

The Diving Ireland Medical Process

Following some recent feedback, it is clear that there are some miss-conceptions about the Diving Ireland medical process. Therefore, the following note will hopefully clear up any confusion on how the process works and allow divers to use it efficiently so that they can start diving or continue diving with as minimal disruption as possible. The attached flow diagram provides a step by step outline of how to complete the medical process.

What is the process?

One of the initial miss-conceptions of the process is that the divers GP "signs them off" to dive and that once that is in place they are considered "active". This is not the case. The stages that an active diver must go through in order to be considered active (and to be insured) includes

1. Completion of the medical disclaimer on Just-Go (previously Go-Membership) upon joining, annually and if their medical situation changes,
2. The divers periodic medical assessment, the frequency of which depends on the divers age (or if they have a condition which requires more frequent medical assessments),
3. Holding an appropriate diver membership in Diving Ireland,
4. The divers fitness test as confirmed as their Dive Officer in Just Go,

If any one of the above 4 steps is incomplete, the diver is not insured to dive.

How does the medical disclaimer get approved?

The medical disclaimer can be approved in one of two ways. For divers who have no specific medical conditions or medications which is identified by the medical disclaimer as causing a potential contraindication to diving, the disclaimer gets automatically approved by the Just-Go system. If the diver has a condition which could be a contraindication to diving, the medical officer reviews the disclaimer and responds using the Just-Go system in order to communicate with the diver. The medical officer will use the UKDMC guidelines to advise the diver on what they need to do in order to be able to dive. The onus is on the diver to make sure they complete the requirements outlined to them by the medical officer in order to get approved for diving.

What can the diver do to make the process efficient?

1. Make sure you do your medical disclaimer **well in advance** of your medical assessment by your doctor. The disclaimer must also be completed each and every year.
2. If you had an issue with your medical disclaimer in the previous year, make sure that you explain all of the details of that to the medical officer during this years disclaimer.
3. Divers can check the UKDMC website where there is information for divers on conditions which may present a contraindication to diving. The information is available here: <https://www.ukdmc.org/information-for-divers/>
4. Conduct the assessments and/or bring the relevant information that the medical officer requests to your doctor and/or consultant.
5. Respond to the medical officer in a timely fashion using Just-Go.
6. Questions and queries can always be raised using medical@diving.ie (please be respectful and courteous when dealing with all volunteers in IUC including the medical officer)

What if I don't agree with the decision taken by the Medical Officer?

Another common miss-conception is that the NDO or the Executive can override a decision taken by the medical officer. This is **not** the case. If a diver wants to appeal a decision by the medical officer, then the diver should contact the UKDMC to appeal directly. This appeals process is independent from Diving Ireland.

Can I just go and buy diving membership from another organisation?

Another miss-conception is that diving with insurance from another organisation is possible. There are two issues with this. One is related to the club and one is related to the diver. Having divers dive with the club who are not insured through Diving Ireland may result in insurance implications on clubs depending on the situation. Clubs should be careful to ensure they are appropriately covered for insurance for all club diving activities. For divers, while some of the insurance providers will accept payment, you are bound by the medical requirements listed in the terms and conditions of the insurance policy you are purchasing. Most of these insurance providers have similar medical disclaimer / disclosure requirements to Diving Ireland so in many cases, divers may not be covered to dive by other insurance policies.

The most common causes of delays to a members medical renewal

1. Not correctly following the medical renewal method described in the Medical process chart.
2. Not realising that a members doctor cannot overrule the operation of the Diving Ireland medical process.
3. Not filling in the medical form correctly.
4. A member not reviewing their Just Go profile after a reply was sent to them from the HMO.
5. Members feeling that different rules are being applied to them compared to other members. The HMO uses cut and pastes of the UKDMC so the same guidelines are applied to all members.
6. Some specialists feel that if they say someone can dive then they can dive without knowing anything about diving or paying any reference to the UKDMC guidance.