reasons one must rate an allowance as causing 0% impairment (choose all correct answers, and call if you'd like to argue over them)?
☐ A. There are no objective findings of impairment due to the allowed condition at the time of the examination.
☐ B. You don't have a clue how else to rate it.
☐ C. There are inconsistent examination findings.
☐ D. The AMA Guides instruct us to rate the allowance with the greatest impairment and assign 0% to the others, as they are "superseded" by the highest-rated allowance.
4. Providing adequate rationale for any impairment estimate requires which of the following?
☐ A. Collecting objective findings from your examination.
☐ B. Applying your clinical skills to those findings to determine which can reasonably be attributed to the allowed condition(s).
☐ C. Explaining the method and reasoning for applying the Guides as you did in arriving at your estimate.
☐ D. Only two of the above are correct.
5. Examiners reports appear more intelligent when they contain legal references.
☐ A. True
☐ B. False

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.