

The Law

Section 203 of the Highway Traffic Act states that physicians in Ontario have a legal responsibility to report all patients with medical conditions that may impede driving ability to the Medical Review Section of the Ministry of Transportation.

Officials at the Ministry of Transportation review the physician's report and determine whether a license suspension is warranted. If the answer is yes, a registered letter is sent to the individual advising of the suspension. It remains up to the individual or family to ensure that the individual stops driving.

What Can Families Do?

The loss of driving privileges can be devastating. Some individuals with Alzheimer's disease or other dementias may resist or simply forget that they can no longer drive. Some suggestions to ease the transition include:

- Parking the car out of sight
- Hiding the car keys
- Modifying the car so that it cannot be driven.

When these strategies do not work, families have an alternative: the **At Risk Driver Program**.

For More Information on Driving Safety

Sault Ste. Marie Police Services
949-6300

Alzheimer Society of Sault Ste. Marie and Algoma District
942-2195

Seniors' Mental Health Services
759-9396

Ministry of Transportation
1-800-268-4686

Other Safe Return Programs

Ask about **Safely Home®**, a nationwide program designed to help find the person who is lost and assist in a safe return home. Developed by the Alzheimer Society of Canada in partnership with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, a registry stores vital information confidentially on a police database. The information can be accessed by police anywhere in Canada.

Visit our website:
www.dementiaalgoma.org



At Risk Driver Program

A PROGRAM THAT HELPS TO FACILITATE THE SAFE RETURN OF DRIVERS WITH COGNITIVE IMPAIRMENTS



Alzheimer Society

Administered in partnership by the Sault Ste. Marie Police Services and the Alzheimer Society of Sault Ste. Marie and Algoma District

The At Risk Driver Program

The **At Risk Driver Program** provides families and caregivers an opportunity to strengthen the safety net for the person with Alzheimer's disease or a related dementia whose license has been revoked yet continues to drive.

How can the At Risk Driver Program help?

A concerned caregiver can register the individual in the **At Risk Driver Program**. The registration form collects information that helps police identify cognitively-impaired drivers. The person who is registered will be flagged in the police database as someone of "Special Interest to Police".

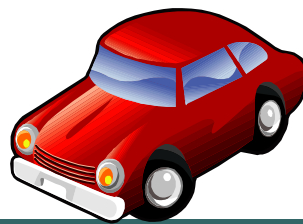
What will happen when the person with dementia is stopped by police?

If the person is registered in the **At Risk Driver Program**, the police will identify the individual as cognitively impaired and will contact the person listed on the registration form to help ensure that the driver is returned home safely. It is the family's responsibility to assist police to safely store any vehicles.

The At Risk Driver Program

If you are considering registering your loved one in this program, there are a few important considerations:

- A driver's license must be under suspension for medical reasons in order to register with this program. However, family members may still contact police at any time if they have concerns about a loved one's driving.
- Because this registration in the **At Risk Driver Program** causes the person to be registered on the Canadian Police Information Centre (CPIC), the license plates that are provided on the registration form will automatically trigger questioning by police and international border personnel. If other family members regularly drive the vehicle, they should be aware of this.
- Any changes in vehicle or license plates, or of the person registered, must be reported so that appropriate changes can be made in the database. You will be contacted every six months to update the information on the form.



Driving and Dementia

Driving a motor vehicle is a complex activity that requires quick reactions, good judgement, an understanding and recall of the rules of the road, an ability to find a destination, and good eyesight.

A diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease and other dementias do not automatically mean that the individual is incapable of driving. However, the disease eventually affects judgement, orientation, and vision, and will ultimately place the affected individual and the general public at risk.

Knowing when a person's driving ability is compromised can be difficult, but there are some warning signs.

WARNING SIGNS*

- Unaware of driving errors
- Gets lost or confused while driving
- Several close calls
- Other drivers often honk
- Seems unaware of other vehicles
- Sometimes misses traffic signs
- No longer able to keep up with the speed of traffic

**DriveABLE Assessment Centres Inc.*