

# Transportation

## *Elder Mobility*

Many seniors can get themselves around by driving, but as eyesight, hearing and other physical abilities decline, driving is no longer an option. This can be distressing, since the ability to get around is key to maintaining a sense of independence.

As a caregiver you, along with other family members and friends, may provide transportation for your elder, driving him or her to the grocery store, medical appointments and elsewhere. Other arrangements are sometimes necessary, however, and this is where community-based transportation services come in.

Most communities offer a variety of transportation services. You and the person for whom you care will have to evaluate all available options, deciding which services are the best option considering the senior's needs and budget



### *Types of Transportation*

Transportation services available tend to fall in one of the three following categories:

**Fixed Route:** Transportation is provided along fixed routes with fixed schedules. This includes city buses and vans. Typically, riders must pay a fare for each ride, or buy a pass good for a certain amount of time. Often, seniors can receive discounts.

**Door-to-Door:** This kind of service offers transportation from a senior's home or other designated point directly to a destination—such as a hospital, doctor's office, grocery store, or mall. This flexible and convenient service, also sometimes called Dial-a-Ride or Demand Response service, generally requires advance reservations and payment of a fare per ride.

**Ridesharing:** Ridesharing programs match up volunteer drivers with seniors who need transportation. These might be organized by senior centers, hospitals or other destinations.

### *Where to Look for Transportation*

Check with your local municipality about the availability of buses or vans. There might be both fixed-route and door-to-door services available; inquire into cost, flexibility and senior discounts.

**Senior Centers:** Many senior centers offer van service—both to the senior center and to other destinations in and outside of the community. Often, these are run on a pay-per-ride basis.

**Hospitals:** Some hospitals offer transportation, either free or at a nominal cost, for elderly or disabled patients who have medical appointments. Call your hospital to inquire about any services available.

**Retirement Communities:** Most retirement communities and assisted living facilities offer free transportation services for their residents—both on an as-needed basis and for special events or trips.

**Phone Book:** The phone book has listings for specialized transportation services available in your community, under "Transportation," "Senior Services," or "Community Services."

**Area Agency on Aging:** Your local Area Agency on Aging can give information about transportation services available in your area.



*Check your phone book for local transportation services.*