



***Report of the Division 40 Task Force on Education,  
Accreditation and Credentialing***

# **Guidelines Regarding the Use of Nondoctoral Personnel in Clinical Neuropsychological Assessment**

## **Introduction**

The guidelines regarding the use of nondoctoral personnel in clinical neuropsychological assessment represent a continuation of previous documents from the Task Force (Task Force, 1987, 1988). The document below represents a general position regarding the use of nondoctoral personnel, and delineates the role of such personnel in the general context of clinical neuropsychological assessment. The committee members who participated in the development of this document included R.A. Bornstein (Chair), Linas Bieliauskas, Lloyd Cripe, James Hom, Edith Kaplan, Roberta White, Alan Yozawitz.

## **Use of Nondoctoral Personnel in Neuropsychological Assessment**

The practice of Clinical Neuropsychology involves the integration of data derived from a variety of sources which may include clinical or diagnostic patient interviews, clinical histories, and interpretation of data from various neuropsychological measures. There is a broad range of practice in regard to the use of neuropsychological measures in the assessment of behavioral consequences of impaired brain function. In the use of neuropsychological assessment techniques, individual psychologists may elect to perform their own assessment (in whole or in part) in order to directly observe specific aspects of behavior. However, there is no obligation for all psychologists to perform their own assessments in this manner. One practice in Clinical Neuropsychology includes the supervised participation of nondoctoral personnel (technicians, psychometrists, psychometricians, psychological assistants, etc. depending on the venue). The use of such technicians is a common and accepted practice when the supervising psychologist maintains and monitors high standards of quality assurance as suggested for such work in the General Guidelines for Providers of Psychological Services, (American Psychological Association, 1987); Specialty Guidelines for the Delivery of Psychological Services by Clinical Psychologists, (American Psychological Association, 1981); and Ethical Principles of Psychologists, (American Psychological Association, 1981).

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## Roles for Technicians in Clinical Neuropsychological Assessment

The neuropsychological technician occupies a critical role in the assessment process (for those psychologists who elect to use technicians). No neuropsychologist can interpret improperly obtained data, and it has been suggested that “excellent examination technique is the sine qua non of neuropsychological evaluation” (Boll, 1981). However, technicians have a very narrowly defined and highly specific role in the overall process. These technicians are responsible only for the administration and scoring of neuropsychological tests under the supervision of a neuropsychologist who must be a licensed psychologist in that state or province. The selection of tests, interpretation of those tests, clinical interviewing of patients or family members, and communication of test results and their implications is the sole and exclusive responsibility of the licensed (neuro)psychologist. Experienced or “senior” technicians may be involved in the training of new technicians or in the monitoring of testing procedures; however, the ultimate responsibility for testing procedures and training remains with the licensed supervising (neuro)psychologist. The professional relationship in clinical neuropsychology is between the patient and the licensed (neuro)psychologist. Fees for service and accountability for the quality of professional work are exclusively the purview of the licensed (neuro)psychologist.

## References

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- This statement reflects the official position of the Division of Clinical Neuropsychology and should not be constructed as either contrary to or supraordinate to the policies of the APA at large.*

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