

Rides



Change

Lives



Innovations in Senior Transportation

NCST Grants 2008-2009

Based in Washington, D.C., the National Center on Senior Transportation is administered by Easter Seals, Inc. in partnership with the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging through a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Transit Administration, and with guidance from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration on Aging. The contents of this publication are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the Federal Transit Administration.

Innovation in Senior Transportation:

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Introduction

The National Center on Senior Transportation was created, in part, to identify, and facilitate the adoption of, effective and innovative community approaches for addressing older adult mobility. Older adult mobility in its broadest sense encompasses driver safety, transitioning from driving (driving modification and cessation), pedestrian access, fixed route, public transportation, curb-to-curb, door-to-door, taxi, volunteer, and door-through-door (escort) services.

The NCST issued a request for senior transportation demonstration project proposals in the fall of 2007, hoping to identify the “best of the best” in new ideas and program innovations. Included in the 322 applicants were transit providers, aging and human services providers, public and private agencies and a variety of organizations involved in the design and delivery of senior transportation services in 46 states plus the District of Columbia.

This booklet describes the innovative approaches of the center’s premier group of eight **Senior Transportation Demonstration Grantees**, awarded in May 2008:

- ACCESS Transportation Systems in Pittsburgh, Pa.
- Human Services Council in Vancouver, Wash.
- Jewish Family and Children’s Service of Minneapolis in Minnetonka, Minn.
- Knoxville-Knox County Community Action Committee in Knoxville, Tenn.
- Leslie, Knott, Letcher, Perry Community Action Council, Inc. in Hazard, Ky.
- Meadowlink in Rutherford, N.J.
- Mid County Senior Services in Newtown Square, Pa.
- Southwest Michigan Planning Commission in Benton Harbor, Mich.

The grants range from \$35,000 to \$90,000 for one year, and grantees will receive an additional twelve months of technical assistance from the Center. Grantees are expected to work to increase coordination of transportation services for older adults in their communities through building connections between aging and transportation providers. Each grantee also adopted one or more of the goals of the United We Ride Initiative: to increase transportation options for older adults, to simplify older adults' access to transportation services and to increase the quality of transportation services for older adults.

The eight grantees are leading the way in senior transportation innovation and are implementing approaches that can be readily adapted by transportation and human services providers in communities throughout the United States. They are:

- Using **technology** to improve scheduling, communication with drivers and customers, improve service delivery and increase regional coordination;
- Exploring **new volunteer options**, including volunteer drivers who use agency-owned or rental vehicles and using volunteers to accompany elders who need more than a ride;
- Creating **alternative funding mechanisms** to enable family, friends and community members to pay for rides for low income elders; and
- **Expanding services, increasing options and improving the quality** of transportation for older adults in their communities.

Most important of all, the work of these grantees is having a transforming effect on the lives of elders living in their communities.



ACCESS Transportation Systems (ACCESS) is one of the largest coordinated transportation brokerages in the United States, operating in the city of Pittsburgh and the surrounding county, with a mix of urban, suburban and rural areas. The agency also serves as the area's provider of paratransit services.

This project demonstrates the use of low-cost technology in improving service efficiency, alleviating concerns of waiting customers and saving money through a decrease in client 'no-shows'.

This project will:

- Use a low-cost real time information system to support drivers' schedules and improve on-time arrivals.
- Generate automated telephone calls providing actual vehicle arrival time to waiting customers.
- Conduct a series of surveys to track customer satisfaction with the new system.



As a result of this project, older people will experience improved transportation services leading to increased customer satisfaction and decreased anxiety of waiting passengers.

For more information contact Karen Hoesch, Executive Director, Access Transportation Systems, at (412) 562-5351 or khoesch@accesstransys.com

Sponsor-A-Ride



Human Services Council (HSC) is a non-profit corporation that serves as a transportation broker in a five-county, predominately rural, part of southwest Washington State. The agency coordinates rides appropriate to client need with an array of contracted and screened providers.

This project demonstrates an innovative approach to funding transportation for older people who are not eligible for publicly funded programs but cannot afford private pay options because of frequency of need or fixed income.

This project will:

- Create sponsorship accounts to enable families, friends and the community to pay for rides for older people with limited income.
- Recruit and train volunteers to drive and accompany seniors on medical and other trips.
- Use a Mobility Coordinator to create individualized transportation plans for seniors.



As a result of this project, older people in this rural community will have access to more transportation options tailored to their needs.

For more information contact Sherri Greenleaf, Mobility Coordinator, Human Services Council, at (360) 735-5702 or sherrig@hsc-wa.org

L'Chaim Senior Services



Jewish Family and Children's Services of Minneapolis (JFCS) is a human service organization supporting people of all

backgrounds in reaching their full potential in the city of Minneapolis and its suburbs. JFCS' L'Chaim Senior Services program provides door-to-door and accompanied transportation using volunteers as escorts and drivers.

This project demonstrates the effectiveness of volunteer driver programs, the benefit of partnerships in increasing transportation options for older adults, and the role of a Mobility Counselor in older driver transition.

This project will:

- Recruit and train additional volunteers to accompany seniors on medical and other trips.
- Partner with the Congregational Nurse Program to expand volunteer driver programs in the community.
- Provide mobility counseling to educate older drivers about alternatives to driving.



Older adults in the community will benefit from more rides to a broader service area, more options and improved transportation information, including language specific materials for Russian-speaking elders

For more information contact Annette Sandler, Supervisor of Senior Programs at (952) 542-4866 or asandler@jfcsmpls.org

Volunteer Assisted Transportation



Knoxville-Knox County Community Action Committee (CAC) is a public agency that provides programming in support of seniors, low to moderate income families, the unemployed/underemployed, persons with disabilities and other individuals with special needs for services. The area served consists of the

City of Knoxville and surrounding large suburban county, including a sparsely populated rural outskirts. Knoxville CAC Transit provides transportation to medical and other appointments and services.

This project demonstrates the use of agency-owned vehicles in the delivery of a volunteer driver program to limit liability concerns and the effectiveness of driver sensitivity training to improve transportation service delivery to older adults.

This project will:

- Recruit and train volunteers to drive and accompany seniors on medical and other trips.
- Offer a volunteer driver program that uses company-owned hybrid vehicles and includes screening and training of volunteers.
- Work with taxicab drivers to make taxi rides more senior friendly.



As a result of this project, older people will have access to new transportation options provided by volunteer drivers and assistants and improved taxicab service.

For more information contact Warren Secrest, Volunteer Assisted Transportation Program Manager, Knoxville-Knox County Community Action Committee, at (865) 524-2786 or warren.secrest@knoxcac.org

Seniors on the Go (SoGo)



Leslie, Knott, Letcher, Perry Community Action Council, Inc. (LKLP) is a non-profit human services provider serving a four-county area in rural, mountainous Appalachian Kentucky. About 80% of the agency's services are transportation-related, and include demand-response public transportation for anyone and non-emergency medical and vocational transportation to eligible clients.

This project demonstrates the importance of socialization trips for isolated seniors and the benefit of older driver safety training in a region with adverse driving conditions.

This project will:

- Provide older driver safety training and education about alternatives to driving.
- Offer evening and weekend recreational trips to combat isolation and depression.
- Strengthen partnerships between the aging and transportation communities.



As a result of this project, older people will have more opportunities to get out during weekends and in the evening, and older drivers will improve their driving skills and become aware of transportation options in the community.

For more information contact Tawny Acker Hogg, Program Development Director, Leslie, Knott, Letcher, Perry Community Action Council, Inc. at (606) 436-8853 ext. 2310 or t.hogg@lklp.net OR Mike Woods, Public Transportation Director, at (606) 436-8853 ext. 1110 or m.woods@lklp.net

EZ Ride Community Cars



Meadowlink is a well-established provider of commuter services that delivers fixed-route and on-demand shuttle trips within a six-county urban New Jersey community. Services include van and carpools, bicycle and pedestrian programs, and now, transportation to seniors through its EZ Ride Community Cars program.

This project demonstrates a unique approach to maximizing senior transportation options during non-commuter hours and implements a neighbor-helping-neighbor approach to recruit volunteer drivers and escorts.

This project will:

- Create a new volunteer driver program that uses a fleet of rented vehicles.
- Recruit and train volunteers to drive hybrid vehicles and accompany seniors on trips.
- Create sponsorship accounts whereby community residents and businesses contribute to the cost of rides for seniors who cannot afford them.



As a result of this project, older people in this urban community will have access to an affordable, reliable and personalized transportation service for any trip purpose.

For more information contact Suzanne Lyon, Team Leader, Meadowlink, at (201) 939-4242 ext. 40 or suzanne.lyon@meadowlink.org

Chore Connection

Main Line Health

Mid-County Senior Services

Mid County Senior Services (MCSS) is a non-profit agency offering programs to support older adults living in a predominately suburban county bordering the city of Philadelphia. Since 1992, MCSS' Chore Connection program has provided door-through-door transportation, a key component of community living.

This project demonstrates how increased knowledge about transportation options and expanded service can benefit the community -- older people and the agencies and providers that serve them.

This project will:

- Expand the agency's door-through-door rides to low-income older adults by increasing the number of volunteer drivers.
- Publish a transportation options brochure to educate older adults about the array of transportation services available in the community.
- Work to improve communication, cooperation and collaboration between the aging and transportation communities.



As a result of this project, older people with low incomes will be more knowledgeable about their transportation options and benefit from access to more services.

For more information contact Lynn Shelton, Chore Connection Director, Mid County Senior Services, at (610) 353-6642 or lskelton@senrs.org

Regional Coordination of Senior and Rural/Small Urban Transit Services in Southwest Michigan

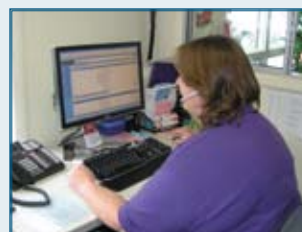


Southwest Michigan Planning Commission (SWMPC) is the Metropolitan Planning Organization for a predominately rural region in Southwest Michigan. It is responsible for transportation planning and decision-making and for distributing state and federal money for transportation projects within the service area.

This project demonstrates how using technology to support scheduling leads to more efficient, customer-focused service and improved communication and coordination among providers.

This project will:

- Implement a regional web-based routing and scheduling system for eight transit agencies to improve quality and efficiency.
- Senior Connect Program-escorts accompany seniors on bus trips.
- Partner with regional AAA to survey senior transit needs.



As a result of this project, older people will experience improved mobility and a more responsive transportation system.

For more information contact Marcy Colclough, Senior Planner, Southwest Michigan Planning Commission, at (269) 925-1137 ext. 25 or colcloughm@swmpc.org

2008 Senior Transportation Demonstration Projects

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