

Table 7 - Brain Function

Introduction to Table 7

- Table 7 is to be used to assess the functional impact of a diagnosed condition related to neurological or cognitive function.
- The diagnosis of the condition causing the impairment must be made by an appropriately qualified medical practitioner.
- There must be corroborating evidence of the person's impairment.
- Self-report of symptoms must be supported by corroborating medical evidence.
- Examples of corroborating evidence for the purposes of this Table include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - a report from the person's treating doctor
 - a report from a specialist health practitioner supporting the diagnosis of conditions associated with neurological or cognitive impairment such as an acquired brain injury, stroke (cerebrovascular accident (CVA)), conditions resulting in dementia, tumour in the brain, some neurodegenerative disorders, chronic pain, myalgic encephalomyelitis/chronic fatigue syndrome (ME/CFS), attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) or autism spectrum disorder (ASD);
 - results of diagnostic tests (such as Magnetic Resonance Imagery (MRI), Computerised (Axial) Tomography (CT) scans, Electroencephalography (EEG));
 - results of cognitive function assessments;
 - Interviews with the person and those providing care or support to the person.
- The person may not have sufficient self-awareness of their cognitive function or may not be able to accurately describe its effects. This is to be kept in mind when discussing issues with the person and reading supporting evidence.
- The signs and symptoms of neurological or cognitive impairment may vary over time.
- The person's presentation on the day of the assessment cannot solely be relied upon.
- A person with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) or fetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD) who does not have a meaningful intelligence quotient (IQ) between 70-85, can be assessed under this Table.
- Table 7 cannot be used when a person has an impairment of intellectual function already assessed under Table 9, unless the person has an additional condition affecting neurological or cognitive function.
- When determining whether a descriptor applies that involves a person performing an activity, the descriptor applies if that person can do the activity when they would be expected to do so and not only once or rarely.
- When assessing episodic or fluctuating impairments and conditions, a rating must be assigned which reflects the overall functional impact of those impairments, taking into account the severity, duration and frequency of the episodes or fluctuations as appropriate.
- The examples used in descriptors are not an exhaustive list and are to be used only as a guide.
- Assistance means assistance from another person rather than any aids or equipment the person may use, unless specified otherwise.

Points	Descriptors
0	<p><i>There is no or minimal functional impact resulting from a neurological or cognitive condition.</i></p> <p>(1) The person has no significant problems with memory, attention, concentration, problem solving and cognitive flexibility, visual-spatial function, planning, decision making, comprehension, self-awareness, social skills or behavioural regulation.</p>

5	<p><i>There is a mild functional impact resulting from a neurological or cognitive condition.</i></p> <p>1. The person is able to complete most activities of daily living without assistance and has mild difficulties in at least 2 of the following:</p> <p>(a) memory;</p> <p><i>Example: the person occasionally forgets to complete a regular task or sometimes misplaces important items.</i></p> <p>(b) attention and concentration;</p> <p><i>Example 1: the person has mild difficulty concentrating on tasks for more than 1 hour.</i></p> <p><i>Example 2: the person has mild difficulty focusing on a task if there are other activities occurring nearby.</i></p> <p><i>Example 3: the person has mild difficulty with concentration due to sensitivity to sensory input, including environmental stimuli from any of the senses.</i></p> <p>(c) problem solving and cognitive flexibility;</p> <p><i>Example 1: the person has mild difficulty solving problems that may involve multiple factors or abstract concepts.</i></p> <p><i>Example 2: the person shows a lack of awareness of problems in some situations.</i></p> <p><i>Example 3: the person has mild difficulty considering the point of view of others or coping with changes to their daily routine if not provided with warning in advance, which may result in strained relationships with occasional tension or arguments.</i></p> <p>(d) planning;</p> <p><i>Example: the person has mild difficulty planning and organising activities such as arranging travel and accommodation for an interstate or overseas holiday.</i></p> <p>(e) decision making;</p> <p><i>Example: the person has mild difficulty in prioritising and decision making when there are several option to choose from.</i></p> <p>(f) comprehension;</p> <p><i>Example: the person has mild difficulty in understanding instructions involving multiple steps.</i></p> <p>(g) visuo-spatial function;</p> <p><i>Example: the person has mild difficulty with visuospatial functions such as distance and depth perception when driving and parking a car.</i></p>
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(h) behavioural regulation;

Example 1: the person exhibits temper outbursts, withdrawal or effusiveness without significant adverse consequences.

Example 2: the person sometimes demonstrates behavioural dysregulation that is mildly self-limiting and/or impactful on others, such as mild difficulty engaging in non-preferred environments, or self-stimulatory behaviour (stimming) in a familiar setting.

(i) social skills;

Example: the person has mild difficulty reading non-verbal communication such as gestures or facial expressions, has mild difficulty interacting with others and shows a lack of awareness of social norms and expectations.

(j) self-awareness;

Example 1: the person has mild difficulty in recognising and responding to social cues and the person appears less engaged or inappropriately engaged.

Example 2: the person exhibits disinhibited behaviour resulting in awkwardness with social interactions.

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There is a **moderate** functional impact resulting from a neurological or cognitive condition.

1. The person requires occasional (less than once a day) assistance with activities of daily living and has moderate difficulties in at least 2 of the following:

(a) memory;

Example 1: the person often forgets to complete regular tasks such as putting the bin out on rubbish night.

Example 2: the person often misplaces items.

Example 3: the person requires memory aids such as shopping lists to remember any more than 3 or 4 items.

(b) attention and concentration;

Example 1: the person has moderate difficulty concentrating on tasks for more than 30 minutes

Example 2: the person experiences moderate difficulty focusing on a task due to distraction or overstimulation from sensory input including environmental stimuli from any of the senses.

(c) problem solving and cognitive flexibility;

Example 1: the person has moderate difficulty solving some day-to-day problems or problems not previously encountered and may require assistance or advice from time to time.

Example 2: the person has moderate difficulty coping with changes in routine, even when provided with warning about the upcoming change or difficulty switching between activities or prioritising required tasks.

(d) planning;

Example: the person has moderate difficulty planning and organising new or special activities such as planning and organising a large birthday party.

(e) decision-making;

Example: the person has moderate difficulty planning and organising new or special activities such as planning and organising a large birthday party.

(f) comprehension;

Example: the person has moderate difficulty understanding instructions involving multiple steps and may require more prompts, written instructions or repeated demonstrations than peers to complete tasks.

(g) visuo-spatial function;

Example: the person has moderate difficulty with visuo-spatial functions such as difficulty reading maps, giving directions or judging distance or depth but this does not result in major limitations in activities of daily living

(h) behavioural regulation

Example 1: the person occasionally (less than once a week) has moderate difficulty controlling behaviour in routine situations such as showing frustration or anger or losing temper for minor reasons but displays no physical aggression.

Example 2: the person occasionally (less than once a day) demonstrates behavioural dysregulation that is moderately self-limiting and or/impactful on others, such as moderate difficulty or refusal to engage in non-preferred environments, or Self-stimulatory behaviour (stimming) around unfamiliar people or environments.

(i) social skills;

Example: the person has moderate difficulty reading non-verbal communication such as gestures or facial expressions, has moderate difficulty interacting with others and shows a lack of awareness of social norms and expectations.

(j) self-awareness;

Example: the person lacks awareness of own limitations, resulting in moderate difficulties in social interactions or problems arising in activities of daily living.

There is a **severe** functional impact resulting from a neurological or cognitive condition.

1. The person requires frequent (at least once a day) interactive assistance and supervision and has severe difficulties in at least 2 of the following:

- (a) memory;

Example 1: the person has severe difficulty remembering routines, regular tasks and instructions.

Example 2: the person has severe difficulty recalling events of the past few days.

Example 3: the person gets easily lost in unfamiliar places.

- (b) attention and concentration;

Example 1: the person has severe difficulty concentrating on any task, even a task that interests the person, for more than 10 minutes.

Example 2: the person has severe distress from sensory input, including environmental stimuli from any of the senses.

- (c) problem solving and cognitive flexibility;

Example 1: the person has severe difficulty solving routine day-to-day problems (such as what to do if a household appliance breaks down) and needs regular assistance and advice.

Example 2: even when provided with support about an upcoming change, the person has severe difficulty coping with changes in routine, or experiences distress with changing focus or activities.

- (d) planning;

Example: the person has severe difficulty planning and organising routine daily activities (such as an outing to the movies or a supermarket shopping trip).

- (e) decision making;

Example: the person has severe difficulty prioritising and making simple decisions and often displays poor judgement, resulting in negative outcomes for self or others.

- (f) comprehension;

Example: the person has severe difficulty understanding basic instructions and needs regular prompts to complete tasks.

- (g) visuo-spatial function;

Example: the person has severe difficulty performing many visuo-spatial functions (such as following or giving simple directions (including to the person's house) or judging distance or depth (resulting in stumbling on steps or bumping into objects)).

- (h) behavioural regulation;

Example 1: the person often (more than once a week) has severe difficulty controlling behaviour even in routine, day-to-day situations and may be verbally abusive to others or threaten physical aggression.

Example 2: the person frequently (at least once a day) demonstrates behavioural dysregulation that is severely self-limiting and/or impactful on others such as severe difficulty or refusal to engage in non-preferred environments, or self-stimulatory behaviour in most environments.

- (i) social skills

Example: the person has severe difficulty reading non-verbal communication (such as gestures or facial expressions), has severe difficulty interacting with others and shows a lack of awareness of social norms and expectations.

- (j) self-awareness

Example: the person lacks awareness of own limitations, resulting in severe difficulties in social interactions or problems arising in activities of daily living.

There is an **extreme** functional impact resulting from a neurological or cognitive condition.

1. The person requires continual interactive assistance and supervision and has extreme difficulties in at least 2 of the following:

(a) memory;

Example 1: the person requires constant prompts and reminders to remember routine tasks, familiar people and places and may get lost even in familiar places if not accompanied.

Example 2: the person has extreme difficulty remembering events that happened earlier in the day (such as what the person ate for breakfast).

(b) attention and concentration;

Example: the person has extreme difficulty concentrating on any task for more than a few minutes which may be due to sensory input, including environmental stimuli from any of the senses.

(c) problem solving and cognitive flexibility;

Example 1: the person has extreme difficulty solving even the most basic problems (such as what to do if the kettle is empty) and needs complete assistance with problem solving.

Example 2: the person has extreme difficulty coping with changes in routine, or experiences restricted behaviours resulting in extreme distress with changing focus or activities.

(d) planning;

Example: the person has extreme difficulty planning and organising daily activities and needs complete assistance to organise daily routine.

(e) decision making;

Example: the person has extreme difficulty prioritising and making simple decisions and needs substantial support from a guardian or other delegate to make decisions or give consent on the person's behalf.

(f) comprehension;

Example: the person has extreme difficulty understanding even simple, single step instructions and needs assistance to complete most tasks

(g) visuo-spatial function;

Example 1: the person has extreme difficulty performing even basic visuo-spatial functions, following spatial direction (such as 'turn left at the corner') or judging distance or depth which severely limits mobility.

Example 2: the person has left or right-sided neglect, that is, they are not aware of objects, people or body parts in the left or right field of vision. This means that even though the person's eyes can see an object, the person's brain does not register its presence.

(h) behavioural regulation;

Example 1: the person has extreme difficulty controlling behaviour in a range of Day-to-day situations and this interferes with participation in activities outside the home and requires supervision and possibly restriction to a home or institutional environment.

Example 2: the person constantly demonstrates behavioural dysregulation that is extremely self-limiting and/or impactful on others, such as extreme difficulty or refusal to engage in non-preferred environments, or self-stimulatory behaviour in all environments.

(i) social skills

Example: the person has extreme difficulty reading non-verbal communication (such as gestures or facial expressions), interacting with others and shows a lack of awareness of social norms and expectations.

(j) self-awareness.

Example: the person has very poor or no awareness of own limitations resulting in frequent and serious risks to self or others.