



**For Immediate Release**  
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## **BC Seniors Advocate launches largest ever survey of HandyDART service in BC**

**Victoria** – BC’s Seniors Advocate is asking 30,000 users of HandyDART how well the service is helping them meet their transportation needs.

HandyDART is a door-to-door service provided by TransLink, BC Transit, and their service providers for passengers with physical or cognitive disabilities who are unable to use conventional public transit without assistance. The majority of users, approximately 73%, are 65 or older. Last year 2.37 million rides were provided, with 51% of these in the Lower Mainland.

“Transportation is identified as a key issue for seniors,” said Seniors Advocate Isobel Mackenzie noting that at age 65, 76% of seniors have an active driver’s license, and that drops to 34% for those over 85. “Clearly we need to ensure a robust transportation system is in place for seniors, most of who are still active, but may no longer be able to drive. HandyDART is part of that system and we need to ask the people who are using the service how well it is meeting their overall transportation needs,” said Mackenzie.

The survey asks a range of questions starting with what people think of the application process, the availability of rides, the cost of the service, as well as overall satisfaction levels. To ensure statistical integrity, a sample of every other client will be surveyed on Vancouver Island, the Okanagan, and the Lower Mainland, while for the other three regions that offer service, all clients will be surveyed.

The questions for the survey were developed through a consultation process that included users of HandyDART, service funders as well as front-line staff. “In any of these surveys it is important that we are asking the right questions and involving those who both use and deliver the service ensures we don’t miss anything important,” said Mackenzie. “Ensuring a standardized approach to questions is also key to understanding the overall system and allows us to compare results from different parts of the province.”

Recipients of the survey can either complete a paper-based survey or fill it out online. Surveys should be completed and returned by Nov. 7, 2016. Results of the survey will help inform the Seniors Advocate’s overall review of seniors’ transportation issues.

“I want to thank those who have been involved in developing the survey and I really want to thank those who are going to take the time to fill out the survey,” said Mackenzie. “Everyone’s time is valuable but we need to hear from those who are using the service about both what could be improved and what areas are working well.”

The Office of the Seniors Advocate is an independent office of the provincial government with a mandate of monitoring seniors' services and publicly reporting on systemic issues affecting seniors. The Office also provides information and referral: toll-free 1.877.952.3181 or by visiting: [www.seniorsadvocatebc.ca](http://www.seniorsadvocatebc.ca)

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