



OFFICE OF THE
SENIORS ADVOCATE
BRITISH COLUMBIA

Seniors Transportation

AFFORDABLE, APPROPRIATE, AND AVAILABLE

MAY, 10th 2018

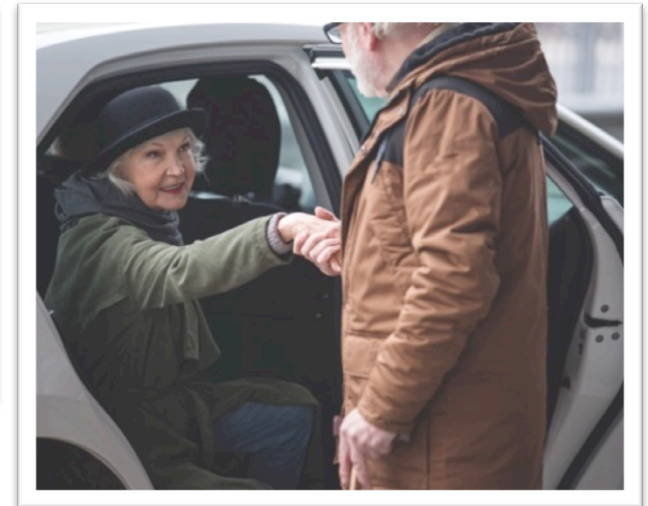
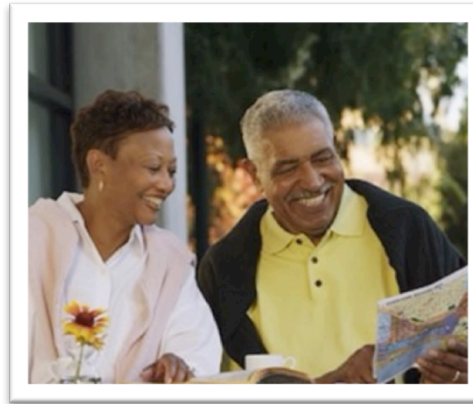
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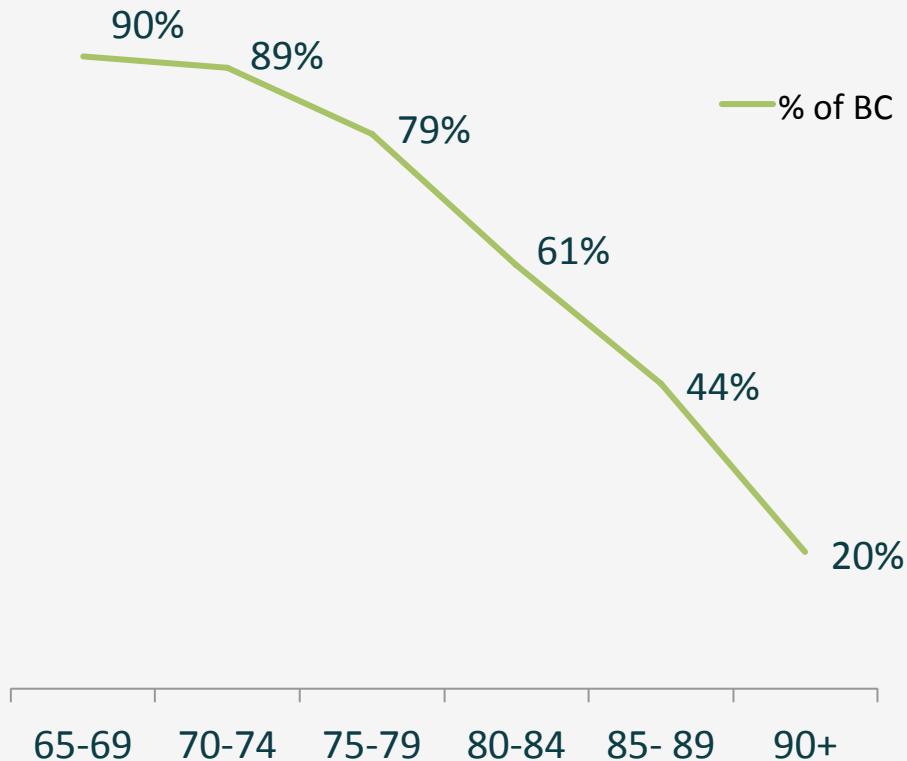
Why Transportation Is Important

- Gets us from A to B
- Keeps us connected
- Makes us feel productive



Why Focus on Seniors Transportation

% of BC Seniors with Licences



Reasons for Decline

- ▶ Functional decline
- ▶ Cognitive decline
- ▶ Uncomfortable
- ▶ Cost

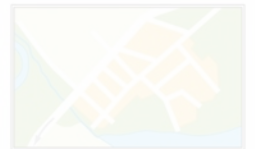
Risk factors for

- ▶ Isolation and loneliness
- ▶ Decrease health status
- ▶ Increased use of health services

Modes of Transportation



- **Driving**
- **Friends and Family**
- **Public Transit**
- **Walking**
- **HandyDART**
- **Taxis**
- **Volunteer Drivers**





Walking



Recommendation

- The Province work with local government to explore ways of achieving more pedestrian-friendly communities through the use of grants, tax incentives, rebates and other tools that local government may have or be given. Pedestrian-friendly developments in terms of location to shops and services should be incentivized, and infrastructure that supports mobility-challenged pedestrians moving about in the commercial hubs where shops and services are located should be required.



Driving



Recommendations

- The Province coordinate with ICBC to get information about transportation alternatives and other community supports into the hands of those seniors who are not renewing their driver's licence.
- The Province reimburse physicians a standardized rate for the completion of the DMER regardless of whether it is a blue or yellow form for those seeking to renew a class 5 licence.
- The Province examine the possibility of expanding the range of health care professionals that can conduct the DMER.



➤ Friends and Family



Recommendation

- Support people who volunteer to drive their family members, friends or neighbours to medical appointments. Just as tax deductions are allowed for those who use their personal vehicles for business, examine the possibility of a similar tax relief program for someone who acts as the primary driver for a senior who is no longer in possession of a current driver's licence and qualifies for HandyDART and/or the Federal Disability Tax Credit.



➤ Public Transit



Recommendations

- The Province work with BC Transit and TransLink to establish a standardized, province-wide "Seniors Bus Buddies" program that will connect seniors with local volunteers or staff that will work with the senior to initiate them into the use of public transit. This may require riding the bus with the senior for the first few times and ensuring they have numbers available to call if there are problems. Linking with ICBC and with the local Health Units will help ensure those who will benefit the most are connected to the service.
- The Province work with BC Transit and Translink to increase the number of benches at bus stops.
- Create an annual seniors bus pass where the fee charged will be based on income. The pass should be considered eligible payment on HandyDART if the passenger has a HandyCard or HandyPASS.
- Develop a province-wide mandated training program for transit drivers focused on supporting senior transit users.



HandyDART



Recommendations

- Continued efforts need to be made for increasing the availability of HandyDART services. Priority should be given to the six transit systems with no HandyDART followed by those communities with no evening and weekend services.
- The fees charged to clients who use HandyDART should be reviewed, and a more progressive approach that recognizes income and frequency of use to be applied to ensure that cost is not a barrier for low-income seniors who need to use HandyDART. In particular, the consideration should be given to allow the BC Bus Pass to be considered eligible payment.
- HandyDART users should be able to access HandyDART anywhere in the province, regardless of the local transit authority they are registered with.



➤ Taxis



Recommendations

- All British Columbians regardless of where they live should have access to Taxi Saver vouchers if they qualify.
- All taxi companies must require their drivers to accept Taxi Saver vouchers.

Summary of Recommendations

1. Information on Transportation Alternatives through ICBC
2. Standard Reimbursement for DMER
3. Expand health care professionals for DMER
4. Incentivize pedestrian-friendly communities
5. Tax deductions for family and friends with eligible seniors
6. Access to Taxi Saver vouchers province-wide
7. Accept Taxi Saver vouchers in all taxis
8. Senior Bus Buddies
9. Work with BC Transit and TransLink to increase number of benches
10. Annual bus pass fee based on income
11. Province-wide mandated training for transit drivers
12. Increase availability of HandyDART throughout all systems and on evenings and weekends
13. Make HandyDART fares more progressive
14. Use HandyDART across the province with card

Lingering Gap

- Less frequent routes/times
- Need for an attendant
- Multiple stops (errands)
- Familiarity with driver
- Driver who understand unique needs of seniors
- More spontaneous trips
- Very specific times

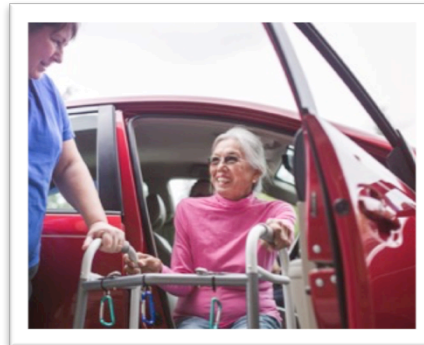


New Model

- Home Support Expansion to include driving
- Current infrastructure
 - ✓ Assessment of need
 - ✓ Assessment of co-payment
 - ✓ Scheduling system based on time and travel
 - ✓ Capacity within current workforce
 - ✓ Ability to attract new workforce

Community Drivers

- Pick clients up
- Drop off and pick up again or accompany clients
- Can become known to client
- Client will pay based on ability
- Potentially more cost effective than HandyDART



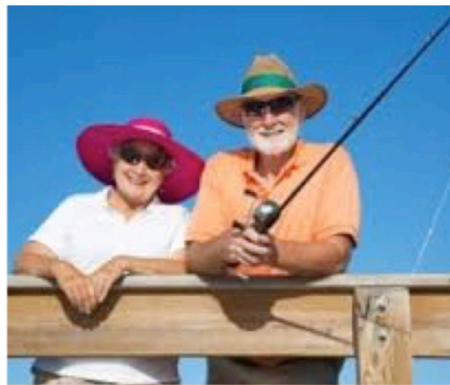
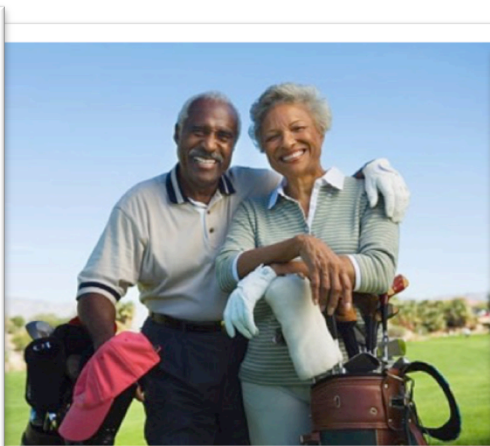
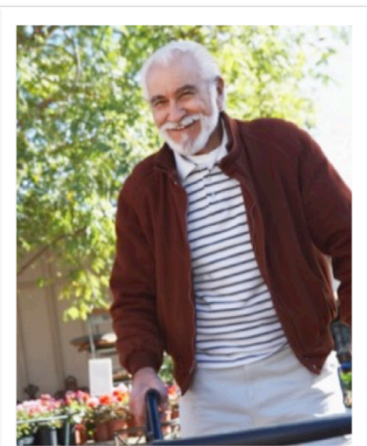
The Road Ahead

Affordable, appropriate and available transportation is key to allowing seniors to remain living independently.

Seniors must be able to **engage** in the **community** and **transportation is key**



- *Social inclusion*
- *Independence*
- *Community engagement*





Contact

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Open Monday – Friday [8:30am – 4:30pm]

TRANSLATION SERVICES AVAILABLE IN MORE THAN 180 LANGUAGES

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