



Frequently Asked Questions

Independent Medical Examinations (2024)

This companion document is intended to provide physicians with general advice to support their understanding of the expectations set out in a College Standard of Practice.

This document may be edited or updated for clarity at any time. Please refer back to the document regularly to ensure you are aware of the most recent advice.

Frequently Asked Questions

What are some examples of Independent Medical Examinations (IMEs)?

Common examples include occupational health examinations, fitness for work examinations, disability benefit claim examinations, and automobile insurance claim examinations.

What is the role of an IME physician?

An IME physician provides an impartial opinion on the examinee's medical needs or condition, as detailed by the requesting third party. The opinion provided must be fair and not biased towards any party's interest, including the party who has retained the physician.

What is unique about obtaining consent for an IME?

The role of a physician conducting an IME differs from that of a physician in a therapeutic physician-patient relationship. As such, it is important to ensure that the examinee understands the role of the IME physician and the purpose of the IME prior to providing consent. The examinee should be made aware that the IME physician is preparing a report for a third party. The College's Standard of Practice on [Consent to Treatment](#) provides additional information on the general expectations of the College for obtaining consent.

What should I do if the examinee withdraws their consent to be examined?

The examinee is permitted to withdraw their consent to be examined. If this happens, advise the examinee that you accept their withdrawal of consent and, if applicable, explain how the withdrawal impacts on your ability to complete the IME. Detail any such limitation(s) in your report to the requesting third party.

What should I do if the examinee withdraws their consent to share the IME findings with the requesting third party?

The examinee is permitted to withdraw their consent to share the IME findings with the third party. If this happens, advise the examinee that you accept their withdrawal of consent and explain how the withdrawal impacts on your ability to complete the IME. Advise the requesting third party that consent to share the IME findings was withdrawn by the examinee.

I discovered a concerning health finding during an IME. What should I do?

Discuss the finding with the examinee and explain the limitation of your role in their medical care. If the examinee has a primary healthcare provider, offer to communicate your finding with their provider if the examinee provides consent. If the examinee does not have a primary healthcare provider or does not provide consent for you to communicate with their provider, explain the importance of seeking further assessment of the health finding.

I still have questions. Who can help me?

Contact the College by [email](#). We will direct your inquiry to the appropriate person at our office.

Document History

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