

## *Calgary Seniors' Resource Society*



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- Calgary Seniors' Resource Society (CSRS) offers innovative and creative services that support seniors
- CSRS is a registered charity and has been providing programs and services in Calgary since 1995
- CSRS focuses on vulnerable seniors who are low income and/or isolated

Who We Are

## *Our Escorted Transportation Program*

- Not a pick up and drop off service
- Volunteers provide social and physical support
- No other service like it in the city of Calgary

## *History*

- The Escorted Transportation program began in early 1990
- 329 rides were provided to medical appointments, the bank and grocery shopping
- Volunteers drove just over 8,500 kms

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## Today's Program

- Today, the ET program has 45 volunteer drivers and almost 800 registered clients
- 1,500 - 3,000 round trip rides are provided to medical and banking appointments per year
- Volunteers drive between 75,000 and 100,000 kms per year
- The average round trip takes 2.5 hours and is approximately 50 kms in length

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## Senior Riders

- Program clients are not able to use other methods of transportation (such as public transit) due to health, mobility or income limitations
- If a senior still drives, or has a spouse who drives, they will not qualify for the program
- Priority is given to those who do not have friends or family to assist them
- Individuals must be over 65 years of age to access the service (with some exceptions)
- Program clients must live independently in their own home or apartment within Calgary city limits

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## *Client Registration*

- Seniors either call directly about the ET program or are referred by a third party, such as a Social Worker or other service provider
- If a senior meets the program criteria, they will be registered for the service over the telephone
- If program staff feel it is necessary, an appointment will be made with the potential client to conduct a home assessment
- Upon acceptance into the program, a package containing a welcome letter, payment form and a program agreement are mailed to the senior. The payment form and program agreement must be returned to CSRS for registration to be completed

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## *Trip Requests*

- Rides are provided Monday through Friday from 8:30 am until 4:30 pm (with some exceptions for earlier appointments for surgery etc.)
- Trip requests must be received a minimum of two weeks in advance, unless there is an emergency or exceptional circumstance
- Registered clients phone in their trip requests and leave a message if no one is available to take their call
- Special need or one time requests are considered on a case by case basis
- Although we do accept banking requests, priority is given for medical appointments

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## *Volunteer Drivers*

- Complete a volunteer application
- Go through an interview
- Provide references
- Attend extensive training, including a session put on by AMA
- Submit to a police security check
- Provide copies of: five year driver's abstract, license, registration and insurance

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## *Driver Dispatch*

- CSRS uses a web based application called RideScheduler to manage ride requests and driver dispatch
- RideScheduler allows each driver to have their own log in information and password
- Drivers can log into RideScheduler from home to accept rides or manage their trips
- RideScheduler tracks mileage, alerts program staff about documents about to expire, and generates numerous reports (including number of trips etc.)

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## Volunteer Mileage Reimbursement

- Volunteer drivers submit a monthly trip log (this can also be generated or confirmed by RideScheduler)
- Volunteers can choose to either be reimbursed for their mileage at a rate of \$0.46 per kilometre or receive a charitable tax receipt at a rate of \$0.53 per kilometre
- Mileage cheques are mailed out by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the following month

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## Client Billing

- In the summer of 2006, CSRS implemented a gas recovery fee for senior riders due to increasing program expenses and lack of stable funding
- CSRS charges \$10 per round trip for those seniors who can afford to pay. Many are only able to give \$5 per ride or pay nothing at all. In total, we collect about \$13,000 per year in fees. We pay about \$30,000 in volunteer mileage
- CSRS mails a detailed invoice itemizing each ride to every client who used the service at the end of each month. If the client is registered for credit card payments, they receive a statement listing their rides and the charges that have been applied
- If a senior rider has not paid for their trips for more than two consecutive months, their new trip requests will not be accepted until they have either paid in full or discussed the situation with program staff and made other arrangements

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## Program Growth

- CSRS has a three year plan to expand our Escorted Transportation program to include compassionate visits and evening and weekend trips
- We are working with several seniors centres in Calgary to assist with transportation to social recreation facilities and activities
- CSRS continues to explore sustainable funding and social entrepreneurship opportunities that will benefit the program

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## Challenges

- New volunteer driver recruitment and aging volunteer base
- Rapidly increasing demand for services
- Need for rides beyond medical appointments
- Lack of operational funding
- Perception of risk

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## *Program Costs*

- It costs CSRS about \$54 per round trip without the gas recovery fee (this dollar amount figures in everything from program staff salaries and RideScheduler fees to photocopying and facility expenses). The total cost of the program per year is between \$80,000 and \$100,000
- To take a taxi (which only offers pick up and drop off without any assistance) a comparable distance, would cost a senior approximately \$108.
- The Escorted Transportation program is completely unfunded. CSRS ends each year with close to a \$50,000 program deficit, which is covered by general operation dollars and individual donations

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## *What makes a volunteer driver program successful?*

- Relationships with volunteers
- Communication internally and externally
- Sharing best practices
- Clear policies and procedures
- Risk management strategies

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Questions?