

*Empowering Minds*

---



*Transforming Lives*

---

# Human Services Transportation Study for McHenry County

**Prepared for:**

**McHenry County Mental Health Board**

620 Dakota Street, Ste 251

Crystal Lake, IL 60012

**Prepared by:**

**Region 1 Planning Council**

127 N Wyman St, Ste 100

Rockford, Illinois 61101

**February 2021**

# Human Services Transportation Study for McHenry County

## Table of Contents

Introduction.....	2
Background & Purpose .....	2
Project Scope .....	2
Development of the Report .....	2
Transportation Role in Health.....	3
Defining Transportation Services .....	3
Why It Matters .....	3
Existing Transportation Services .....	5
Public Transportation .....	5
Human Service Transportation .....	7
Transportation Network Companies .....	7
Transportation Needs Survey .....	8
Development .....	8
Survey Findings .....	8
Strategy Toolbox .....	12

# Introduction

## Background and Purpose

McHenry County Mental Health Board (MHB) is one of the leading entities in planning, coordinating, and fostering the development of quality mental health services within McHenry County. As MHB works towards a comprehensive mental health system, transportation access is an integral part in ensuring the prevention and treatment of mental illness, developmental disabilities, and substance abuse. Without convenient and reliable access, care integral to one's quality of life may be delayed or missed, increasing the likelihood of poor health outcomes and overall health-care expenditures.

While McHenry County has a robust network of behavioral health entities committed to improving the lives of their clientele, providing context-sensitive transportation solutions to these services is needed for both organizations and individuals to thrive. Transportation continues to be a major barrier for many residents seeking services, particularly those who may not have access to a personal vehicle.

In collaboration with MHB, Region 1 Planning Council (RPC) has developed a toolbox to guide local health care and transportation providers as they improve connections between transportation and behavioral health services. Through the recognition of collective assets and the identification of transportation needs and gaps, this report frames key issues and provides best practices in addressing barriers and increasing access to both transportation and mental health services.

## Report Scope

Located in Northeastern Illinois along the Illinois/Wisconsin border, McHenry County is approximately 50 miles northwest of Chicago. As of 2019, McHenry County had a population of 307,774 people, with more than half of the population residing in the southeast corner of the county. While McHenry County is part of Chicago metropolitan area, much of the county is still rural with a relatively low population density making public transportation coordination and partnership exceedingly pertinent to successful mobility opportunities.

Through dissemination and analysis of a Transportation Needs Survey, review of existing public transportation services and partnerships, and identification of best practice communities, this report looks to elicit conversations that will leverage and coordinate transportation options and behavioral health systems in McHenry County.

## Development of Report

The McHenry County Mental Health Board (MHB) served as sponsoring agency for this report, providing recommendations and input throughout its development and communicating with behavioral health agencies in the survey collection process. The McHenry County Division of Transportation (MCDOT) also provided key support throughout the development process, supplying feedback on deliverables, and sharing necessary data.

# Transportation's Role in Health

## Defining Transportation Services

Public transportation is defined as “a system of transport for passengers by group travel systems available for use by the general public,” and is essential for millions of Americans, connecting them to people, places, and possibilities. According to the American Public Transportation Association, Americans took 9.9 billion trips on public transportation in 2019. There are several different types of public transportation including, but not limited to, buses, light rail, subways, commuter trains, streetcars and trolleys, cable cars, van pool services, ferries and water taxis, paratransit services, and motorails and tramways. Within McHenry County, public transportation is a growing facet of the county’s transportation system and includes Pace Bus fixed routes, Metra Union Pacific Northwest Line, MedRyde Transport, Senior Care Volunteer Network, and MCRide Dial-A-Ride program. The county is also served by private transportation services, such as Uber and Lyft.

## Why it Matters

Public transportation helps ensure individuals can successfully attend everyday activities, such as jobs, schools, shop for healthy food, and travel to healthcare facilities, safely and reliably.<sup>1</sup> According to the 2019 Census figures, nearly nine percent of American households do not have access to a vehicle. In McHenry County, 3.9 percent of households do not have access to a vehicle. This can be a significant barrier in receiving health services and accessing grocery stores. Specifically, limited or no access to a vehicle can create issues with accessing healthcare, mental health, and/or substance use treatments. Transportation is an incredibly important link between individuals and the mental health services they receive as mental health treatment needs to be consistent and reliable. Without reliable transportation, an individual may have to reschedule or miss appointments, routine care, or medication use, which may lead to poor management of chronic illness and thus poorer health outcomes overall.

The National Aging and Disability Transportation Center (NADTC) trends report states that, “caregivers and/or family members of adults with mental or emotional health issues spend an average of 32 hours per week providing unpaid care,” including transportation services. For this reason, public transit options are crucial and need to expand beyond typical fixed route services. Some individuals may have challenges utilizing a fixed route service due to the symptoms associated with their mental illness (i.e., anxiety, increased sensitivity, confused thinking) resulting in a need for alternative transportation options that may not be available in their area. A study from the “Traveling Towards Disease: Transportation Barriers to Health Care Access” found that transportation barriers can impact health care access as much as 67 percent.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, Flores et al. studied 203 children’s caretakers and found that 21 percent of children in urban settings faced



1 Public Transportation System: Introduction or Expansion. (2018, October 19). Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/policy/hst/hi5/publictransportation/index.html>

2 Syed, S. T., Gerber, B. S., & Sharp, L. K. (2013). Traveling towards disease: transportation barriers to health care access. *Journal of community health, 38*(5), 976-993.

transportation barriers to timely health care. Of these, 62 percent cited lack of a car as a specific barrier, which exceeded other barriers such as excessive distance, expense, or inconvenience of public transportation.

The COVID-19 pandemic has re-shaped many facets of the American lifestyle, including transportation. Telehealth became the primary approach for medical treatments, including those related to physical and mental health, as well as substance use treatment. This has added to the reduction of transit riders and lessened the need to find alternative transportation to healthcare services. COVID-19 has also caused a reduction of individuals seeking medical care, with over 40 percent of a population sample stating they have delayed medical care throughout the course of the pandemic (Chen, et al., 2021). Furthermore, “How is the COVID-19 Pandemic Shaping Transportation Access to Health Care” (2021)<sup>3</sup>, found that telemedicine is working as a partial substitute for some visits, but cannot fulfill all health care needs, especially for vulnerable groups and some patients who may be likely to require additional support during the pandemic or have to overcome new travel barriers caused by changes in public transit services or other alternative transportation options. Transportation services are crucial for individuals to maintain good health outcomes and remain involved in mental health and substance use care.

---

3 Chen, K. L., Brozen, M., Rollman, J. E., Ward, T., Norris, K. C., Gregory, K. D., & Zimmerman, F. J. (2021). How is the COVID-19 Pandemic Shaping Transportation Access to Health Care?. *Transportation Research Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, 100338.

# Existing Transportation Services

The Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) is a unit of local government created to oversee finances, secure funding, and conduct transit planning for major transportation agencies in the Chicago metropolitan area. Currently, three public transportation services operate in McHenry County under RTA. These include Metra, the commuter rail service; Pace, the suburban public transit service; and MCRide, a demand-response (dial-a-ride) service operated by Pace. Out of the six counties that make up RTA's service area, McHenry County has the least amount of transit services available when compared with other counties. However, the services currently available are essential for many residents who do not have access to a personal vehicle, are unable to drive, or may choose not to drive.

## Public Transportation

### MCRide

MCRide is the public demand-response transportation service in McHenry County. Service is funded by McHenry County, Pace, and Federal Section 5310 grant funds. As a demand-response program, rides are scheduled in advance and provides curb-to-curb service from the rider's desired pick-up and drop-off destinations. Due to MCRide's role as a coordinated countywide paratransit service, vehicles do not travel on a fixed route and may stop for other passengers during a single trip. While McHenry County is the lead agency for MCRide, Pace Suburban Bus coordinates all services.



Image sourced from McHenry County Department of Transportation's website.

Service is operated seven days a week between 6:00 am to 7:00 pm. The general public can schedule a ride up to 48 hours in advance, whereas seniors and individuals with a disability can schedule up to 7 days in advance. Reservation hours are Monday through Friday, from 5:30 am to 6:00 pm, and from 8:30 am to 4:00 pm on Saturdays and Sundays. Due to lower staff levels on the weekend, only same-day reservations can be made. However, trips on Saturday through Monday can be reserved on the preceding Friday. MCRide fares are based on the distance of the trip. The first five miles of travel cost the general public is \$3.00. While seniors and individuals with disabilities receive a reduced fare of \$1.50 for the first five miles. Each additional mile costs \$0.25. Riders may also be picked-up or dropped-off at seven point destinations outside the MCRide service area: Advocate Good Shepherd Hospital, Barrington Metra Station, Randall Oaks/Park/Zoo/Golf Course, The Arboretum, Advocate Sherman Hospital, Spring Hill Mall, Chain O'Lakes State Park.

### Pace Bus

Pace is the suburban public transit service and the regional paratransit division of the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) for the Chicago metropolitan area. Pace operates a number of fixed routes across their six-county region in Northeastern Illinois and contracts the operation of the vehicles and call center used in MCRide services. Pace also offers ADA paratransit services within three-quarters of a mile of all their fixed routes, however, only persons with a disability or health condition are eligible for these services.

#### *Pace Fixed Routes*

In January of 2019, Pace eliminated the Route 809 route, reducing the number of McHenry County routes down to four. The four routes include: Route 550, Elgin Transportation Center – Crystal Lake; Route 806, Crystal Lake – Fox



Image sourced from Pace's website.

Lake; Route 807, Woodstock – McHenry, and Route 808, Crystal Lake – Harvard.

**Route 550** - Route 550 provides service between the Pace Elgin Transportation Center, Elgin Metra Station, and the Metra UP-Northwest Line Crystal Lake Station, serving Big Timber and Randall Roads. All stops along this route are fixed; however, some stops along Randall Road, especially in Kane County, are currently hard to access.

**Route 806** - Route 806 provides rush hour service between three Metra stations: the Northwest line's Crystal Lake and McHenry stations and the Milwaukee District North line's Fox Lake station. This route provides connections to Northwestern Medicine McHenry Hospital as well as social service providers such as the Pioneer Center. Four separate municipalities are served by this route including Crystal Lake, McHenry, Johnsburg, and Fox Lake.

**Route 807** - Route 807 travels along IL-120 to provide weekday rush hour service between the villages of McHenry and Woodstock. The route serves McHenry City Hall, Metra's Woodstock and McHenry stations, McHenry County Courthouse, and McHenry Market Place.

**Route 808** - Route 808 travels along Highway 14 and IL-20, providing service between Crystal Lake, Woodstock, and Harvard. The route serves three Metra stations in Crystal Lake, Harvard, and Woodstock. In addition, the routes also provide service to McHenry County College, Centegra Hospital, and Mercy Harvard Hospital.

Route 550 is operated through the day on weekdays, while the other three routes only operate during rush hour on weekdays. Unlike other routes in the Pace system, the 806, 807, and 809 routes do not use traditional transit buses or offer electronic destination signs and bike racks that may improve travel.

## Metra

McHenry County is also home to Metra's Union Pacific-Northwest (UP-NW) Line which provides service between the City of Chicago and the City of Harvard. The Metra UP-NW line has two branches. The main line originates at the Harvard station stops in Fox River Grove, Cary, Crystal Lake, Woodstock, and Harvard. The second branch originates at the McHenry station.

While not directly located in McHenry County, the Milwaukee North Line (MD-N), which primarily serves Lake County, is often used McHenry County residents due to the Fox Lake station close proximity to the county and as it is served by MCRide. Like the UP-NW line, the MD-N line provides service to downtown Chicago, terminating at Union Station. Due to a lack of infrastructure and the park-and-ride design of these stations accessing these Metra stations are harder to do without a personal vehicle.

Additionally, a \$6 Day Pass has been introduced for unlimited travel between three zones or less. The current \$10 Day Pass is still available for travel between all 10 fare zones. The three-zone pass is an affordable option for shorter and intermediate trips, such as between suburbs or between Chicago neighborhoods.



Image sourced from Metra's website.

# Human Service Transportation

In addition to MCRide demand-response and Pace’s fixed route services, a number of human service transportation agencies in McHenry County also provide transportation services for their clientele. The coverage area and hours vary by agency with some services, such as Senior Care Volunteer Network, relying strictly on volunteers for operation. One such service is provided by Algonquin Township Senior Bus, which operates from 7:00 AM to 4:00 PM on weekdays within Algonquin township. Table X lists the various human service transportation options in McHenry County.

## Kaizen Health Care

While Kaizen is not explicitly a transportation provider, the company offers a platform that aggregates transportation services in one place. McHenry County Mental Health Board currently contracts with Kaizen for human service organizations and stakeholders to utilize the platform and arrange transportation for their clientele. Kaizen Health mobilizes existing transportation providers under one platform to simplify the process of accessing transportation options in the county. Kaizen typically offers curb-to-curb services but can also arrange door-to-door, door-through-door, and bed-to-bed transport. The platform includes a decision-making tool for social workers or caregivers to select the vehicle that will best accommodate their patient’s needs.

## Transportation Network Companies

Transportation Network Companies (TNC) provide technology-based platforms for on-demand transportation services. Unlike taxi’s, TNC’s use smartphone applications to connect drivers to riders, providing a more convenient experience. App-based ride hailing allows drivers to pick up riders with greater frequency due to their ability to match customers with routes more efficiently. Users are able to schedule rides knowing the upfront cost of the trip, utilize mobile payment, and track the progress of their ride. Uber and Lyft are two examples of ridesharing companies that offer 24-hour service within McHenry County.



Image Courtesy of McHenry County.

# Transportation Needs Survey

## Development

As a part of this report, the McHenry County Mental Health Board (MHB), in collaboration with Region 1 Planning Council (RPC), administered a transportation needs survey to organizations that provide behavioral and human health services in McHenry County. While many MHB network partners and human service organizations operate “in-house” transportation programs, the survey’s goal was to capture and quantify information that could support data-driven decision-making and best allocate patient transportation resources in the county. A total of 32 questions were asked to gain organization-specific information on transportation programming, clientele needs, transportation barriers and constraints, and potential coordination efforts. Organizations could explain the services they provide and their needs on an organizational- and clientele-level, as well as their role in transportation programming.

The development and dissemination of this survey was integral in the transportation improvements and collaboration tactics discussed in this report. After two weeks of administration, 15 surveys were completed. The following section expands upon several key findings. More detailed information on survey results can be found in Appendix A.

The following agencies participated in the transportation needs survey:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| Association for Individual Development (AID)             | Pioneer Center for Human Services          |
| Rosecrance   | Mathers Community Mental health            |
| Home of the Sparrow                                      | Senior Services Associates                 |
| Senior Care Volunteer Network                            | Clearbrook West                            |
| 22nd Judicial Circuit                                    | Independence Health and Therapy            |
| Thresholds   | New Directions Addiction Recovery Services |
| Northern Illinois Special Recreation Association (NISRA) | Opinions & Advocacy for McHenry County     |
| Northwestern Medicine Westbrook Hospital                 |  |

## Survey Findings

### Clientele & Services

Behavioral and human health organizations can serve a variety of clientele ranging from the general public to specific groups, such as individuals 65 years and older. The majority of organizations surveyed as a part of this report provide services to targeted populations such as persons of low income (57 percent) or persons with a disability. Nearly 80 percent of these organizations reported serving more than 250 people annually, signifying their role as an essential service.

In McHenry County, many health and human service organizations serve a variety of different needs, as indicated in the responses received. The services most common among respondents include mental health treatment (42.9 percent), substance abuse treatment (35.7 percent), and recreation/leisure opportunities (50 percent).

The majority of survey respondents provide some form of transportation, such as volunteers or staff transporting clientele, contracting with another agency, partnering with public transportation for pass distribution, or providing their own service. Forty-six percent of respondents noted that their organization already partner with public transportation agencies to purchase and distribute passes to clientele, 38.5 percent of respondents either operate their own transportation services or contract with another entity to provide transportation service, and only two agencies do not provide transportation services.

Program transportation, demand-response, and non-emergency medical transportation (NEMT) are the most common types of service offered by those operating transportation in-house. Medicaid non-emergency medical transportation (NEMT) is a benefit that offers access to and from medical services for beneficiaries who need disability accommodation or have no means of transportation. Multiple organizations called out Pace and McHenry County's MCRide Dial-A-Ride service as a transportation option utilized by their patients when applicable.

## Transportation Barriers, Constraints, and Needs

### *Organizational Barriers and Needs*

Service coverage was the number one constraint organizations with transportation services face, with 70 percent of respondents noting this as an issue. While funding was the second most noted limitation at 50 percent, often times the inability to improve transportation service, such as expanding geographic coverage, is due to a lack of funding. Forty percent of respondents indicated that vehicle maintenance and replacement and scheduling were also concerns, as some organizations rely on internal funding streams and volunteers to support their services.

For those who may not operate their own transportation services, funding and coverage of service are still significant barriers. However, clientele special needs, Medicaid issues, and insurance liability issues also play a role. Some patients may have health conditions, mobility limitations, or mental health conditions that make it difficult to use transportation options, such as fixed route service or TNCs. Additionally, Medicaid transportation benefits and eligibility qualifications vary by state which can make service provision difficult to navigate, especially over county borders. Other Medicaid restrictions, including prior authorization requirements and copayments, also make the process to acquiring transportation benefits lengthy and difficult.

### *Client Barriers and Needs*

Identification of clientele needs came from organizations' perspectives as a survey was not distributed to those who utilize these services directly. A summary of the client barriers and needs provided by the agencies surveyed is provided below.

- The top three barriers clientele experience in regards to transportation is limited-service coverage (85.6 percent), limited hours of transportation service availability (76.9 percent), and a lack of personal vehicle (69.2 percent).
- Due to medical or physical disabilities, curb to curb and door to door service is most needed for respondents' clientele.
- Transportation service is most needed between 8:00 am and 6:00 pm.
- Transportation service is most needed on weekdays.

Many clients may not have access to transportation services due to where they live or their destination. While clients need transportation most frequently for social service and medical appointments, there are other destinations instrumental to daily life that are not accessible through current transportation options. Expanding the geographical coverage of some transportation services could increase ridership and number of individuals participating in them.

## Target Populations served by respondents:

### Mental Health Treatment



### Substance Abuse Treatment



### Recreation & Leisure



Source: Transportation Needs Survey Results

Top places clients need to go but can't access using current transportation services:

- Medical Appointments
- Out of County medical specialist appointments
- Individual Therapy Appointments
- Support Group Therapies (ex. AAA Meetings)
- Employment/Job Interviews
- Destinations that are not “needs based” (ex. Social Events)
- Residential
- Community Programming
- Child Care Centers
- Other Social Service Agencies
- Western and Northern areas of McHenry County

According to the survey, another barrier experienced by their clientele was the limited hours of transportation service available. Traveling in the evening and on weekends can be more difficult in comparison to weekdays. Service hours for most transportation services in McHenry County fall within normal weekday business hours (5:00 AM and 6:00 PM). While Metra does operate service later into the evening, passenger rail is most appropriate for travel to downtown Chicago rather than within the county itself. Additionally, MCRide services require trips to be scheduled in advance which may not be conducive to the sporadic nature of patients' health care needs. Factors such as these make it difficult for riders to reach their desired destinations at certain times and is particularly difficult for seniors and persons with disabilities who may not have other transportation options available to them.

### Respondants who said they face issues with:



Source: Transportation Needs Survey Results

Potential changes or connections that would improve clients' access to transportation:

- Increase in volunteer availability.
- Increase in public transportation coverage or service areas, particularly in rural areas.
- Increase in public transportation service hours, particularly on nights and weekends.
- Increased frequency of public transportation routes.
- Transportation vehicles that accommodate mobility aid devices such as wheelchairs.
- Additional funding to cover staffing and vehicle maintenance costs.
- Consistency and reliability of pick up and drop off times.
- Contractual agreements or collaboration with public transportation options in the County (ex. PACE).
- More opportunities for ridesharing.
- Acquisition of vehicles that can be used to transport clientele.

## Transportation Service Funding

The amount of money spent on transportation programming varied among respondents, with organizations spending as little as \$3,000 dollars and others spending over \$100,000 dollars. Seventy-three percent of responses indicated that transportation services come at no cost to the client due to funding from outside sources. Most organizations noted their reliance on foundation grants and local funding to support their transportation services. However, private contributions and donations also heavily support these services. One respondent indicated their use of MHB grant dollars to purchase gas cards, cab rides, and bus and train tickets for their clientele. While federal

and state grants do support transportation services provided by some organizations within the County, these numbers are relatively low. Funding streams could be diversified and improved through further collaboration with public transportation agencies such as McHenry County. One-time grant applications may also help with large capital investments in transportation infrastructure.

## Collaboration

Nearly 70 percent of respondents were open to the possibility of improving patients' transportation options through collaborative means. One respondent indicated that coordination between health and transportation sectors could lead to the development of a comprehensive list of transportation resources in the area. These resources could help health organizations better communicate and match transportation options to their clientele.

While one respondent noted vehicle sharing as a potential way for their organization to collaborate with transportation providers and other health-based entities, the majority of respondents were less open to vehicle sharing. Liability issues was considered the main deterrent but concerns over clientele safety, scheduling, and maintenance coordination were prevalent among respondents.

Since vehicle acquisition, operations, and maintenance costs can be a constraint for many organizations, it may be advantageous for organizations to jointly share resources, where possible. However, this does not have to be fleet sharing. Organizations may find it advantageous to partner in order to leverage state resources. Sponsorships and partnerships often generate revenue for health-care collaborative programs.

## COVID-19

Over the past year and a half, COVID-19 has not only changed the way transportation services operate but has also influenced the way individuals utilize and perceive transit. Whether it be a reduction in service, additional cleaning procedures, or fluctuations in demand, transportation providers have re-examined how to best meet the needs of users and organizations have seen a shift in the transportation needs of their clients. Health care organizations who participated in the survey indicated that COVID-19 has led to an overall decrease in ridership (50 percent) due to the increase in telemedicine services (75 percent) and the reduction of employee availability (58.3 percent) to manage transport services.

However, the majority of organizations (61.5 percent) indicated their clientele does plan on using transportation services once the pandemic has calmed. This may be attributed to the fact that not all health care needs can be met virtually. Although telemedicine services have increased during COVID-19, specifically in the mental health field, these services rely on community reimbursement and the ability for specialists to consistently offer the same services that are available in person. Notably, telemedicine cannot address all patients, as some require or need in-person care due to health conditions or unsafe home environments.

# Strategic Toolbox

Identifying a strategic toolbox to understand the community’s needs, health care cooperation and coordination, and provide information on data, funding and qualifications was an essential portion of this report. In order to understand and utilize the findings from the survey, understanding the clientele’s needs and the structures currently in place will help to determine a course of action. This Strategic Toolbox will assist in identifying contextual and circumstantial considerations to ensure all citizens of McHenry County are provided with the necessary transportation services. The tools and strategies below are largely based on best practices throughout the county.

## *Understanding Riders Service Needs*

Consider what type of service is most appropriate for clientele. Asking questions, such as “What are the rider’s capabilities?” or “Do they qualify for ADA eligibility?”, can help organizations understand how to best address transportation barriers. It is recommended that organizations send out a transportation needs survey to their clientele in order to receive direct feedback.<sup>1</sup>

## *Coordinate Health Care Scheduling with Transportation Availability Hours*

Ensuring that appointments coincide with the hours and days transportation services are provided. Health facilities may be able modify their hours to match when transportation services are offered, or organizations can work with transportation operators to extend routes or services at specific times of day.<sup>2</sup>

## *Data*

Collecting data can be a great resource in making a case for health care transportation solutions, such as calculating the cost of missed appointments; and social costs of unmet healthcare needs, as well as the costs transit providers and agencies could save on alternative service provision.<sup>3</sup>

## *Funding*

Transportation agencies should look outside of traditional funding sources to ensure the long-term viability of public transportation and paratransit to meet the transportation needs of the most economically and medically vulnerable patients during and after the pandemic.<sup>4</sup>

## *Qualification*

Transportation agencies should streamline eligibility checks and application processing in order to enroll more eligible individuals into paratransit and NEMT programs. Health insurers should consider expanding NEMT eligibility to cover vulnerable groups that are not Medicaid-eligible, such as undocumented immigrant population.<sup>5</sup>

---

1 Syed, S. T., Gerber, B. S., & Sharp, L. K. (2013). Traveling towards disease: transportation barriers to health care access. *Journal of community health*, 38(5), 976-993

2 (See Footnote 1)

3 (See Footnote 1)

4 Chen, K. L., Brozen, M., Rollman, J. E., Ward, T., Norris, K. C., Gregory, K. D., & Zimmerman, F. J. (2021). How is the COVID-19 Pandemic Shaping Transportation Access to Health Care?. *Transportation Research Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, 100338.

5 Myers, A. (2015, January 07). Retrieved from <https://www.ncsl.org/research/transportation/non-emergency-medical-transportation-a-vital-lifeline-for-a-healthy-community.aspx>

## *Context Sensitive Solutions*

Make sure a contextual-sensitive approach is used in addressing transportation needs. Different mobility needs will require different transportation solutions, such as providing bus passes for fixed route versus a specialized door-to-door service. For example, those able and willing to use a fixed route may not need an expensive specialized service.

A possible solution is the increased use of mobile clinics or community paramedics who can deliver care to those with transportation difficulties, including those experiencing homelessness. Another context sensitive solution could be the expansion of access to paratransit through streamlining the eligibility application process, increasing the number of NEMT and TNC providers who can accommodate PWD, ensuring that PWD can access telemedicine, and exploring innovative models of home care delivery during the pandemic could help establish infrastructure to ensure improved long-term access to care.

## *Other Considerations*

- Development of a central transportation resource hub for McHenry County.
- Consolidate scheduling technology and route planning apps that provide services at pre-arranged sites for clients within a particular geographical area.
- Integrate mobility management services.
- Increased coordination within the public sector system

### We Welcome Your Feedback

Public comment is always welcome at the beginning and end of all MCMHB meetings.

*Empowering Minds, Transforming Lives*

620 Dakota Street | Crystal Lake, IL 60012 | 815-455-2828 phone | 815-455-2925 fax | [www.mc708.org](http://www.mc708.org)