

FY19-20 Governor's Council on Aging Sept 18, 2019

Topic: Transportation for Aging Arizonans: The Current Challenges and Rising Opportunities

This was a great discussion! I wasn't aware that there are so many resources available to seniors. I wonder if our members know? Here's what our panelists had to say - and be sure to take a look at the last paragraph for comments from Fire Fighters and audience members. Lastly, thanks to Suzanne Bias for attending with me!

Panelist

- Christina Quast, **AHCCCS** Operations Administrator Health Care Management
AHCCCS coordinates transportation for Non-emergency medical transportation from providers using brokers.
- Jennifer Lugo, City of Phoenix **Dial-a-Ride Program**
Dial-a-Ride services are operated throughout the region and offer either curb-to-curb or door-to-door shared-ride public transportation service to persons with disabilities, seniors 65 or over and the general public.
<https://www.valleymetro.org/dial-ride>. Dial-a-Ride coordinate services with regional ride providers for seamless service. Jennifer also talked about a tax subsidy for transportation costs when ADA accessible ride options are not available.
- Chasen ("Chase") Smith, **LYFT** Marketing Manager, Southwest
The Lyft Healthcare initiative partners Lyft with healthcare providers to provided door-to-door service (a.k.a. First mile, last mile program) for patients that need assistance. Lyft Concierge offers a flexible ride service for members and their personal care assistant. Lyft is working with Ability360 and is building out several ADA accessible vehicles.
<https://www.lyftbusiness.com/industries/healthcare>.
- Kathryn Chandler, Executive Director, **Northwest Valley Connect**
This is a volunteer organization that serves Sun City and Sun City West, assisting seniors with rides when Dial-a-Ride isn't available. These cities do have transportation programs. Northwest Valley Connect partners with Valley Metro. <http://northwestvalleyconnect.org>
- Ron Brooks, **Valley Metro's** Accessible Transport Division
Per ADA standards seniors are qualified as disabled and can utilize ADA Paratransit-Valley Metro services. Paratransit is a prescheduled and

shared ride services. <https://www.valleymetro.org/ada-paratransit>. Ride Choice is another ValleyMetro program available to ADA qualified individuals. <https://www.valleymetro.org/ridechoice>.

- Vivienne Gellert, President and Founder of **ELAINE**
ELAINE is a Health Navigation and Transportation system for the homeless and underserved. This nonprofit is sponsored by Toyota. ELAINE provides hand-to-hand assistance, picking patients up, going to the doctor appointments with them and then delivering them back into their home. Patients are referred by the Healthcare system.
<https://elaineaz.org>

Fire fighters asked about door-to-door service from each of the panelists; very specifically getting the senior or disabled person from the curb to their door or inside their house. It was surprising to hear that firemen responded to hundreds of “fall calls” or “lift assist” calls monthly because the transportation provider left the individual on the curb and they needed help getting inside. All panelists took note.

Another attendee asked about assistance for motorized scooters and wheelchairs that have run out of charge. There are services that will come out and charge - for a fee. Many times the rider will turn down the service because they can't afford the fee and then they call the 911 and the Fire Department has to respond. These motorized scooters and wheelchairs weigh over a hundred pounds and AZ Legislators are now discussing legislation to address the liability issue around firemen lifting/transporting these chairs. Lastly, the issue of drivers who's first language is not English and the lack of clear communication between the driver and the disabled and/or senior passenger. Lyft stated that they do screen for communication skills.

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