Removing Barriers to Transportation & Expanding Senior Mobility Webinar
August 23, 2018
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Webinar Agenda

Overview: NADTC
  • Virginia Dize, NADTC Co-Director, n4a

Senior Transportation Connection
  • Catherine Ciha, Director of Development

Berkshire Regional Planning Commission
  • Laura Kittross, Manager, Public Health Program

Facilitated Discussion/Q&A
NADTC Overview

Partnership:
Easterseals and the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging

Funding:
Federal Transit Administration with guidance from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Community Living

Mission: To promote the availability and accessibility of transportation options for older adults, people with disabilities and caregivers

Functions: Technical Assistance and I&R; Training; Communication and Outreach; Community Support
Total Funding: $300,000 for 12 months*

• Strengthen the connections between transit and human services

• Build bridges between transportation and community programs that support community living

• Identify strategies for better utilization of federal, state and local funding opportunities
NADTC 2017 Grants

- **Area Agency on Aging 1B**, Southfield, MI: Travel Training
- **Berkshire Regional Planning Commission**, Pittsfield, MA: Cross-jurisdictional medical trips
- **City of Hernando**, Hernando, MS: New travel options to connect to hard to reach destinations and nutrition
- **Mountain Empire Older Citizens**, Big Stone Gap, VA: Transportation improvements for persons with chronic care and dialysis needs
- **Peace Village Cancer Justice Network**, Cincinnati, OH: Transportation Navigator Program
- **Senior Transportation Connection**, Cleveland, OH: New weekend and evening transportation

www.nadtc.org
Lessons Learned

• Time and flexibility are key

• Articulate and keep focused on the outcome

• Partnerships is critical to success

• Need to match new programs to actual needs and preferences of the target group

• Sustainability requires funding, internal support and champions
Project Purpose

Pilot evening/weekend accessible transportation service
- Cuyahoga County, Ohio
- Aged 60 and older and/or adults with disabilities

Leverages Senior Transportation Connection (STC) reputation, resources

Strengthens relationships with partner communities

Creates consumer-directed program
- Passenger pays for the trip = more destination choices

Develops practical, sustainable innovation to accessible transportation
Since 2005, STC provides comprehensive, coordinated, efficient and affordable transportation to seniors and adults with disabilities throughout Cuyahoga County, Ohio.

128,000 weekday trips in 2017
5,000 active clients age 60-plus
Over one million miles driven per year
30+ partners
60 vehicles
84 staff
$4 million budget
Senior Transportation Connection

- Communities/organizations pay for core service
  - A public-private partnership
  - Nominal passenger co-pay or donation
  - Restricted locations
    - Medical appointments, shopping, senior center functions
- Weekdays only
Why does STC Plus matter?

Reduces social isolation evenings/weekends
◦ Few affordable, accessible evening and weekend options
◦ Offers independence, autonomy
◦ Social, spiritual, recreational participation

Leverages STC resources and trusted brand
◦ Uses new attractive, accessible vehicles
◦ Tests a premium service model
◦ Expands to younger adults with disabilities
STC Plus Partners

Services for Independent Living (SIL) supports individuals with disabilities and included daytime transportation among its array of services.

The City of North Olmsted Senior Center connects senior residents to nutrition, enrichment, education and recreation activities.

Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency (NOACA) is the local administrator of Program 5310 funds as regional planning entity.
STC Plus Serves...

- Launched in North Olmsted
- 32,000 residents
  - 26 percent age 60-plus
  - 1,700 working age adults with disabilities
  - 500 use STC daytime program
- Popular senior center programs
- Expanded countywide mid-grant
STC Plus is Sustainable

Fee for Service
- Per trip/per mile charges
- Promoting group outings
- Potential business or church sponsors
- Demand for dialysis services
STC Plus marketing plan

- Postcard distribution
- Community forums & senior fairs
- Partner meetings
- Local print/online newspaper
- Local TV
- Social Media
- Calendars
Challenges

- Communicating a value proposition
- Maintaining quality and affordability
- Marketing budget
- Sufficient volume
- Confusion regarding two services
- Staffing
Launched April 1, 2017

- Goal: 1,000 trips during grant period
  - Complimentary first trip
  - Achieved 548 trips, 138 users
    - 382 trips were paid
    - 28 repeat users during grant period (94 percent of goal)
    - Few younger adults
- Continued marketing, advertising
  - Post-grant, about 80 trips per month
  - Income earned carries program forward
  - The Cleveland Foundation grant
Questions

www.ridestc.org
https://www.facebook.com/ridestc/
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Berkshire Rides to Wellness
Funded by: National Aging and Disability Transportation Center: Innovations in Accessible Mobility Grant

LAURA KITTROSS
MANAGER, PUBLIC HEALTH PROGRAM
BERKSHIRE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
Transportation Challenges

- Berkshire County covers 950 square miles; Few major roads; long winters; two hours end to end.
- 128,000 people in 32 municipalities; more than half under 2,000 residents
- No county government or infrastructure
- Located in far west of the state, bordered by NY, CT, VT; isolated geographically & culturally from the rest of the state
- Lowest median income in MA, >$20,000 lower than state median
- Second oldest county (after Cape Cod); aging faster than state & US
- Estimate close to 25% of population will be >65 by 2030; more than 50% over 50. Smaller, more isolated towns have highest numbers.
- Missing young adult population; more 65+ than under 18
- Public transportation is extremely limited.
Project Goals

- To provide transportation to pre-arranged medical visits for older adults and those with disabilities without other transportation options:
  - Reimbursed Council on Aging (COA) and other transportation providers who crossed jurisdictional/municipal boundaries to provide rides under the program
  - Individuals requesting rides called centralized number (Elder Services) and Elder Services determined if they could be accommodated by participating transportation providers.
  - Transportation providers entered information on rides provided into a real-time, on-line system to facilitate reimbursement
Nine communities had COA vans, purchased by the Berkshire Regional Transit Authority (BRTA) using MAP / Section 5310 funding.

Two additional had municipally owned vans (at least one out of service many months); one additional had a volunteer driver program.

Six additional towns belonged to Southern Berkshire Elderly Transport (SBETC) which had a van purchased through Section 5310.

Thirteen municipalities had no senior transportation option available (41%).

Five municipalities signed contracts; four provided rides under the program.
Results

- Operational July 1 – December 31, 2017
- Publicized fairly heavily, especially in the Fall
- Billed as a pilot program
- Less than 100 calls (91) were received by centralized call line – much lower than expected
- Of those, 78 callers were accommodated (86%) – much higher than expected
- 31 unduplicated individuals served – much lower than expected
- Most trips were only one or two towns over – much shorter distances than expected
- There were a few additional trips arranged outside the COAs, notably several trips to Boston for specialty visits.
Results Analysis

- Despite lower numbers, we know the need is there.
- Many individuals can arrange rides to medical visits with friends or family, or through other social service programs/providers, but still lack transportation to social & cultural events, shopping, etc.
- Many individuals are reluctant to change patterns for a limited pilot program – no matter how good.
- Limitations on geographic reach – at least seven of the municipalities with no transportation could not be accommodated by participating COAs.
- Political issues in the south part of the county
- Several larger COAs unable to participate due to capacity issues.
Successes & Sustainability

- Just getting municipalities to share services across municipal borders is an accomplishment.
- Councils on Aging staff and riders all expressed positive feedback to the program (drivers less so, esp. volunteer drivers).
- Open conversation around need to share resources & the need for more resources (vans, vans with 4-wheel drive, addt’l vehicles w/out handicap accessibility).
- Several permanent cross-jurisdictional relationships are in the process of forming, which was the ultimate goal of the program.
Questions?

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Questions

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