

NAN DEFINITION OF A CLINICAL NEUROPSYCHOLOGIST 2001

*Official Position of the National Academy of Neuropsychology
Approved by the Board of Directors 05/05/2001*

This 2001 definition expands upon and modifies the 1989 definition by Division 40 of the American Psychological Association, which was used as the foundation for this updated document.

A clinical neuropsychologist is a professional within the field of psychology with special expertise in the applied science of brain-behavior relationships. Clinical neuropsychologists use this knowledge in the assessment, diagnosis, treatment, and/or rehabilitation of patients across the lifespan with neurological, medical, neurodevelopmental and psychiatric conditions, as well as other cognitive and learning disorders. The clinical neuropsychologist uses psychological, neurological, cognitive, behavioral, and physiological principles, techniques and tests to evaluate patients' neurocognitive, behavioral, and emotional strengths and weaknesses and their relationship to normal and abnormal central nervous system functioning. The clinical neuropsychologist uses this information and information provided by other medical/healthcare providers to identify and diagnose neurobehavioral disorders, and plan and implement intervention strategies. The specialty of clinical neuropsychology is recognized by the American Psychological Association and the Canadian Psychological Association. Clinical neuropsychologists are independent practitioners (healthcare providers) of clinical neuropsychology and psychology.

The clinical neuropsychologist (minimal criteria) has:

1. A doctoral degree in psychology from an accredited university training program.
2. An internship, or its equivalent, in a clinically relevant area of professional psychology.
3. The equivalent of two (fulltime) years of experience and specialized training, at least one of which is at the post-doctoral level, in the study and practice of clinical neuropsychology and related neurosciences. These two years include supervision by a clinical neuropsychologist¹.
4. A license in his or her state or province to practice psychology and/or clinical neuropsychology independently, or is employed as a neuropsychologist by an exempt agency.

At present, board certification is not required for practice in clinical neuropsychology. Board certification (through formal credential verification, written and oral examination, and peer review) in the specialty of clinical neuropsychology is further evidence of the above advanced training, supervision, and applied fund of knowledge in clinical neuropsychology.

References

Report of the Division 40/INS Joint Task Force on Education, Accreditation, and Credentialing (1984). Division 40 Newsletter, Vol.2, no. 2, pp. 3-8.

Definition of a Clinical Neuropsychologist, *The Clinical Neuropsychologist* 1989, Vol. 3, No. 1, pp.22

¹ Individuals receiving training in clinical neuropsychology prior to this 2001 definition should be subject to the educational and experiential guidelines published by Division 40 of the American Psychological Association (APA, 1984; 1989). The 2001 definition should not be interpreted as negating the credentials of individuals whose education and experience predates the Division 40-APA definitions. Individuals meeting these prior criteria are and continue to be clinical neuropsychologists under this 2001 definition.