



## Social Security (Tables for the Assessment of Work-related Impairment for Disability Support Pension) Determination 2011

**Table 7 – Brain Function**

### Introduction to Table 7

- Table 7 is to be used where the person has a permanent condition resulting in functional impairment related to neurological or cognitive function.
- The diagnosis of the condition must be made by an appropriately qualified medical practitioner.
- Self-report of symptoms alone is insufficient.
- There must be corroborating evidence of the person's impairment.
- Examples of corroborating evidence for the purposes of this Table include, but are not limited to, the following:
  - a report from the person's treating doctor;
  - a report from a specialist health practitioner (e.g. neurologist, rehabilitation physician, psychiatrist or neuropsychologist) supporting the diagnosis of conditions associated with neurological or cognitive impairment (e.g. acquired brain injury, stroke (cerebrovascular accident (CVA)), conditions resulting in dementia, tumour in the brain, some neurodegenerative disorders, chronic pain);
  - results of diagnostic tests (e.g. Magnetic Resonance Imagery (MRI), Computerised (Axial) Tomography (CT) scans, Electroencephalograph (EEG));
  - results of cognitive function assessments.
- The signs and symptoms of neurological or cognitive impairment may vary over time. The person's presentation on the day of the assessment should not solely be relied upon.
- For neurological or cognitive conditions that are episodic or fluctuate, the rating that best reflects the person's overall functional ability must be applied, taking into account the severity, duration and frequency of the episodes or fluctuations as appropriate.
- A person with Autism Spectrum Disorder who does not have a low IQ should be assessed under this Table.
- Table 7 should not be used when a person has an impairment of intellectual function already assessed under Table 9, unless the person has an additional condition affecting neurological or cognitive function.

Points	Descriptors
0	<p><i>There is <b>no</b> functional impact resulting from a neurological or cognitive condition.</i></p> <p>(1) The person has no significant problems with memory, attention, concentration, problem solving, visuo-spatial function, planning, decision making, comprehension, self awareness or behavioural regulation.</p>

5 *There is a **mild** functional impact resulting from a neurological or cognitive condition.*

(1) The person is able to complete most day to day activities without assistance and has mild difficulties in at least one of the following:

(a) memory;

*Example:* The person occasionally forgets to complete a regular task or sometimes misplaces important items.

(b) attention and concentration;

*Example 1:* The person has some difficulty concentrating on complex tasks for more than 1 hour.

*Example 2:* The person has some difficulty focusing on a task if there are other activities occurring nearby.

(c) problem solving;

*Example 1:* The person has difficulty solving complex problems that may involve multiple factors or abstract concepts.

*Example 2:* The person shows a lack of awareness of problems in some situations.

(d) planning;

*Example:* The person has some difficulty planning and organising complex activities (such as arranging travel and accommodation for an interstate or overseas holiday).

(e) decision making;

*Example:* The person has some difficulty in prioritising and complex decision making when there are several options to choose from.

(f) comprehension.

*Example:* The person has some difficulty in understanding complex instructions involving multiple steps.

There is a **moderate** functional impact resulting from a neurological or cognitive condition.

- (1) The person needs occasional (less than once a day) assistance with day to day activities and has moderate difficulties in at least one of the following:
- (a) memory;  
*Example 1:* The person often forgets to complete regular tasks of minor consequence such as putting the bin out on rubbish night.  
*Example 2:* The person often misplaces items.  
*Example 3:* The person needs to use memory aids (such as shopping lists) to remember any more than 3 or 4 items.
  - (b) attention and concentration;  
*Example 1:* The person has difficulty concentrating on complex tasks for more than 30 minutes.  
*Example 2:* The person has significant difficulty focusing on a task if there are other activities occurring nearby.
  - (c) problem solving;  
*Example:* The person has difficulty solving some day to day problems or problems not previously encountered and may need assistance or advice from time to time.
  - (d) planning;  
*Example:* The person has difficulty planning and organising new or special activities (such as planning and organising a large birthday party).
  - (e) decision making;  
*Example:* The person has some difficulty in prioritising and decision making and displays poor judgement at times, resulting in negative outcomes for self or others.
  - (f) comprehension;  
*Example:* The person has difficulty understanding complex instructions involving multiple steps and may need more prompts, written instructions or repeated demonstrations than peers to complete tasks.
  - (g) visuo-spatial function;  
*Example:* The person has some difficulty with visuo-spatial functions (such as difficulty reading maps, giving directions or judging distance or depth) but this does not result in major limitations in day to day activities.
  - (h) behavioural regulation;  
*Example:* The person occasionally (less than once a week) has difficulty controlling behaviour in routine situations (such as showing frustration or anger or losing temper for minor reasons but displays no physical aggression).
  - (j) self awareness.  
*Example:* The person lacks awareness of own limitations, resulting in mild difficulties in social interactions or problems arising in day to day activities.

There is a **severe** functional impact resulting from a neurological or cognitive condition.

- (1) The person needs frequent (at least once a day) assistance and supervision and has severe difficulties in at least one of the following:
- (a) memory;  
*Example 1:* The person is unable to remember routines, regular tasks and instructions.  
*Example 2:* The person has difficulty recalling events of the past few days.  
*Example 3:* The person gets easily lost in unfamiliar places.
  - (b) attention and concentration;  
*Example 1:* The person is unable to concentrate on any task, even a task that interests the person, for more than 10 minutes.  
*Example 2:* The person is easily distracted from any task.
  - (c) problem solving;  
*Example:* The person is unable to solve routine day to day problems (such as what to do if a household appliance breaks down) and needs regular assistance and advice.
  - (d) planning;  
*Example:* The person is unable to plan and organise routine daily activities (such as an outing to the movies or a supermarket shopping trip).
  - (e) decision making;  
*Example:* The person is unable to prioritise and make complex decisions and often displays poor judgement, resulting in negative outcomes for self or others.
  - (f) comprehension;  
*Example:* The person is unable to understand basic instructions and needs regular prompts to complete tasks.
  - (g) visuo-spatial function;  
*Example:* The person is unable to perform many visuo-spatial functions, such as reading maps, giving directions (including to the person's house) or judging distance or depth (resulting in stumbling on steps or bumping into objects).
  - (h) behavioural regulation;  
*Example:* The person is often (more than once a week) unable to control behaviour even in routine, day to day situations and may be verbally abusive to others or threaten physical aggression.
  - (j) self awareness.  
*Example:* The person lacks awareness of own limitations, resulting in significant difficulties in social interactions or problems arising in day to day activities.

There is an **extreme** functional impact resulting from a neurological or cognitive condition.

(1) The person needs continual assistance and supervision and has extreme difficulties in at least one of the following:

(a) memory;

*Example 1:* The person needs constant prompts and reminders to remember routine tasks, familiar people and places and may get lost even in familiar places if not accompanied.

*Example 2:* The person has difficulties remembering events that happened earlier in the day (such as what the person ate for breakfast).

(b) attention and concentration;

*Example:* The person is unable to concentrate on any task for more than a few minutes.

(c) problem solving;

*Example:* The person is unable to solve even the most basic problems (such as what to do if the kettle is empty) and needs complete assistance with problem solving.

(d) planning;

*Example:* The person is unable to plan and organise daily activities and needs complete assistance to organise daily routine.

(e) decision making;

*Example:* The person is unable to prioritise and make simple decisions and needs a guardian or other delegate to make decisions or give consent on the person's behalf.

(f) comprehension;

*Example:* The person is unable to understand even simple, single step instructions and needs assistance to complete most tasks.

(g) visuo-spatial function;

*Example 1:* The person is unable to perform even basic visuo-spatial functions, is unable to follow spatial directions (such as 'turn left at the corner'), or is unable to judge distance or depth which severely limits mobility.

*Example 2:* The person has left or right-sided neglect, that is, they are not aware of objects, people or body parts in the left or right field of vision. This means that even though the person's eyes can see an object, the person's brain does not register its presence.

(h) behavioural regulation;

*Example:* The person is frequently (every day) unable to control behaviour in a range of day to day situations and this interferes with participation in activities outside the home and requires supervision and possibly restriction to a home or institutional environment.

(j) self awareness.

*Example:* The person has very poor or no awareness of own limitations resulting in frequent and serious risks to self or others.