

TIPS FOR COMPLETING FORM N-648 MEDICAL CERTIFICATION FOR DISABILITY EXCEPTIONS

- All items should be **complete**. The form will be returned and likely not even read if there appears to be an incomplete blank.
- Item 1 is diagnosis only, despite the large size of the box. Name the illness that makes it impossible for the client to test in English and understand history/civics.
- Item 2 is a lay-persons explanation of the illness, e.g. dementia is an illness characterized by a deterioration of the brain, etc.
- Item 5 must list why you are not the regularly treating provider, e.g. The client was referred to me for evaluation because I am a specialist in brain disorders. OR This patient has been under the care of _____ ARNP since February 2014. NPs are not allowed to sign this certification, so I am verifying her findings and certifying.
- Item 6 should be 6 and Item 7 should be No, if that is true.
- Item 8 is a lay-person's explanation of the illness, e.g. "The exact cause of Alzheimer's dementia remains unknown and is being heavily researched. Abnormalities of proteins in brain cells have been found and seem to accumulate over time...."
- Item 9 is the methods used to make your diagnosis. It seems helpful to mention any imaging results, lab testing, or cognitive testing that may have been used.

Example: Diagnosis of Alzheimer's can only be confirmed at autopsy. Diagnosis was made by review of _____'s medical records and labs, in-person exam and personal history, and cognitive screening test. Clinical evaluation of cognitive function including memory, judgment, language, and motor skills (ability to complete complex tasks involving movement) was assessed via the Rowland Universal Dementia Assessment Scale (RUDAS), used for multi-cultural and low formal education patients. She scored 11/27 indicating moderate to severe dementia. Her judgment, language and short-term recall were particularly impaired.

- Item 10 is crucial to acceptance of your N-648. It must clearly explain to a lay person why this person **cannot learn English or history and civics** (it is rarely accepted if Item 11 is not all 4 items). Also, **never mention level of education or economic status in your N-648**. *These are not considered pertinent and even if the rest of your document is sound, it may be dismissed outright if these things are mentioned.* e.g. Because of the damage accumulated so far in _____'s brain she is not able to even care for herself appropriately. Unfortunately her memory and judgment are so impaired that her insight into her impairment is poor (very typical) which limits the amount of assistance she will accept. Her health is getting increasingly worse because she believes she is taking her medications herself (she is not) and tries to keep her own appointments (which she forgets). She is also not able to learn new facts in civics and has been unable to learn English either.