How to Create a Meaningful Patient Transportation Guide[1]

Accessing affordable, available transportation can be a major barrier for patients returning for follow-up visits to the hospital or their outpatient appointments. Every city, county and state has multiple forms of free and nominally priced transport that fit into six major categories:

- Public Transit – City buses and trains with fixed routes and times
- Paratransit – Passenger taxis, minibuses, vans and cars with flexible schedules and personalized routes.
- Private Transit – Offered by for-profit businesses
- Specialized Transit – Offered by an agency, organization, clinic, hospital to its clients, members or patrons
- State Funded/Medicaid Transit – State-funded assistance programs that support the needs of low-income recipients
- Volunteer Driver Programs - Community members volunteer their time and vehicles to transport individuals

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STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

1) Decide on the geographic area e.g., Decatur (city) or Morgan (county), Alabama
2) Perform online searches for transportation using the search terms:

SEARCH TERMS	DESCRIPTION
senior + transportation	For any public transportation that may apply to seniors
non-emergency + medical + transportation	For any transportation that is non-emergent but is not exclusive to seniors
seniors + medical + transportation	For all transportation related to medical issues for seniors, including emergency ambulance services
seniors + non-emergency + medical + transportation	For all transportation needs for seniors that are related to incidental matters
medically + disabled + transportation	For all transportation needs for any persons suffering from a disability

3) Create an excel spread sheet with the following categories:
   a. Region (Your County or City)
   b. Company/Agency
   c. Cost of Transportation
   d. Type of Transportation – you can divide the types as described above or more detailed (Para-transit, Public Transportation e.g. bus or train, Taxi, Companion Ride, Specialized service)
   e. Contact Information
4) Fill in the spreadsheet as you find the information that fits the categories
5) Consider format options for presentation of your information (e.g. handout, brochure, flyer)
6) Contact your department head, Hospital or Clinic Administration to disseminate your information

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[1] This tool is derived from the Michigan Collaborative in which transportation was considered a major barrier to follow-up. Sources for the definitions for various types of transportation included: The Alabama Department of Mental Health Office of Advocacy Services, Kaiser Permanente, LET'S GO!, National Center On Senior Transportation and SeniorLiving.Org