

# Evaluation of the senior physician – Experience of the UC San Diego PACE Program

David E.J. Bazzo, M.D. FAAFP  
Director, Fitness for Duty Program  
Clinical Professors of Family Medicine  
UC San Diego Physician Assessment and Clinical Education (PACE) Program

# The UC San Diego PACE Program

- Founded in 1996
- Provides assessment of physician competencies and remediation of deficiencies
- Competency assessment of more than 1800 physicians
- Educational services to more than 6000 physicians
- Fitness for Duty Assessments
- Late Career Health Screening for Physicians and Healthcare Professionals (LCHS)
  - formerly known as PAPA

# What to measure?

## The ACGME/ABMS 6 Core Competencies

- Patient care
- Medical knowledge
- Practice-based learning and improvement
- Interpersonal and communication skills
- Professionalism
- Systems-based practice
  
- Physician health is not included

# Moutier CY, Bazzo DEJ, Norcross WA. J Med Reg 2013; 99 (1): 10-18.

- Independent complete history and physical examination, to include screening vision and hearing
- Assessment of mental health using inexpensive standardized tools
- Cognitive assessment (Microcog or MOCA)
- Peer review (?)
- Goals would be safe patient care, quality improvement, maximizing physician health
- If needed, accommodations where possible; including “winding down,” transitioning to retirement

# UC San Diego Late Career Health Screen

- **What it Is:** health screening intended for hospitals that have a “late career” policy.
- **Purpose:** To determine whether or not the participating physician is currently fit to practice, or if further health evaluations are needed.
- **What it is NOT:** “For Cause” fitness for duty evaluation. Diagnostic evaluation
- **Length:** ½ day
- **Cost:** varies
- **Time to complete** (from application to final report): ~30-45 days

# UC San Diego Late Career Health Screen

- Review of self-report health questionnaires
- History and physical examination
- MicroCog™ Cognitive screening exam/MOCA®
- Mental health screen (PHQ-9, GAD-7)
- Substance use screen (questionnaire, no fluid)
- Dexterity test (for proceduralists only)
- Suturing simulation (for those that suture)

# Final determinations

- FIT FOR DUTY
- Results either indicate that no presence of illness exists that interferes with the physician's ability to safely perform the duties of his or her job OR that presence of illness exists but currently does not interfere with the physician's ability to safely perform the duties of his or her job. Reevaluation may be recommended depending on the expected course of any present illness(es).
- FURTHER EVALUATION RECOMMENDED
- Results indicate a possible impairment exists due to a physical or mental health problem. For those identified with possible impairment a fitness for duty evaluation may be recommended.

# A Pilot Study of an Assessment Battery of Physical, Mental and Cognitive Screening Process for Senior Physicians

Bazzo, D.E.J., Smith, P., Wenghofer, E.F.

- Submitted for publication, under review
- **KEY POINTS**
- Question: To determine the acceptability and feasibility of a screening assessment battery of physical and cognitive abilities for senior physicians.
- Findings: This descriptive study recruited 30 physicians assessing their health and cognitive abilities and their reaction to the screening battery. Eight of the thirty required/may require further cognitive evaluation. The screening assessment was judged a positive experience and that screening senior physicians is a good idea.
- Meaning: While needing further validating study, the battery for screening the health and cognition of senior physicians was acceptable and feasible.



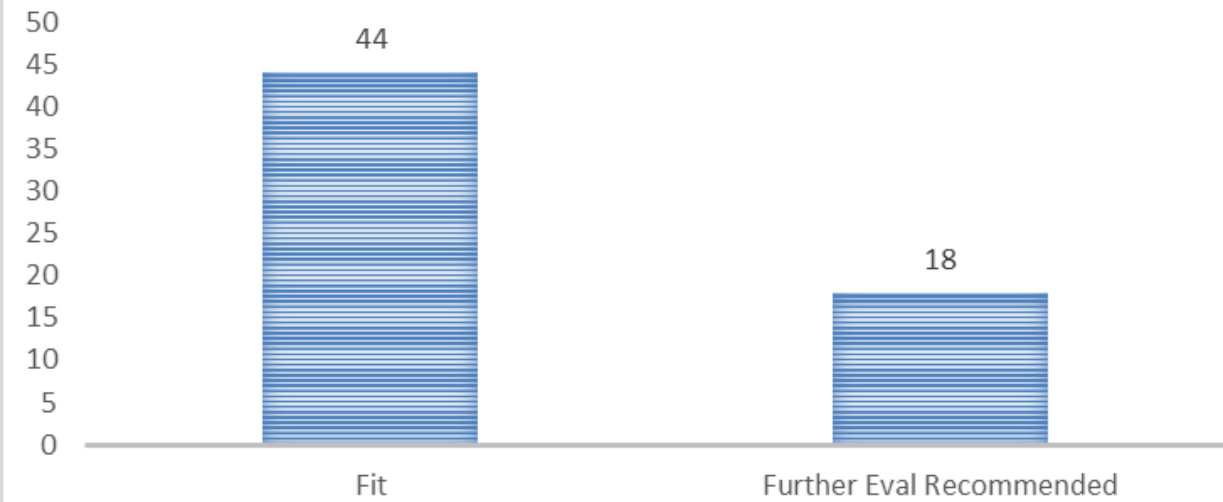
# Active work: Total evaluations 62, 7 Contracts

<b>Multiple assessments:</b>	<b>2 assessments: 6</b>	<b>3 assessments: 1</b>	<b>4 assessments: 1</b>
<b>Gender:</b>	<b>Male: 52</b>	<b>Female: 10</b>	
<b>Age:</b>	<b>Oldest: 80 (rads, F.E.N.)</b>	<b>Youngest: 62 (NV Bd., fit)</b>	<b>Average: 72.4</b>
<b>Referring organizations:</b>	<b>Hosp/Med Grp: 60</b>	<b>State Board: 1</b>	<b>Other: 1</b>
<b>Board Certified:</b>	<b>Yes: 59</b>	<b>No: 3</b>	

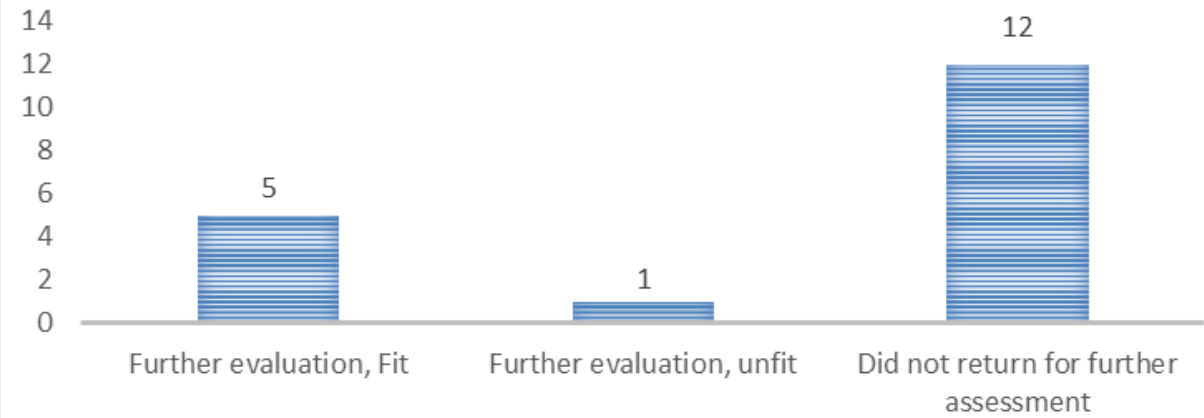
\*As of 8/8/19, 5 additional as of 10/1/19 not included in statistics  
Also, 2 results pending, 6 scheduled, 7 enrolled awaiting scheduling

# Outcomes

## OUTCOMES BY CATEGORIZATION



## OUTCOMES OF THOSE REQUIRING FURTHER ASSESSMENT



# Questions?

[dbazzo@ucsd.edu](mailto:dbazzo@ucsd.edu)

[paceprogram.ucsd.edu](http://paceprogram.ucsd.edu)