



The Transportation Program: A Guide for Clients

**To Book a Drive, please call
(613) 737-5115, extension 2783**

What is the Transportation Program?

South-East Ottawa Community Health Centre (SEOCHC) helps seniors 60+ and adults with physical disabilities who live in the area bounded by the Rideau River and Industrial Avenue/Innes Road to the north, Highway 417 to the east, Hunt Club Road to the south and Bank Street to the west.

The Transportation Program provides transportation for a reasonable cost to clients who need assistance in getting to essential medical appointments.

Essential medical appointments include: doctor, dentist, foot care appointments, filling prescriptions, medical tests and lab work, as well as specialized shopping such as for glasses, special shoes or walking aids. Other types of drives can only be arranged if space is available around the medical appointments, since they are given priority.

SEOCHC is a part of the **Champlain Community Transportation Collaborative (CCTC)**, which is comprised of many Community Support Service agencies that work together with a Regional Transportation Coordinator to help seniors and adults with physical disabilities get to their appointments. Our goal, through this shared service model, is to work together to help you with as many drives as possible. We do this by sharing resources (*e.g. drivers and vehicles*) with one another.

If SEOCHC is unable to find a driver for you, we will work with CCTC partner agencies to coordinate your drive. In order to do this, the staff need to share the following information with our partner agencies so they can coordinate the drives: your name, date of birth, health card number, address, phone number, important health and mobility information, appointment location (*and other details such as suite number*), and emergency contact information. Information may be shared by email, phone, and a secure database, with our drivers and partner agencies. Your information is kept confidential amongst the staff and drivers of these agencies.



In order for you to use the Transportation Program, we require that you sign a '**Consent to Share Information Form**', which grants SEOCHC permission to share pertinent information with CCTC partner agencies in order to help find you a driver. Please rest assured that the information is only used to facilitate the scheduling of drives to essential appointments, and for no other purpose.

If you have any questions or concerns about the **Consent to Share Information Form**, please contact the Service Coordinator.

Who can use the Transportation Program?

In order to be eligible for the Transportation Program you must live within the SEOCHC catchment area. You must also be **60+** or an **adult with a physical disability** who is between 18-59 years of age. SEOCHC does not provide transportation to clients who are less than 18 years of age.

You must be able to communicate with the driver – whether through verbal or nonverbal communication - in case of an emergency. If you are not able to communicate with the driver, or need more than minimal assistance (due to memory loss, physical or behavioral challenges) we ask that you bring along an escort. If you are unable to provide your own escort or translator we will do our best to connect you with an organization that can assist.

You are always welcome to be accompanied by a family member, friend, or other escort (age 16 and over) who can provide you with some additional assistance. Please advise the Service Coordinator ahead of time if you will have someone accompanying you during your drive. This allows us to tell the driver to expect someone else and plan accordingly.

You must be able to manage physically with minimal assistance. Our drivers are not able to provide weight-bearing support and are not permitted to lift or transfer you. This means that you should be able to climb safely in and out of a vehicle with some guidance or assistance from a driver (*such as an arm for stability*). We do have access to some vehicles that have been retrofitted with a turny orbit seat. The 'turny' seats are fully-powered seats which rotate and move (*outside and down*) to the most comfortable position for stepping in/out of the vehicle. Please note, these vehicles and spaces are limited.

You should also be independently mobile or mobile with the use of an assistive device (e.g., cane or a walker). If you use an assistive device you are required to bring it with you, in order to protect you and the driver from potential injury.

Please note that a wheelchair cannot be transported. Our drivers are not equipped or trained to handle wheelchairs or to provide support to individuals who need help transferring in and out of vehicles. Should you require a wheelchair at a medical site, please inform the Service Coordinator who can seek to find a driver that is able to provide this extra assistance. Please note, not all of our drivers are able to provide this additional support.

A final reminder: please note that it is *extremely* important that you are honest with us about your capabilities and limitations. The driver will refuse service if they find that your needs are beyond the service capacity.



Who are the drivers?

At SEOCHC, we value diversity and inclusivity. Just like our clients, our volunteers come from diverse backgrounds and communities including many ethnic and cultural communities, the LGBT (*lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender*) community, as well as a variety of faith backgrounds. It is important that everyone involved in using the Transportation Program treats one another with dignity, understanding and respect.

All Centre drivers complete a screening process which includes: a driver abstract, a clear police record check for work with the vulnerable sector, two satisfactory references, and an interview.

Volunteers must hold a valid drivers license, drive a reliable car, and carry a minimum of \$2,000,000 liability insurance.

Our drivers also help to monitor your well-being by letting the Service Coordinator know if there are any concerns relating to your health or safety.



What am I (the client) responsible for?

Please call the Service Coordinator *at least 10 business days in advance of your appointment to request a drive.* This is preferred because the more notice we have, the better we can help you. It is important to note that the Transportation Program is not an emergency service.

We can only provide drives to appointments that are scheduled during regular working hours (8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.) If your appointment will run later than 4 p.m., it is your responsibility to plan ahead and find an alternative means of transportation to get home. On occasion, special arrangements can be made for you if approved by the Service Coordinator.

Be sure to inform SEOCHC of any special needs at the time you are requesting a ride. *Please note, if advance notice is not given for special needs, we may not be able to accommodate the specific requests at the time of the drive.*

Ensure that the driver is able to safely drive up, walk and escort you from your door and back again. If the driver finds he or she cannot safely get access, they have the right to refuse service.

Advise SEOCHC as soon as possible if you must cancel your trip.

You will be given an Emergency Contact Card that you must carry with you when using the Transportation Program. If you are incapacitated due to accident or illness, the driver can advise emergency services that you have an Emergency Contact Card with you. Please keep your information up-to-date and request a new card if and when needed.

Please note, **clients who are currently experiencing a bed bug or cockroach infestation are not permitted to use the Transportation Program.** If you have an infestation in your home, please let the Service Coordinator know as soon as possible. As bed bugs and cockroaches can latch onto personal belongings, it is possible that you could transmit them to drivers and/or other clients while using the Transportation Program. SEOCHC has a responsibility to put infestation control measures in place in order to protect drivers and other clients from exposure to pests, such as bed bugs or cockroaches. When your infestation has been properly treated, you may resume using the Transportation Program.

How do I request a drive?

Please phone the Service Coordinator for all drive requests. All requests for transportation are to be coordinated by staff at SEOCHC and *not with a driver directly.*

When you request a ride, we will need to know the date, time, and location of the appointment. Any other relevant details, such as: doctor's name or suite/room number and how long the appointment is expected to take, are also helpful to tell us.

You will be matched with drivers according to driver availability. We are able to provide each client with a maximum of one (1) drive per week based on availability. While we may not be able to assist with all of your transportation needs, we will do our best to accommodate your requests.

Drives are scheduled the week before your appointment. When the Service Coordinator has found a driver who is able to help you, we will telephone you and let you know the name of your driver. If we are unable to find a driver, we will call to let you know that we are unable to help with your request.



What can the driver help me with?

The driver will **contact you to confirm your pick-up time** the evening before the appointment. If you do not hear from your driver, please call the Service Coordinator first thing in the morning on the day of your appointment.

The driver will **treat you with dignity and respect.**

The driver will **pick you up at the front door of your house or apartment building entrance** at a pre-arranged time.

The driver will **know the route to take to get to the appointment.**

The driver **can escort you to the car and ensure that you are comfortably seated.**

Once at your appointment, the driver may **help you out of the vehicle and walk you safely to the building entrance.** If special arrangements have been made in advance, a driver may also drop you off at the front entrance, park the car, and return to escort you up to your doctor's office or waiting room area.



The driver will provide **light physical support** as needed:

- Assist going up and down steps
- Help you get in and out of the vehicle
- If you are using a walker, the driver will ensure you are safely seated first before putting your walker in the car.
- Open the doors of buildings and vehicles, if needed.

It is important to discuss with your driver what the pick-up arrangements are to come home. Different options exist. The driver may **wait for you at your doctor's office, return at a pre-arranged time, or ask that you telephone them when you are ready to return home.** If time permits, it may be possible to stop at your pharmacy to fill a prescription. Please discuss this option when making your ride request.



Occasionally you might undergo a medical procedure (*cataract surgery, colonoscopy, etc.*) that might require the driver to escort you to your apartment door (*rather than the building entrance*). If you require additional help, please advise the Service Coordinator in advance so that we can match you with the most suitable driver.

Is there anything that a driver CANNOT do?

Drivers are only permitted to assist with driving to appointments. They cannot help you with other activities such as laundry and running errands.

Drivers are not permitted to transport wheelchairs, help clients who require transfer assistance, or provide weight-bearing support.

Drivers are not permitted to offer any drives that have not been arranged and approved by the Service Coordinator or Regional Transportation Coordinator. Drivers are not allowed to offer additional help to you outside of the Transportation Program. This means that drivers cannot help you outside of our regular hours or outside of the transportation program itself.

Drivers cannot advise you about financial, legal, and/or medical matters.



Please ask the Service Coordinator if you have questions regarding the limits and boundaries of the Transportation Program. It is always best to ask and clarify roles if you are uncertain.

If you require additional support, please contact the Service Coordinator to inquire about other services offered by South-East Ottawa Community Health Centre or other community agencies.

How do I pay for my drive?

Beginning June 1st, 2016, the fee structure will be as follows:

Drives 0 to 20km (round trip): \$12.00 (rate unchanged)

Drives 21km to 50 km (round trip): \$17.00

Drives 51km or more (round trip): \$25.00

We understand that this rate could represent a financial hardship for some clients. We remain committed to providing low-cost transportation to clients. If these fees are not manageable within your budget, please contact our office as subsidized fees may be possible.

As of **June 1st, 2016**, you will receive a monthly invoice.

South-East Ottawa CHC will send the invoice to your home address or the address of the person responsible for paying your fees. Each invoice will be sent to you by mail at the beginning of each month; this invoice will include all drives incurred during the previous month (*i.e., the invoice you receive in early July will include all of your drives in June*). Those who travel together (e.g. *family members, couples*) will receive one invoice, unless otherwise requested.

A variety of payment options will exist. Details on these options and how to make payments will be included with your invoice. If you have any questions, please feel free to ask the Service Coordinator for details when requesting your drive. *Please note, you will no longer be able to pay the driver in cash.*

How do I cancel or make changes to my drive?

Please contact the Service Coordinator as soon as possible if you need to cancel or make changes to a ride. If you are calling after office hours, please leave a message on the answering machine. Cancelling in a timely manner allows us to provide transportation to another client who might be looking for a ride. We recognize that there are times that you will need to cancel your drive with short notice due to illness, unsafe weather, and unforeseen circumstances (*such as a family emergency*). In the case of a short notice cancellation, simply contact us as soon as you can and we will connect with your driver to inform them that you no longer need a drive.



Please note, if you make changes to your drive request (e.g. *your appointment time changes from 10:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.*), we might need to search for a new driver to help you. We will do our best to accommodate these changes, but cannot guarantee a replacement at short notice.

Is my request for a drive guaranteed?

Unfortunately we cannot *guarantee* that we can fulfill all of your requests for drives. Transportation is provided through the use of shared agency vans, paid drivers and volunteer drivers who use their own personal vehicles. **Circumstances such as unsafe weather, driver illness or injury, or a vehicle breakdown might cause rides to be unexpectedly cancelled.**

Drives will be cancelled on days when the Ottawa-Carleton Board of Education cancels their school buses due to unsafe weather conditions and/or your driver feels the weather conditions are unsafe to drive.

Please note, if your drive needs to be cancelled, you will be notified as soon as possible. In the event of a cancellation or unsafe weather conditions, you can attempt to reschedule your appointment. Most doctors are sensitive to appointment cancellations in unsafe weather conditions and will try to accommodate you.

Please understand that unlike a taxi company, we have a limited number of drivers and vehicles. In the event of vehicle breakdown or driver illness/injury, we will do our best to find a replacement driver for you. There may be situations when no suitable replacement can be found. Please plan ahead and be aware of other resources that may be available in the event of a cancellation. For additional assistance or more information on additional transportation options, please contact the Service Coordinator.



Before the drive:

You will know the name of your driver the week prior to your ride. When the driver telephones you to discuss a pick-up time, please take this moment to inform the driver of any important details. If the driver is meeting you for the first time, you might want to tell them what you look like (*the colour of your jacket or hat, for instance*) or ask them what their vehicle looks like. This will make it easier when you are trying to find one another.

If there is anything important that the driver needs to know about your pick-up location, please make sure you let them know. For example, if want the driver to use your side-entrance. Planning ahead helps to avoid confusion and unnecessary complications.

The day of the drive:

Please **dress appropriately for the weather conditions**. Wearing safe and comfortable footwear is important.

If you use a cane or a walker on a regular basis, please bring it along for your ride. Your safety is important to us and our drivers will be happy to load your walker into the car.

If you have an **Accessible Parking Permit** please be sure to bring it with you.

If there is likely to be a **fee for parking, please be sure to bring sufficient money to cover the parking costs**. We kindly ask that you pay for the parking at the time of the drive. Please note, while there is no charge for parking at the local Hospitals, many private parking lots do charge a fee.

Do not wear perfume or cologne. The Centre follows a strict no scent policy, as some drivers and other clients have scent sensitivities or allergies.

Be ready on time. You should be prepared and ready to leave at your pick-up time. If you live in an apartment, please wait downstairs in the lobby.

If the driver is more than 10 minutes late for pick-up, please call the Centre. To safeguard against unforeseen circumstances **OR** In the rare event that a driver does not arrive for a ride, it is suggested that clients establish a back-up plan. SEOCHC will not reimburse missed appointment fees.



During the drive:

A seat belt must be worn at all times and smoking is not permitted in the Transportation Program.

While our drivers can help lift your walker, they cannot carry heavy or awkward items. Please keep this in mind when planning your trip.

You are responsible for attending to your own medical equipment. The drivers are not trained to use your medical equipment. It is your responsibility to know how to use your medical equipment safely or bring along an attendant or escort who can assist you with your needs.

While you are at your appointment:

If your driver is dropping you off and then returning to pick you up at a later time, please pre-arrange a pick-up point so that you can find one another. Let your driver know where your doctor's office is, so that they can locate you if needed.

The drivers who drive our Shared Vans are transporting several people throughout the day. We ask you the estimated length of your appointment so we can plan a tentative schedule for our drivers. The drivers in the Shared Vans will leave you with a card with their cell phone number on it. Please keep this card in a safe place because you will need it to call the driver when you are ready to return home. If you have difficulty using a phone, a secretary or nurse is usually available to help you make this call.

If you lose or misplace a driver's phone number, please call SEOCHC and we will give you the driver's number or call them on your behalf.

The ride home:

If your condition changes and you don't feel well enough to travel home, please advise your driver before you leave. It might be best to be seen by a doctor or nurse before getting into the vehicle. If a driver is concerned about you, they might check with medical staff on site to make sure that you are safe to travel.

If you become suddenly ill, please feel free to ask the driver to pull over. In a medical emergency, a driver will call 911 and seek medical intervention.

Inform SEOCHC in advance if you will need to make an extra stop (or be dropped off at a location other than your home). Any additional stops that have not been previously arranged with SEOCHC are not permitted. If you would like to be dropped off at a different location, please advise the Service Coordinator in advance. *Exception: After attending a medical appointment, and if time permits, the driver may stop at a pharmacy to have prescriptions filled.*

Dropping you off at home:

When you arrive at home, your driver will drop you off and can escort you safely to your front door. They will make sure that you are inside your home or apartment building.

Please note that drivers are not able to accept tips for their services. A simple and meaningful 'thank you' is enough to express your gratitude for their time and help. If you wish, however, you are welcome to make a donation to SEOCHC.

When you are given a new medical appointment, it helps to get into the habit of calling to request a drive to your new appointment right away. Call the Service Coordinator as soon as you have been given your next appointment.



Feedback, Comments, and Concerns:

Your feedback will help us to improve the Transportation Program. Please let us know about your experiences, both positive and negative.

From time to time you may receive a call from a volunteer or staff member from SEOCHC asking you a few questions about your experience with the Transportation Program. We ask that you give us open and honest feedback, as your comments help us to identify areas needing improvement and also help us recognize what is working well. Do you have a great story about the Transportation program to share with us? What are the strengths and weaknesses of our driving program? Your ideas are important to us!

Please feel free to share your praise directly with the drivers themselves. Your kind words of appreciation mean a lot to our dedicated drivers.

Additional Community and Home Support Services Available

Please call us at 613-737-5115 to find out more

HOME HELP DIRECTORY

The Home Help Directory is a referral program designed to link clients seeking help at home, such as housekeeping and home maintenance, with screened independent service providers.

FRIENDLY VISITING

The friendly visiting program matches volunteers who live in the community with clients who are interested in a regular social visit. No cost.



LUNCHABILITY

The LunchAbility program is a fully-accessible, monthly social group for adults 18 to 59 with physical disabilities. With the aim of trying new things and exploring our community, LunchAbility is a group where connections and friendships are cultivated. Meal provided. Low cost.

CAREGIVER SUPPORT PROGRAM

Do you provide support to a senior or vulnerable adult? Caregiver support can take many forms: emotional support, information and referral, education. South-East Ottawa provides them all. No cost.

THE GROCERY BUS

This bi-weekly program provides volunteer-supported grocery shopping to clients AND a vibrant social community. Clients must be able to get in and out of a yellow school bus, with minimal support.

Please call us to find out if you are on our route.

Low-cost.



FRIENDLY GROCER

The Friendly Grocer Program pairs community members looking for grocery shopping support with volunteer shoppers who will assist with grocery shopping. Clients must be able to make their own way to the grocery store. No cost.

SNOW GO ASSIST

Snow-Go Assist (SGA) is a City of Ottawa program, which provides eligible seniors and persons with disabilities with financial assistance to hire a contractor of his/her choosing to clear snow from private driveways and walkways.

BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT PROGRAM

The bereavement support program supports both men and women in working through the loss of a spouse or partner, a child, friend or loved one. No cost.

Other Services Available at SEOCHC

FOOT CARE

- \$20.00/visit;
- Main Site (1355 Bank St.) and Hunt-Club Riverside Satellite Site (3320 Paul Anka Dr.).
- Also offered at certain OCH buildings (\$5 donation). Please call 613-737-4809 for more information or to book an appointment.



FREE DENTAL SCREENING

Come see a dental hygienist for dental screening, fluoride varnish applications, denture cleaning, and dental health information.

CHRONIC DISEASE SELF- MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Variety of programs that seek to empower individuals to cope with disease and live better quality lives by developing confidence in their ability to manage their own chronic conditions.

WISE ADULT SEMINARS

Weekly social group that meets to take part in health presentations and discussion groups.

COUNSELLING AND INTAKE SERVICES

Daily Social Services Walk-in is available to individuals, couples and families. Crisis Support and Counselling Services are also available.

EXERCISES PROGRAMS

VIACTIVE

Fun, easy, enjoyable exercises that include chair exercises, strength exercises, and dance movements.

FROM SOUP TO TOMATOES

Exercise Program: delivered using OTN (Ontario Telemedicine Network) services and lead by a Kinesiologist and RN from Northern Ontario.

URBAN POLE WALKING CLUB

Nordic Pole walking in the fresh air. We provide the walking poles.



What if I am no longer eligible to use the Transportation Program?

Sometimes a client's needs outgrow the Transportation Program. As we are only able and equipped to provide minimal assistance, if your needs change and our program is no longer a safe or suitable option for you, the Service Coordinator would be happy to provide you with some ideas or options for alternative resources.



A few more reminders:

Contact the Service Coordinator immediately if:

- You change your address, phone number, or emergency contact(s)
- There are changes to your health or mobility that should be updated on your file (a new walker, a diagnosis of a new allergy, etc.).
- A problem or uncertainty arises relating to the Transportation Program.

SEOCHC is a not-for-profit agency funded by the Ontario Ministry of Health, Long Term Care Division, the Local Health integration Network, United Way/Centraide Ottawa, and the City of Ottawa to provide activities and services in our community.

For More information:

600-1355 Bank Street
Ottawa, ON K1H 8K7

Telephone: (613) 737-5115
Fax: (613) 739-3723

Web site: www.seochc.on.ca