



NVTC Exercise 2018 Revised

Passengers

Who Travel with Volunteer Driver Programs

Transportation Challenges

Older adults live in many locations: with family members and friends; in nursing homes, assisted living communities, retirement communities; and in their own homes. According to a report by the National Association of State Legislators and AARP, 90% of them want to stay in their own homes for the next 5 – 10 years; and 85% are confident in their abilities to do so without making home modifications. When people “age in place” they may need or want services brought into the home or to be able to access services and activities outside the home. Both will require transportation which is said to be a prerequisite for their ability to access destinations to which they need or want to go.

Driving cessation has been discussed at length in other publications. People who no longer drive often look to friends or relatives to assist with transportation. While transportation options may be available, they may not be convenient or accessible for older adults. Thus, the ability to age in place can be a challenge if community-based accessible, affordable and acceptable transportation options are not available.

This may be the person who once said, I'm planning to drive myself to the nursing home or the cemetery, which ever one comes first. If she can overcome some passenger challenges, she may not need transportation to either destination.



Passenger Challenges

*Walking to the bus stop
Qualifying for ADA Paratransit
Climbing stairs
Getting to the vehicle
Getting in and out of the vehicle
Staying alone at the destination
Getting to distant destinations
Paying for Transportation*

Volunteer Driver Programs

For many older adults who want to age in place, the solution to their transportation challenges is a volunteer driver program. Below is a chart with features that volunteer driver programs frequently offer to their older adult passengers.

The Volunteer Driver Program Option

*provide low cost or no cost rides
afford passenger socialization
provide passenger assistance
often cross jurisdictional boundaries
may offer rides to many destinations
may make multiple stops on the same trip
ensure that volunteers are good drivers*

Many volunteer driver programs offer older adult passengers transportation services that may not be available, accessible, adaptable, acceptable or affordable in their community.



Passengers

In 2016 the NVTC STAR Awards program received applications from 157 volunteer driver programs located in 37 states. The passenger information in this fact sheet was provided by those applicants, who as a group provided their 54,338 passengers with 633,767 rides.

Although volunteer driver programs serve many passenger groups, the majority tend to be older adults age 60+ and many are age 85+.



Profile of 54,338 Passengers

*61% - not able to access other transit options
58% - selected service because of assistance
46% - with cognitive or physical limitations
29% - lived alone
25% - with mobility limitations
44% - age 65+
14% - age 85+*

Passenger Assistance

The volunteer driver program applicants provided high levels of assistance to passengers.

Passenger Support

*81% - door-through-door assistance
81% - stay-at-the destination assistance
77% - door-to-door assistance
55% - curb-to-curb service
84% - did not charge for rides*

When people can no longer drive, their physical and cognitive limitations can make transportation assistance necessary.



Passenger Destinations

Many transportation providers and funders emphasize the destination needs of older adults. Thus, they may only take passengers to needed services such as the doctor; non emergency medical services, and other “necessary” destinations such as the pharmacy and grocery. However, many older adults also have destination wants such as errands, social activities and the beauty shop.

Some of the most passenger friendly volunteer driver programs take their passengers to see the countryside, to enjoy the Christmas lights, and even to visit all their friends in the cemetery.



Destination Needs

- 99% - to doctors
- 53% - to physical therapy
- 35% - to dialysis
- 26% - to pharmacies

Destination Wants

- 49% - to do personal errands
- 29% to social activities
- 27% - to beauty shops
- 20% - to banks and libraries

Passenger Utilization of Services

Volunteer driver program applicants identified many reasons they believed their passengers used and continued to use their transportation services, and said they used the services.

Top Reasons Passengers

Started Using Services

- 61% - could not access other services
- 52% - afraid to drive/no longer drove
- 48% - outlived their driving expectancy
- 16% - family made them stop driving

Top Reasons Passengers

Continued Using Services

- 58% - service provides assistance
- 46% - service is free
- 44% - other services not accessible
- 37% - takes places they want to go

Reasons Passengers Used The Services

of Volunteer Driver Programs

- 58% selected assistance and support
- 46% - selected service because it was free
- 44% selected could not access other options
- 39% - selected not able to pay for rides
- 37% - selected took them where they wanted to go
- 34% - selected service provided socialization

Passenger Friendliness

*Transportation is critical to the ability to get where one needs to go. Transportation options are especially important for people who have limited driving or stopped driving. The friendliness of a transportation option is important. Just what makes a volunteer driver program “passenger friendly”? In the mid 2000s, the Beverly Foundation identified senior friendly transportation, and in 2016 the NVTC translated senior friendliness into the 5A’s of Passenger Friendly Transportation.**

The 5 A’s of Passenger Friendly Transportation

The 5 A’s present challenges for transportation services

Availability Challenges: (1) providing demand response services; (2) ensuring potential passengers know about the service; (3) making sure passengers can reach the service; (4) crossing jurisdictional boundaries; (5) traveling to desired destinations; (6) offering service evenings and weekends; (7) offering on-time pick up and delivery; (8) linking passengers with more appropriate transportation services.

Acceptability Challenges: (1) taking passengers where they need to go; (2) ensuring that vehicles are clean; (3) using well maintained vehicles; (4) ensuring that volunteers are good drivers; (4) ensuring minimal wait times for rides, (5) ensuring ease of scheduling; (6) training drivers to be sensitive to passenger challenges and needs.

Accessibility Challenges: (1) providing assistance to and from vehicles; (2) providing assistance into and out of vehicles; (3) helping with coats, shoes, and boots; (4) helping passengers carry packages; (5) providing assistance at destinations; (6) creating a policy for adapting service to meet passenger needs.

Adaptability Challenges: (1) offering multiple-stop services; (2) offering free rides to transportation escorts; (3) accommodating assistive devices; (4) accommodating passengers’ pets; (5) willingness to adapt service procedures to meet passenger needs; (6) linking passengers with other services; (7) offering group trips to special destinations; (8) offering transit beyond “usual” hours; (9) undertaking annual passenger survey for improving services.

Affordability Challenges: (1) ensuring that passengers are aware of the actual cost of a ride; (2) use of volunteer drivers and volunteer vehicles; (3) recognizing the contribution of volunteer drivers; (4) ensuring affordability for passengers by offering reasonably priced, no cost, or donation only transportation services; (5) enabling passengers to link with less expensive transportation services if necessary; (7) securing funding from multiple donors; (8) ensuring that the donors and the community at large are aware of actual costs of providing rides.

And now, turn to the next page and...

Calculate the Passenger Friendliness of Your Volunteer Driver Program

**These 5A’s and the exercise on the next page were adapted from senior friendliness” research by the Beverly Foundation in 2000 –2006, and a 2010 Beverly Foundation Fact Sheet:*

Passenger Friendliness Calculator

The 5 A's of *Passenger Friendly Transportation* (below) are criteria for making judgments about the level of a program's friendliness for its passengers. To initiate your review, check each of the factors that are represented within a volunteer transportation program with which you are familiar. Each check equals one point. When you have completed your review, add up your score and look at the scoring key at the bottom of the page to know where you are on...

*"the road to passenger friendliness."**

Availability : The Transportation Service....

- provides demand response transportation service to passengers.
- ensures that potential passengers know about the service.
- provides transportation when needed (day, evenings, weekends).
- takes passengers to desired destinations.
- can provide group trips to special destinations.

Acceptability: The Transportation Service...

- ensures that vehicles are clean and free of litter.
- uses vehicles that are easy for passengers to access.
- ensures that vehicles are well maintained.
- offers advance scheduling options acceptable to passengers.
- provides driver "sensitivity to passengers" training.

Accessibility: The Transportation Service...

- provides passenger assistance to and from the vehicle.
- provides passenger assistance in and out of vehicle.
- uses vehicles that are easy for passengers to access.
- can help passengers with assistive devices.
- Stays with passengers at destinations.

Adaptability: The Transportation Service...

- offers trip chaining or multiple stops on the same trip.
- will take the pets of passengers if the volunteer driver is willing.
- can offer or link with vehicles that accommodate wheelchairs and walkers.
- can link seniors with "more appropriate" transportation options.
- undertakes annual passenger survey to promote service improvement.

Affordability: The Transportation Service...

- offers reduced fares (or free transportation) to passengers.
- use of volunteer drivers results in low cost transportation services.
- use of volunteer vehicles results in low cost transportation services.
- informs passengers of the actual cost of providing each ride.
- secures funding from for non transportation services.

Total (Possible Score = 25)

The Road to Passenger Friendliness





The National Volunteer Transportation Center

The National Volunteer Transportation Center resulted from the efforts of each of its founders to support existing and emerging volunteer transportation programs and services across the country.

In 2000, the Beverly Foundation began a research and awards initiative related to volunteer driver programs. In 2014, the National Volunteer Transportation Center opened with a database of more than 700 volunteer transportation programs throughout the 50 states plus the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. In 2015, Toyota and the NVTC partnered to undertake the Center's STAR Awards program and a variety of other initiatives.

The NVTC website includes numerous technical and informational materials related to planning, organizing, and managing volunteer driver programs. Perhaps its most important asset is the wisdom, experience, and expertise of its founders who, as a group, bring to the Center a long history of transportation and aging research, direct service delivery, risk management



TOYOTA

