PHYSICIAN EVALUATION FORM
FOR FIRE FIGHTERS WITH DIABETES MELLITUS

You are being asked to evaluate an individual for a position as a fire fighter (FF). It is essential that the FF undergo an individualized assessment of his or her diabetes to determine whether the individual's condition permits safe and effective job performance. This evaluation is based on the guidance established by the NFPA Technical Committee on Occupational Safety and Health in consultation with representatives of the American Diabetes Association. The relevant sections of these guidelines are listed below in bold, followed by the information needed to assess whether the individual meets these guidelines.

I. Introduction

The educated and motivated FF or FF applicant with well-managed diabetes mellitus can be capable of safe and effective job performance. An individualized assessment of the FF's or FF applicant's diabetes should be performed, including an assessment of the following:

- History of blood glucose control
- Current stability of blood glucose
- Risk for significant hypoglycemia or hyperglycemia
- Presence of diabetic complications
- Knowledge of diabetes and its management

Risk of hypoglycemia remains the major concern in regard to those with diabetes being or becoming a FF. This risk occurs primarily in those taking insulin, particularly those with type 1 diabetes, although it may also occur in those with type 2 diabetes who take insulin and/or sulfonylureas and other secretagogues.

Fire fighting entails a unique set of conditions that need to be considered in regard to those with diabetes and the risks of either hypo or hyperglycemia. These may include (depending upon the duties of the particular FF position):

- unpredictable periods of maximal physical exertion (e.g., climbing stairs with over 50 pounds of PPE and 20 to 40 pounds of equipment);
- use of encapsulating and insulated personal protective equipment (PPE) that can result in significant fluid loss and dehydration;
- exposure to extreme environmental temperatures;
- during emergency responses with limited access to food, water, and medications for prolonged periods of time;
- emergency response driving with the responsibility for others in the vehicle;
- critical, time-sensitive complex problem solving in hazardous environments;
- unpredictable meal schedules;
- control of one's emotions under stress;
- functioning as a team where sudden incapacitation can result in mission failure or risk of injury or death to civilians or other team members.

FIGURE E.1 Physician Evaluation Form.