

# Psychological Assessment: Assessing a patient's capacity for work

This resource will assist GPs to assess a patient's functional capacity for work. The Certificate of Capacity is used to record capacity assessments and recommendations for reasonable adjustments to support performance of work duties.

## Undertake a functional assessment by considering the following factors:

 <p><b>Side effects of medication</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is your patient on any medication which may impair cognitive or other functioning?</li> </ul>
 <p><b>Cognitive capacity</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Can your patient: Read and recall what they have read?</li> <li>Can your patient: Use technology, including communicating via email, and use social media?</li> </ul>
 <p><b>Coping</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How is your patient coping with the usual frustrations of day-to-day activities?</li> <li>Are there signs that your patient isn't coping, such as avoidance behaviours or substance abuse?</li> </ul>
 <p><b>Energy and endurance</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does your patient sleep soundly through the night?</li> <li>Does your patient have sufficient energy to get through the day or do they need additional breaks?</li> </ul>
 <p><b>Structure and routine</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does your patient have some structure to their daily routine?</li> <li>How does your patient manage their daily living activities?</li> <li>Does your patient wake and retire to bed at a reasonable time each day?</li> <li>Is your patient performing caring duties for dependent children or relatives or friends?</li> </ul>
 <p><b>Interpersonal functioning</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does your patient engage with their family or friends?</li> <li>Is your patient continuing to participate in social or recreational activities?</li> <li>Is your patient receiving managerial and/or social support at work?</li> </ul>
 <p><b>Evidence of work capacity</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does your patient engage in any study or voluntary work?</li> </ul>

## Work modifications or reasonable adjustments

Keeping your patient at work while they recover results in better health and wellbeing outcomes.

Modification to work duties, practices or the workplace should occur to protect the person, allow time to recover and create an environment of meaningful work.

## Determine your patient's capacity for work:

### Some capacity

Selected pre-injury duties, other suitable duties or workplace modifications.



### Full capacity

Pre-injury duties and hours with no modification

No capacity is only applicable when a person cannot undertake modified work duties.

## Where capacity is limited, consider recommending flexible work hours and / or location and / or reduced work hours

IF YOUR PATIENT IS:	RECOMMEND
Tired, lethargic or lacks energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More frequent breaks at work</li> <li>Reduce the intensity of the work tasks</li> </ul>
Lacking concentration or memory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduce tasks that are complex or require sustained concentration</li> <li>Break down tasks to simpler tasks</li> <li>Provide written instructions</li> <li>Reduce distraction in the work environment</li> <li>Extra time to complete tasks</li> </ul>
Unable to cope with demands due to limited frustration tolerance or avoidance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minimise exposure to sources of work stress</li> <li>Encourage participation in events and activities your patient usually enjoys</li> </ul>
Interpersonally sensitive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Restrict tasks requiring interpersonal interaction</li> </ul>
Agitated or anxious	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regular breaks through the work-day</li> <li>Variety of tasks</li> <li>Avoid tasks which require sustained concentration</li> </ul>
Disturbed sleep	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regular breaks through the work-day</li> </ul>
Lack of motivation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recommend simpler tasks</li> <li>Encourage work goals</li> </ul>