

Senior Transportation Demonstration Projects Summary

The **National Center on Senior Transportation** has awarded grants to eight community organizations for senior transportation demonstration projects. The projects will work creatively to meet the transportation needs of older adults living in the community. The grants range from \$35,000 to \$90,000, and the sites will also receive 24 months of tailored technical assistance. The eight projects are described below.

ACCESS Transportation Systems (Pittsburgh, PA) will utilize cellular phones as “mobile terminals” to generate automated calls, providing seniors real-time information on the arrival time of their rides. This low-cost technology solution will result in shorter waits for both consumers and drivers, increase customer satisfaction as measured by extensive pre and post testing, facilitate the provision of hand to hand, door-through-door assistance and improve service efficiency by reducing wait times. It is estimated that 1,500 riders will benefit from the new system within the first six months of operation. khoesch@accesstransys.com

Jewish Family and Children’s Service of Minneapolis (Minnetonka, MN) will work with Jewish, Muslim and Christian congregations to recruit volunteer drivers and provide accompanied transportation to seniors, including Russian-speaking elders. Mobility counseling and education on transportation options will also be offered and the project will coordinate with the Aging and Disability Resource Centers (Senior LinkAge Line) to better inform older consumers about transportation services. As a result of the project, approximately 1,000 accompanied rides will be provided and 8,500 Russian-speaking elders will be informed about transportation choices. mforbush@jfcsmpls.org

Knoxville-Knox County Community Action Committee (Knoxville, TN) will develop a volunteer escort and driver program for frail seniors and work with area taxicab companies to upgrade standards (including driver training, background checks and drug tests) to better meet the needs of older passengers. It is expected that 100 seniors will receive escorted rides and 10 new volunteers will be trained within one year. Barbara.monty@knoxcac.org

Leslie, Knott, Letcher, Perry Community Action Council, Inc. (Jeff. KY) will add evening hours for transportation services to counter isolation and support seniors’ participation in the life of their community. The project will also offer safety training to older drivers and educate older adults about the transportation options available to them. The project is expected to decrease the dependence on driving of many older adults living in this rural, isolated community and result in increased usage of transportation services. T.hogg@lklp.net

Meadowlink (Rutherford, NJ) will develop a model volunteer driver program utilizing a fleet of rental cars (rather than volunteers' personal vehicles) and offer door-to-door transportation services tailored to seniors' needs. A small annual membership fee and per-ride fees will be charged. Program income will be generated through daily and hourly car rentals offered to the larger community and volunteers will be able to earn "banked rides" to address their own transportation needs. It is anticipated that this new transportation option will be viewed positively by consumers and volunteers as evidenced by 80% consumer satisfaction and retention of 80% of volunteers. Suzanne.lyon@meadowlink.org

Mid County Senior Services (Newtown Square, PA) will expand its door-through-door volunteer driver program, use gas cards as an incentive for volunteering, and increase older adults' awareness of transportation options. The agency will also develop a framework for collaboration between aging services and community transit providers. The number of volunteer-provided rides is expected to increase by 10-15% and 10-15 new volunteers will be recruited. lshelton@senrs.org

Southwest Michigan Planning Commission (Benton Harbor, MI) will develop and implement a regional web-based routing and scheduling system to better coordinate and improve the quality of transportation services for older people. In addition, a study will be conducted to identify optimum approaches for expanding and diversifying the transit system and a door-through-door escort service for older users of public transit will be pilot-tested. A 15% increase in elderly riders on public transit is expected to result, with 300 individual and 6 group escorted rides to be provided. cocloughm@swmpc.org

Please visit the National Center on Senior Transportation web site (www.seniortransportation.net) for information on resources and tools related to transportation for older adults.

For more information on the Demonstration Projects, contact:
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