

Functional Capacity Evaluation and Cognitive Functional Capacity Evaluation

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Goals

- Participants will be able to
 - Describe what a functional capacity evaluation and cognitive functional capacity evaluation is.
 - Describe what case management questions each assessment can be used to answer.
 - Describe the advantages and limitations of each assessment
 - Describe specific information that needs to be provided to the evaluator when facilitating a referral.



FCE defined

- FCE- A compilation of physical standardized and non-standardized tools to evaluate the client's strength, endurance, speed, and flexibility.
- Each assessment is unique and designed to answer specific referral source questions.
- Free of bias promoting case resolution.
- Designed to have utility and is practical while maintaining validity, reliability, and most importantly safety.



Possible questions answered by an FCE

- Did the client provide full physical effort?
- Is the client reliable in their reports of pain and disability?
- Is the client able to return to their pre injury job?
If not what restrictions will be needed to succeed in this job?
- What are the client's physical tolerances to assist with vocational planning?



FCE Details

- Length 4-6 hours
- The sequence of an FCE is determined based on keeping the assessment safe but also getting to the questions to be answered.
- It always starts with sedentary demand level activity increasing through the range of demand levels until a safe maximum is met or the demands of the job being tested are met.



Cognitive FCE

A new product for case resolution

- Presently this is a product that has limited availability in New England.
- The West Coast and Canada have more availability of clinicians doing these. This is a result of better reimbursement and a different case management model.
- CFCEs are viewed as essential for life planning in Canada. Assessments performed in Canada can last a day up to a full week in length incorporating testing in the clinic, work, home, and community environment.
- Although a full week assessment is expensive, the efficiency of future care provision that results from the information gathered in the CFCE results in a savings over the course of lifetime of care.



History of Cognitive FCE at DHMC

- In the past 7 years the pathways of accessing neuro rehab care and provision of care has been better organized into a neuro rehab program at DHMC.
- As we were fine tuning this care flow, it was evident that once a patient plateaued in rehabilitation and other care options, there was still a question about whether they could return to some level of employment.
- I attended additional training on the West Coast to learn how to incorporate cognitive testing into the FCE while still maintaining safety, reliability, and validity.



CFCE defined

- CFCE - Contains some of the same physical testing options as in an FCE but also includes standardized cognitive assessment, non standardized assessment, and simulation activity to promote the observation of cognitive, physical, behavioral, and psychosocial function.




Advantages of CFCE

- Not a recipe. Each assessment is individually designed to answer specific referral questions
- Performance over time. This evaluation can be up to 6 hours in length with the day organized similar to a work day.
- Provides additional information compared to neuropsychological or other cognitive or psychological based testing.



Advantages of a CFCE

- CFCE has some standardized cognitive assessment but also weighs on custom simulation type activities in varied environments
- CFCE provides the ideal opportunity to observe executive function (integrate component cognitive abilities to produce meaningful task performance).
- A CFCE is important because work oriented executive function has characteristics that are not found in ADL or leisure activities.



Reliability of Pain and Disability Reporting

- Compare the client's reports of disability to actual performance.
- Assess level of insight and awareness into physical and cognitive deficits.
- Identify why there is a discrepancy between subjective reports and actual performance.
- Important to guide future treatment and care needs.

Physical/Cognitive Effort

- Objective data supporting consistent effort is necessary for the results of the assessment to be considered an accurate representation of the client's abilities.
- The population being tested and assessment of cognition bring some unique challenges to determining effort. The assessor must delineate symptoms of limited initiation, visual issues, or slowed problem solving from lack of effort in the task. Impulsivity can also be confused with high level of effort.
- The CFCE uses standard physical indications of effort such as heart rate analysis, competitive test performance, hand grip testing, observation for clinical inconsistencies, and biomechanical changes.
- Observation of behavior and clinical consistency are also considered related to determining effort with cognitive function.



Limitations of an FCE and CFCE

- These are one-day assessments at DHMC and are a snap shot in time.
- We cannot assess the effects of physical or cognitive fatigue the day after testing.



Summary and recommendations portion of the CFCE report

- Although a table is provided in the report including performance areas, limitations in each area, and if it meets work requirements, this does not always paint a clear picture of the client's true abilities.
- In the summary, specific detail is provided of how physical and cognitive abilities interact.
- The recommendation section provides direct answers to the referral questions

logistics

FCE

- 4-5 hours in length
- Evaluators are fairly available through New England to do these.
- There are a number of different FCE certification programs resulting in different FCE offerings that are not apple-to-apple comparisons.

CFCE

- 5-6 hours in length
- Limited access to evaluators on the east coast. As of 3 years ago, DHMC was the only facility to offer this.
- Matheson and Associates is the only certification company presently offering advanced training in CFCE



Final Thoughts: How to get the most out of an FCE or CFCE.

- Often times MDs order a FCE or CFCE because a lawyer requests it, the patient is at medical end point, or the patient requested one.
- It is important that the evaluator knows what specific questions need to be answered prior to the assessment. Some individuals with brain injury (and some without) are unable to express this.
- Ideally, contact the evaluator prior to evaluation to discuss purpose of the FCE and specific client information the evaluator may need to know.



THANK YOU!