

The Diving Medical Advisory Committee

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DMAC Statement on Education and Training in Diving Medicine

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DMAC together with EDTC has established a mechanism for the recognition of training courses in diving medicine suitable for physicians who support the commercial diving industry. Courses at Level 1 – *Medical assessment of divers (Medical Examiner of Divers)* – and 2D – *Medical management of diving accidents and illnesses (Diving Medicine Physician)* – cover the theoretical background and include some practical experience of necessary procedures and the diving environment.

However, the development of competence in diving medicine will require direct clinical experience of the management of diving illness and since episodes of illness and injury occurring in the course of commercial diving operations remain relatively rare, it is difficult for any individual to gain the necessary experience. The limited number of clinical episodes, together with changes in the working practices of the medical profession, means that diving physicians trained today may only get practical on site experience of a handful of cases over the course of a career.

Since a large proportion of commercial oilfield diving is conducted in saturation mode, there is a need for further training of diving physicians which provides both the experience of the saturation diving environment and the opportunity to learn all the practical issues of the provision of medical care and the use of medical equipment in that environment.

While the need for such additional training is most obvious in saturation diving, it would also be beneficial for physicians involved in other areas of commercial diving such as wind farm diving activity.

Although such courses would not be able to provide direct clinical experience, they would provide much greater familiarity and knowledge of the environment so that in the event of an emergency situation physicians were able to concentrate fully on medical care provision.

DMAC therefore actively supports the development and provision of such courses.

DMAC, the independent body comprising diving medical specialists from across Europe, seeks to provide advice about medical and certain safety aspects of commercial diving.