Title
Impact of Transportation on Health Outcomes

By Prisca Osuji
M.D. 2016, Howard University
GE-NMF Primary Care Leadership Program Scholar

Abstract
Access to public transportation is an essential aspect of the lives of countless individuals across the United States. It serves as the only means by which many Americans are able to meet with a physician. Lack of adequate public transportation could cause a decrease in the number of patients who can reach an Adelante Healthcare site. This project serves to examine how inadequate access to transportation may lead to negative health outcomes via missed physician visits as well as proposing improvements for increased access to transportation thereby increasing the number of patients who present are able to Adelante Healthcare facilities.

Keywords: Transportation, Health Outcomes, AHCCCS, taxi cab
**Introduction**

As a native of the east coast I am well familiar with the benefits of an expansive public transportation system. Thus, on arriving in Arizona I was shocked with the increased demand for a personal car. On using the buses for the first time I found myself frustrated with the restrictions imposed on my travel by the limited bus routes. I found my opinions mirrored by many people I spoke with regarding the system in Arizona; they described the public transportation as disorganized and underdeveloped especially in less populated areas. The idea for a project centered on transportation came when the PCLP scholars were given a tour of the new site in Peoria; there was no source of public transportation running through the area. I empathized with the patients whose mobility was limited and I came to believe that the new site in Peoria would not be able to meet its full patient potential due to a lack of access by these patients. Ironically, it is often these patients who are limited by their lack of access to transportation who need care the most. As time passed, I learned of other issues that the patient population at Adelante faced in terms of transportation. In particular, the complaint of poor service provided by an insurance funded taxi service caught my attention. Many patients and Adelante staff that I spoke with cited instances of late or missed doctor visits caused by the inefficiency of the taxi service. I found the notion of taxi drivers providing inadequate service at the expense of the patients unfair. I hope that my project will help bring to light the issue of transportation and its role among patient populations and, as a result, help improve health outcomes within the patient population at Adelante Healthcare.

**Background**

According the World Health Organization (WHO), health is defined as “a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.” (1)
In today’s ever-expanding healthcare system, the primary goal is improved health for all patients. Positive health outcomes are arguably the most reliable measure of success and progression towards this goal of improved patient health where health care outcomes are defined as “a change (or lack of change) in health status caused by a therapy or factor when compared with a previously documented health status using disease-specific measures, general quality of life measures or utility measures.” (2) The metrics of health outcomes are debatable, but many tend to measure their impact according to the level of improved quality of life and a reduced mortality rate. (3) Health outcomes are dependent on numerous factors; access to adequate transportation is likely a factor that is underestimated. One of the major implications of inadequate access to healthcare can be missed visits to the physician. By missing a visit a patient losses the opportunity to receive treatment for a condition, or prescription for a medication that could make a great difference. Indeed, even if the patient eventually makes it to the physician at a later time, the physician may not be able to make as much of a difference as they could have if the patient had been able to reach the physician sooner. This study will examine whether there is a correlation between transportation and missed patient visits, and indirectly health outcomes, at Adelante Healthcare as well as the level of transportation disparity being faced.

History of Community Healthcare Center Movement

The first two community health centers (CHC) in the United States were established in 1965 in the cites of Boston, Massachusetts and Bound Mayou, Mississippi with funding provided by the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964. (4) H. Jack Geiger and Count D. Gibson Jr. are the two physicians whose active participation in the Civil Rights Movement helped breathe life into the CHC movement. The motion for the creation of a CHC in impoverished settings within the U.S. was founded from Geiger’s observation
that under the prior health model in place at the time was “the poor get sicker and the sick get poorer.” (5) The model he suggested sought to address the issues of poverty within the community and improve community health at the same time. The prospect of increasing the economic capacity of urban and rural indigent populations as well as decreased health costs as a result of affordable quality health care found favor with President Lyndon B. Johnson who’s “War on Poverty” Movement sought to improve financial sustainability in impoverished areas of the US at the time, thus the funding from the Office of Economic Opportunity was provided for the construction of the community health centers.

Today, Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) receive federal grant funding according to the regulations of Section 330 of the Public Health Service for assistance in areas with health care disparities. (4) They are unique in that they are required to have an executive board in which more than half of the members are themselves patients; in this way the community truly has the say in what is will be most beneficial for patients and the community at large. (6)

GE-NMF Primary Care Leadership Program

The Primary Care Leadership Program (PCLP) arose in 2012 through a partnership between the GE foundation and the National Medical Fellowships in response to the growing national shortage of primary care physicians. National Medical Fellowships is a nonprofit organization which seeks to increase diversity and cultural competency across the medical profession. (7) The GE foundation supports the community at large and is committed to helping individuals attain the tools they need to achieve success on all fronts whether it be economy, health, or education. PCLP scholars are recruited from all branches of the medical profession and undergo a service oriented learning experience with emphasis on training in the areas of leadership, service-learning, and clinical experience. (8)

Adelante Healthcare

Initially known as Clinica Adelante, Adelante Healthcare is a nonprofit organization founded in 1979 in response to an increased need for quality healthcare for migrant and local farm workers in the community
(9). Today, Adelante Healthcare serves the community of Maricopa county and provides quality healthcare to patients regardless of financial difficulty through utilization of an income based sliding fee scale (9). Adelante Healthcare’s mission is based on the notion of sustainable health not only for the individual but also for the entire community.

AHCCCS taxi cab system

Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS) is Arizona's Medicaid agency.(10) Through AHCCCS Arizona residents are able to participate in numerous healthcare programs, including health care coverage. Individuals must meet certain income criteria and other requirements to obtain services rendered. In affiliation with the Arizona Discount Cab Company, AHCCCS is able to offer subsidized taxi services for patients through patients’ specific insurance provider. Patients call in advance to schedule a taxi ride for an upcoming physician visit. However, several complaints regarding the service of the taxi system have surfaced. Within the context of the aforementioned aims, this study will examine possible reasons for the dissatisfaction among the patient population with the AHCCCS taxi system.

On calling the Discount Cab Company they stated that their process of sending transportation to patients is the same for each of the insurance companies that they are contracted with. Essentially, the patient will call their own insurance provider and then the insurance provider will call Discount Cab and request the transportation services for that patient.
Methodology

A needs assessment was implemented via a brief five question multiple choice survey that was conducted by hand. Please refer to Appendix 2. Adelante Healthcare Patients and WIC clients were asked to answer questions surrounding their ability to reach the healthcare center locations as well as their satisfaction with the taxi services provided by AHCCCS. Phoenix, Avondale, and Surprise locations were targeted because they are the closest sites to the future site in Peoria and therefore expected to provide the best data in terms of estimating patient response toward issues of transportation in Peoria in addition to measuring outlook on access to transportation among the general Adelante patient population. The survey was conducted over the period of 2 weeks. The use of translators was implemented as needed. Parents of pediatric patients were asked to fill the survey on the behalf of the child they accompanied.

Several outside transportation companies were contacted regarding possible transportation alternatives for patients. These sources include Uber, Lyft, and Comtrans. These services were contacted due to their familiarity and credibility among members of the community. In addition, the likelihood of a future bus route through the future site in Peoria was explored by contacting Valley Metro, the company in control of the buses running through the Phoenix Metropolitan area, via phone and email.

Results

Inquiry of Bus route to the new site in Peoria:

Refer to Appendix 3. According to the email response that was received, the city of Peoria will not likely be implementing a bus route through the new Adelante Healthcare site in Peoria. The primary reasons listed were a lack of funding and lack of demand for such a route by the citizens of Peoria.

Inquiry into other possible taxi/transportation providers for patients:
On contacting Uber, the company stated that they have not yet implemented a group transport option but that such an option may be available in the future.

Outreach to Lyft was attempted through their “Lyft for Good” campaign. The campaign places an emphasis on community service with the aid of the Lyft Company. Please refer to appendix 4 for responses submitted in the Lyft for Good candidate nomination form. The premise of the nomination suggests that drivers would be given free health care services by Adelante as compensation for their work. In return drivers would transport patients to their appointments. No response has been received from Lyft as to the possibility of group transport.

On contacting Comtrans, the possibility of establishing a contract for patient transport was established. The insurance provider that Comtrans accepts is MercyCare, any other patient transport would have to be covered out of pocket or by Adelante Healthcare. Please refer to Appendix 5 for the descriptions of clients/patients that Comtrans currently transports.

Refer to Appendix 1. At the conclusion of data collection 122 surveys were collected from all sites. 30 surveys were collected from surprise, 36 surveys were collected from Avondale, and 56 surveys were collected from Phoenix. Use of a personal car was the most utilized means of transportation by far at each of the sites (75% Surprise 80% Avondale 65% Phoenix) which resulted in an average of 71% of patients using their own cars to get to the sites overall. Getting a ride from someone was the second most popular option at Surprise (17%) and Avondale (20%). However, at Phoenix public transportation was the 2nd most utilized means of transportation after use of a personal car (18%). The majority of patients cited that transportation was not a major reason for missing an appointment at the Surprise (93%) and Avondale sites (100%). It is possible that the patients who experienced intolerable transportation difficulty relieved the burden by going to a health center that was closer to their home. These individuals would not have been represented by the data and the data might thereby represent only those patients who were able to get to the health center with ease. Further, patients may be more likely/ less reluctant to come in to their
physician when something went wrong if coming to their physician was made easier for them. At Phoenix the majority of patients (84%) surveyed cited that problems with transportation were the primary reason for missing an appointment. Likewise, despite the majority of the patients at each site reporting reliable means of transportation to their doctor’s visits, the majority of patients at each of the sites also stated that they would take a taxi if it was convenient (Surprise 77%, Avondale 58%, Phoenix 83%). This highlights that transportation is a likely a struggle for most of the patient population, even for those patients who have demonstrated that they have a car, possibly for reasons indirectly related to transportation, e.g. distance from home to the healthcare site or inability to afford gas.

There was not enough data collected from the Surprise and Avondale locations concerning use of the AHCCCS taxis to make a fair judgment as to whether or not there was adequate patient satisfaction. The average satisfaction score generated from those sites was average however further studies should be conducted to examine the accuracy of the level of satisfaction at those sites.

The Phoenix site had a more sizable sample of patients using the AHCCCS taxis that could be considered for analysis. On review of the data points (Refer to appendix 6) patient satisfaction with the AHCCCS taxis was reasonable. However, the scope of the data points is limited in that there are still too few data points for a confident statement to be made concerning satisfactory levels. According to the data points, MercyCare patients utilize the taxi services the most. Satisfaction levels were similar across all levels except for 2 insurance providers, CMDP and AHCCCS users who had failed to indicate their specific insurance provider on the survey. There was only 1 patient using CMDP and only 2 patients who indicated dissatisfaction and did not list an insurance provider. Again, due to the limited number of data points it is difficult to generalize these results to the entire corresponding patient populations at Adelante. If more data were generated with similar results, it could indicate an issue at the level of the insurance provider with implementation of transportation on behalf of the patient.
Based on the trends in the data, which indicate similar levels of satisfaction regardless of the insurance provider utilized, it appears that the role of the insurance company in the transportation services provided for patients has not been of obvious detriment to the transportation services rendered to patients. This is with the exception of the two aforementioned categories which may garner investigation in future

**Discussion**

Comtrans seemed eager to establish a relationship with Adelante Healthcare for patient transport. I am concerned that their limited acceptance of MercyCare health coverage may not make them a readily available option. However, MercyCare is the largest health coverage provider utilized at Adelante Healthcare which is a factor that I feel makes Comtrans worthy of further examination for possible future partnership.

While conducting the survey, there were instances where language barriers made conducting the survey difficult. Use of a translator was possible in some instances but not every instance and thus populations who did not speak English, who are often the source of financial as well as health disparities in general were not well represented in the data points that were collected.

At the Phoenix the majority of patients cited not having a reliable source of transportation despite access to public transportation. This is significant because the highest number of surveys was collected from Phoenix. Likewise the use of translators was most heavily utilized at the Phoenix site. The assumption can be made then that of the three sites the data points captured from the Phoenix site is most representative of the potential patient population. Patients at the Avondale sites are limited to being females coming for OB/GYN visits. These visits are often planned well in advance such that patients are able to find adequate transportation to their appointment. Patients at the Surprise sites are less likely to represent patients with transportation disparities because of the lack of access to public transportation. Thus, it is likely that if patients do not own their own car or are unable to find a ride that the subset of
patients who would get a ride to the center via public transportation will not come to the surprise location for care.

Overall, it was shocking to uncover the number of patients who were not aware that the AHCCCS taxi cabs were a service that was available to patients. The system might be a remedy to many of the patients at the Phoenix site, if not patients at all the sites, who recognize difficulty getting to their appointment due to transportation.

A frequent complaint that surfaced while conducting the survey was the issue of women not being able to take their children with them in the taxi. Several patients complained that it was impossible for them to leave their child because there was no one to watch the child and cited instances of being turned away from taxi drivers when they presented to the taxi with their child. A change in this policy might make it easier for OB/GYN patients to schedule appointments.

Assimilating as much as a possible to the Adelante culture was of aid in the process of conducting the survey. I believe patients were more receptive the survey while I was wearing my Adelante Healthcare scrubs than they may have been if I was not wearing them. The logo on the survey may also helped in building patient comfort that the survey was legitimate.

**Recommendations**

A primary recommendation is expansion of the survey. In addition, to a survey of the general patient population, I would also like to have stratified the survey to examine exclusively: (1) patients who missed visits and whether lack of access to transportation is a major cause of missed visits within that specific subset of patients as well as (2) patients within a 5-10 mile radius of the new site in Peoria to see if transport to the new site will be an issue for patients considering that site does not have access to public transportation. These topics are examined by the survey but a more isolated response pool would be ideal.
for analysis and comparison purposes. Further, I would have liked to distribute the survey to far more patients to get more accurate collection of data points from the patient population.

At this point in time I do not feel that the data collected would be adequate justification for filing a complaint against a particular insurance company or the Discount Taxi Cab Company. In the future, however, if further surveys indicate increased levels of dissatisfaction then recommendations toward filing such a complaint should be considered.

Due to the dismissal of the Bus Route to the new site in Peoria other alternative transportation aid should be considered. A shuttle from the nearest Bus stop the actual Peoria location may be a possibility. Volunteer drivers, as was suggested through the nomination for the “Lyft for Good” campaign, is another possibility. It was brought to attention that the next step with advocating for a new bus route would be a petition to the city of Peoria as well as advocating for the new route at city hall meetings in the presence of the town mayor.

**Conclusion**

Transportation in Arizona is in the developing stages. Steps such as expansion of the current light rail in central Phoenix indicate that expansion of the system is moving in the correct direction. However, the system still leaves a great deal to be desired in terms of allowing people to access different sites in Arizona. Until access better access to transportation is established it is possible that the sites will never reach their full potential. A major concern to be considered is the issue that transportation poses to the patient population in Surprise and the chances that those same issues will be mirrored in the new site in Peoria. In many ways, the challenges presented by transportation are less obvious. However, in many cases transportation can pose as an indirect obstacle to obtaining timely access to care. It is my strong belief that by improving access to transportation, sites like Adelante Healthcare will not only improve patient health but also aid in sustaining positive patient health outcomes.
Acknowledgements

I would like to express my utmost gratitude to the GE Foundation and to the National Medical Fellowships for allowing me to participate in this amazing opportunity. To each and every member of the staff at Adelante Healthcare I am so thankful for the opportunity to have had you as a part of my experience at Adelante Healthcare and for the warmth you showed me during my time with you. To Avein, you are an inspiration. Adelante is blessed to have you as a leader, visionary, and Chief Executive Optimist. Thank you for your utmost reverence for patient life and quality care and a capacity to love the likes of which I have not before seen. To Audrey, before meeting you I was convinced there was only so much kindness a person could show. Through you I have seen that there is no limit to the depth of kindness that the human heart can possess. To Dr. Bohanan your words to wisdom will reside with me for years to come. I am so grateful to you for showing me that “being me” is the very best thing I could do not only for myself but for the patients I hope to serve. To Dr. Jonathan Cartsonis, your guidance helped bring life to the vision I had for this project. Thank you for you insightful critics and for helping me push my project to new heights. To my research partner Eric Ottey, I could not have done this project without your help. Thank you for your shared passion for tackling such an immense issue and your perceptive yet practical outlook on how to go about solving it.
References


**Appendix**

**Distribution of Modes of Transportation: Surprise**
- Personal car: 3%
- Ride from friend/family: 3%
- Public transportation: 17%
- Other: 77%

**Transportation a cause for missing an Appointment? Surprise**
- Yes: 93%
- No: 0%
- Unanswered: 7%

**Reliable Transportation? Surprise**
- No (N=2): 7%
- Yes (N=28): 93%

**Would you willing to take a taxi if Convenient? Surprise**
- No (N=7): 23%
- Yes (N=23): 77%
Means of transporation: Avondale

- Personal car: 80%
- Ride from someone else: 20%

Reliable Transportation? Avondale

- Yes: 97%

Would you take a taxi if convenient? Avondale

- Yes (n=21): 58%
- No (n=15): 42%
Means of Transportation? Phoenix

- Taxi: 6% (n=36)
- Public Transportation: 11%
- Ride from someone: 6%
- Personal car: 65%

Transportation a cause for missing an appointment? Phoenix

- Yes: 84%
- No: 16%

Reliable transportation? Phoenix

- Yes (n=46): 84%
- No (n=9): 16%

Taxi if reliable? Phoenix

- Yes: 83%
- No: 17%
Appendix

Survey results for AHCCCS Taxi system Rating

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Surprise</th>
<th>Avondale</th>
<th>Phoenix</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avg AHCCCS score</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of AHCCCS users surveyed</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

AHCCCS taxi patient usage by insurance provider at Phoenix site
Insurance Provider: ________________

PLEASE CIRCLE ONE ANSWER!

How do you normally get to your appointments?

a) public transportation
   b) personal car
   c) ride from a friend/family
   d) walking
   e) Other ____________

Do you have reliable transportation for medical visits?

a) yes
   b) no

Is transportation often a reason for missing an appointment?

a) yes
   b) no

Would you be willing to take a taxi if it was convenient?

a) yes
   b) no

How would you rate the performance of the AHCCCS taxi cabs on a scale of 1-10?

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10   I Don’t use AHCCCS Taxis

Any other comments/concerns???

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

THANK YOU!!!!
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject:</th>
<th>Re: Fw: Adalante Healthcare Peoria site bus route</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>From:</td>
<td>Eric Ottey (<a href="mailto:eottey001@ucla.edu">eottey001@ucla.edu</a>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To:</td>
<td><a href="mailto:posuji1@yahoo.com">posuji1@yahoo.com</a>;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date:</td>
<td>Friday, June 27, 2014 11:20 PM</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hi Prisca,

I was driving so I wasn't able to see read the survey until late. This looks like it will be good for Monday. Not sure of how it will go but we can modify it if there are problems. Small correction, the medicaid program is "AHCCCS". Just in case anyone asks. Let me know how it goes and we meet again next week.

On Fri, Jun 27, 2014 at 2:59 PM, Prisca Osuji <posuji1@yahoo.com> wrote:

Eric,
Please find attached the updated survey. I omitted/changed several questions for conciseness sake I am headed back to the CSO now to make copies. Please let me know if you'd like me to make any changes. Hopefully Elena is present so that I can type up a translated draft and print it simultaneously. Also, please find below the conversation with Valley Metro I mentioned during our conversation with Carlos this morning. Best.

Prisca Osuji  
Howard University College of Medicine, '16  
Howard University College of Arts and Sciences, B.S. Biology

On Thursday, June 26, 2014 1:19 PM, Walt Begley <Walt.Begley@peoriaaz.gov> wrote:

Ms. Osuji,
If you will refer to my note below, I stated that the City does not plan to have a fixed route in the near future. The 83rd route would most likely be the next logical route to add. The time frame has not been determined. The general circumstances that would cause a route to be established are general citizen demand, desire by the Mayor and Council, and of course funding which has been in short supply for the past few years. 
Regards,
Walt Begley

From: Prisca Osuji [mailto:posuji1@yahoo.com]  
Sent: Thursday, June 26, 2014 12:48 PM  
To: Walt Begley  
Subject: Re: Adalante Healthcare Peoria site bus route

Good Afternoon Mr. Begley,
Thank you for your prior response. I am curious as to the reason why the City of Peoria does not have plans on including a bus route down 83rd ave. as I am sure it would be of great benefit to the citizens who
will be patients at the new site. Can you please elaborate. Also, out of further curiosity, what series of events typically occurs for a change in the bus route to be considered? Thank you in advance.

Prisca Osuji  
*Howard University College of Medicine, ’16*  
*Howard University College of Arts and Sciences, B.S. Biology*

On Tuesday, June 17, 2014 3:39 PM, Walt Begley <Walt.Begley@peoriaaz.gov> wrote:

Ms. Osuji,  
The City of Peoria does not currently have a fixed bus route on 83rd Ave. and does not plan to in the near future. We do have a dial a ride service that is available by appointment made 24 hours in advance. If you would like more information on this service, you may contact our transit office at 623-773-7435.  
Thank you,  
Walt Begley  
623-773-7138

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**From:** Prisca Osuji [mailto:posuji1@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 17, 2014 10:37 AM  
**To:** Dayal, Abhishek  
**Subject:** Adalante Healthcare Peoria site bus route

Greetings,  
My name is Prisca Osuji. I am a medical student externing with Adelante Healthcare this summer. I spoke with you on the phone about an hour ago concerning the bus route running through the city of Peoria and the lack of a bus stop at the new Peoria site for Adelante Healthcare.

The address is:  
15525 N 83rd ave, Suite 101-106  
Peoria, AZ 85383

I look forward to your insights as to a solution for this transportation issue as well as what Adelante Healthcare must do to have a stop at the Peoria site put in place on the bus route. Thank you.

Prisca Osuji  
*Howard University College of Medicine, ’16*  
*Howard University College of Arts and Sciences, B.S. Biology*
Lyft for Good: Community Nomination

If you’re a local Lyft community member who wants to nominate an organization or cause, let us know here.

* Required

**Name**
prisca osuji

**City**
Phoenix AZ

**Web Link**
If there are any pages or materials online that help explain or support your idea, please share them here.
adelantehealthcare.com

**In one sentence, what is your Lyft for Good idea?**
Free transportation for patients to a community health center via volunteer drivers or in exchange for free health benefits.

**Tell us why you’re excited about having your local Lyft community help with this idea.**
Transportation is a huge issue in Arizona and for those who can not afford a car the travel to the physician is made near impossible. Adelante is in great need of additional support with transportation of patients, especially to sites where there is limited access to public transportation. If Lyft were able to pair with Adelante that would allow more patients to get to a health center for treatment. Likewise, it may help give health care to a driver who otherwise would not have been able to afford it.

**Please share a little about yourself and your organization.**
I am a medical student on externship with Adelante Healthcare in Arizona for the summer. I've seen the passion that the employees have for the community and I would really love for Adelante to be able to touch as many patients as its potential will allow. Adelante Healthcare is a not-for-profit Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) based in Primary Care.

**Why do you think Lyft is the best fit to partner with your organization?**
I think Lyft is the best fit to partner with Adelante because its principles are rooted in drivers who came out of the community. Adelante works to ensure that the individual as well as the community is able to grow. In providing this partnership Adelante, Lyft would help the community while still maintaining its three core values: Empowerment- drivers would have the satisfaction of having made a difference in the lives of patients by getting them to their appointments in a timely manner. Impact- helping increase positive

**What are the financial requirements for this idea?**

So long as there would be a willing driver with a car and they would agree to give of their time in exchange for health coverage with Adelante Healthcare or just to volunteer their time for the benefit of patients, then there would be no additional charges.

**Contact Information**

Please provide an email address at which we can reach you to discuss your Lyft for Good nomination further.

`posuji1@yahoo.com`

Submit

Never submit passwords through Google Forms.
WHO WE TRANSPORT

ComTrans provides transportation services to passengers who are covered under the terms of contracts with agencies, organizations or businesses. Contracts are developed to provide the specific level of service that is appropriate for each passenger.

It may be possible to schedule one-time transportation of a group of people to and from an individual event, if it does not conflict with regularly scheduled contractual commitments. For more information, call us at 602.231-0102 ext. 117.

SOCIAL SERVICE ADULT

This service provides transportation to:

- Adults enrolled in behavioral [HEALTH PROGRAMS](#)
- People who have been diagnosed as Seriously Mentally Ill (SMI)
- Adults needing non-wheelchair special assistance service through Dependable [MEDICAL TRANSPORTATION SERVICES](#) (DMTS)

Passengers are taken to and from appointments with counselors and doctors.

And ComTrans works closely with all of our client agencies to ensure that service to all adult passengers is consistent and reliable.

SOCIAL SERVICE CHILDREN

Child passengers and children with special needs are transported to and from:

- School
- School under the Mckinney Vento [PROGRAM](#)
- After-school [PROGRAMS](#)
- [BEHAVIORAL](#) health after-school programs
- Parental visits or services provided through the Arizona Department of Child Protective Services.

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CRISIS

Two-person Mobile Crisis Teams, in which one person is an EMT, operate 24/7/365 to respond to non-medical behavioral crisis situations. Passengers are transported to:

- [URGENT CARE](#) centers
- Psychiatric urgent care centers
- Hospitals
- Shelters
- DETOXIFICATION facilities
- Behavioral health facilities

For transportation for someone in a behavioral health crisis, contact:

CRISIS RESPONSE NETWORK
Maricopa County Line – 602.222.9444
Pima County Line – 520-622-6000

In case of a medical emergency, always call 9-1-1.
Impact of Transportation on Health Outcomes

Prisca Osuji
Adelante Healthcare
Phoenix, AZ
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The effects of adequate access to transportation on health outcomes are often overlooked. One of the major implications of inadequate access to healthcare can be missed visits to the physician. By missing a visit a patient loses the opportunity to receive treatment for a condition, or prescription for a medication that could make a great difference.
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Results

• A personal car was the most utilized means of transportation by far at each of the sites (75% Surprise 80% Avondale 65% Phoenix). Getting a ride from someone was the second most popular option at Surprise (17%) and Avondale (20%). However, at the Phoenix site, public transportation was the 2nd most utilized means of transportation after use of a personal car (18%).

• At Phoenix, the majority of patients (84%) surveyed cited that problems with transportation were the primary reason for missing an appointment.

• Despite the majority of the patients at each site reporting reliable means of transportation to their doctor’s visits, most patients at each of the sites also stated that they would take a taxi if it was convenient (Surprise 77%, Avondale 58%, Phoenix 83%).

• On contacting Comtrans, the possibility of establishing a contract for patient transport was established. Further negotiation would be required to contract Comtrans for patient utilization at Adelante Healthcare.
Discussion

• A frequent complaint that surfaced while conducting the survey was the issue of women not being able to take their children with them in the taxi. Several patients complained that it was impossible for them to leave their child because there was no one to watch the child and cited instances of being turned away from taxi drivers when they presented to the taxi with their child. A change in this policy might make it easier for OB/GYN patients to schedule appointments.

• The highest number of surveys was collected from Phoenix. Likewise the use of translators was most heavily utilized at the Phoenix site. The assumption can be made then that of the three sites the data points captured from the phoenix site is most representative of the potential patient population. At the Phoenix the majority of patients cited not having a reliable source of transportation despite access to public transportation.

• Overall, it was shocking to uncover the number of patients who were not aware that the AHCCCS taxi cabs were a service that was available to patients. The system might be a remedy to many of the patients at the Phoenix site, if not patients at all the sites, who recognize difficulty getting to their appointment due to transportation.
Recommendations

• A primary recommendation is expansion of the survey. In addition, to a survey of the general patient population, I would also like to have stratified the survey to examine exclusively:
  • (1) patients who missed visits and whether lack of access to transportation is a major cause of missed visits within that specific subset of patients.
  • (2) patients within a 5-10 mile radius of the new site in Peoria to see if transport to the new site will be an issue for patients considering that site does not have access to public transportation.

• Further, I would have liked to distribute the survey to far more patients to get a more accurate collection of data points from the patient population.
Conclusion

• Transportation in Arizona is in the developing stages. However, the system still leaves a great deal to be desired in terms of allowing people to access different sites in Arizona. Until access better access to transportation is established it is possible that the sites will never reach their full potential.

• Lack of public transportation continues to pose issues for to the patient population in Surprise and the chances that those same issues will be mirrored in the new site in Peoria may become a stark reality.

• In many cases transportation can pose as an indirect obstacle to obtaining timely access to care. It is my strong belief that by improving access to transportation, sites like Adelante Healthcare will not only improve patient health but also aid in sustaining positive patient health outcomes.
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Impact of Transportation on Health Outcomes
Prisca Osuji — Howard University
Site Placement: Adelante Healthcare, Phoenix AZ

• Objective: To examine how inadequate transportation may lead to negative health outcomes via missed physician visits as well as proposing improvements for increased access to transportation thereby increasing the number of patients seen.

• Methods: A needs assessment was conducted surrounding patients’ ability to reach the healthcare centers as well as their satisfaction with the taxi services provided by AHCCCS. Several outside transportation companies were contacted regarding possible transportation alternatives for patients.

• Key Findings: At the Phoenix site, the majority of patients (84%) surveyed cited that problems with transportation were the primary reason for missing an appointment. Likewise, despite the majority of the patients at each site reporting reliable means of transportation to their physician visits, the majority of patients at each of the sites also stated that they would take a taxi if it was convenient (Surprise 77%, Avondale 58%, Phoenix 83%).

• Recommendations: Expansion of the survey should be considered. Several means of survey expansion are feasible including a stratified survey to examine exclusively: (1) Patients who missed visits and whether lack of access to transportation is a major cause of missed visits within that specific subset of patients. (2) Patients within a 5-10 mile radius of the new site in Peoria to explore if transport to the new site will be an issue due to the lack of public transportation. The next step with advocating for a new bus route would be a petition to the city of Peoria as well as advocating for the new route at city hall meetings in the presence of the town mayor.