

# Meeting the Challenges

Quarterly

**JOURNAL**

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*The Independent Living Partnership works for the capability and right of all to continue to live independently in their own home and community.....*

## **Pain Relief With Physical Therapy And Exercise**

Leo Adorador, PT, DPT

**T**he use of some type of Physical Therapy and exercise is integral to almost all forms of back pain and neck pain treatment. Sometimes Physical therapy and exercise are the first lines of treatment, other times it may help manage chronic pain, or provide rehabilitation after surgery. But did you know that both gentle back exercise and physical therapy play a vital role in relieving pain?

Physical Therapy and exercise are perhaps the most mainstream of all non-surgical treatments for back pain and neck pain. And unlike other conservative treatments (medications, injections, etc.) physical therapy can also help prevent (and /or lessen) future recurrences of back pain or neck pain.

**First, alleviate the acute pain before you begin to exercise.** When you're in a lot of pain, the thought of active rehabilitation and exercise can be pretty

daunting. For this reason, your physician and / or physical therapist will first focus on bringing your pain to a tolerable level, and may use one or a combination of the following passive pain- relieving techniques (modalities) : Electrical stimulation (e.g. TENS UNITS ); Ice and / or heat; ultrasound; massage therapy.

Medications, injections, manual manipulations, or other treatments may also be needed to sufficiently reduce your pain. All of the above therapies are designed with one goal in mind: to provide enough pain relief to help you progress to an active exercise program.

**Carefully pace yourself.** When returning to activity after an episode of pain or following surgery, you absolutely will want to pace yourself. The danger is getting in a pattern of beginning a day with

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..AND MORE!

**DISCLAIMER:**

Articles prepared by or presented in *Meeting the Challenges* are for general information purposes only.

The information is not intended to be medical advice. If you suspect that you have a physical, medical or psychological problem, you should always seek care from a qualified professional.

**Before taking any action that may impact you personally, consult with your own physician, attorney, investment counselor, or other professional advisor.**

(Continued from page 1)

minimal pain, and subsequently engaging in so many activities that you relapse with severe pain. A much healthier approach to rehabilitation is to pace your activities regardless how you feel in order to keep pain under relatively good control and to prevent a flare-up.

**Engage in active physical therapy (EXERCISE).**

Active exercise is necessary to help the back heal and stay healthy. While some of the muscles that provide support for the spine are used in everyday life, most do not get adequate exercise from daily activities and tend to weaken with age unless they are specifically exercised.

Any exercise program for the back should include a combination of stretching, strengthening, and low-impact aerobic exercise.

1. **Stretching exercises** are important because any form of inactivity - especially where an injured back or neck is involved - is usually associated with some progressive stiffness. These structures are designed to move, and any limitation in motion can accentuate your pain.
2. **Strengthening exercises.** Certain strengthening programs can help centralize

the pain, which for many people is more tolerable, or help reduce motion at the injury location.

3. **Expect some initial discomfort.** Beginning an exercise program after an episode of back pain, or if you suffer from chronic back pain, will almost always cause some increase in your pain at first.

However, the pain experienced when doing an appropriate exercise program for back pain should be "good pain". This pain is to be expected as a natural part of increasing activity - stretching tissues that have become stiff and using muscles in unfamiliar ways. It is the kind of pain that you might experience after going to the gym for a tough workout, and can actually be a signal that you are getting better.

Of course, if the pain is severe, then it is time to reassess your exercise program. Discuss this with your physical therapy professional - it could be that just one of the exercises in your program is causing the pain and discomfort, or that you need to improve your form on certain exercises. Only you can decide what is normal discomfort or if the level of pain is sig-

***Meeting the Challenges***

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naling that your body is warning you to stop what you're doing.

If you feel physical therapy can help you, contact your physician to get a referral. You could be on your way to a better pain-free life!

Leo Adorador, PT, DPT is owner of Pass Physical Therapy, located in Beaumont and Yucaipa. He has worked in physical therapy since 1992 and received his Doctorate of Physical Therapy in 2005. He currently is a clinical instructor for physical therapy students from Loma Linda University.



The  program can help you get where you need to go.  
**Call us through HelpLink @ 1-800-510-2020**

## *Meeting the Challenges*

Quarterly

You might have been wondering where we have been? We hope you were. We do hope you enjoy receiving *Meeting the Challenges* every 3 months and find the information we provide to be useful and interesting.

We are sorry to have been gone since the Fall issue, but we suffered a funding cut back and couldn't publish again until now. Times have gotten difficult for many of us.

If you can help support the future of our organization with a charitable donation, it would be very much appreciated.

- You can mail a check donation to us at Independent Living Partnership, PO Box 3097, Beaumont CA 92223
- We can accept credit card donations on the Internet at [www.livingpartnership.org](http://www.livingpartnership.org)
- And please consider Independent Living Partnership in your will or living trust. Even a small portion of your estate will assist our organization in carrying out its vital mission in helping seniors, persons with disabilities, and their caregivers. If you wish to learn more about how you can leave a legacy, please send a note to us at PO Box 3097, Beaumont CA 92223 or email to: [executivedirector@livingpartnership.org](mailto:executivedirector@livingpartnership.org) and leave a phone number where you can be reached.

Thank you!

## TRIP VOLUNTEER DRIVERS

*help us understand why they volunteered ...and more.....*

**D**uring the Spring, TRIP staff headed by Gail Graham visited seven senior and community centers across the County. Volunteer drivers were invited to come and meet and talk with TRIP staff about their personal experiences as a volunteer driver.

When new people are enrolled in TRIP they are expected to recruit a volunteer driver to assist them with getting to the doctor, or shopping or with other transportation needs.

Sometimes people tell us that they aren't able to recruit a volunteer to help them. With coaching from TRIP staff most are successful if they really try. But we wanted to know something more about the recruitment process so that we can become even more helpful to those who think they won't be able to help themselves.

First we asked, "*What did your rider say to you that convinced you to be their driver?*" Here are some of the typical things the volunteers told us:

- "I need help since I no longer drive. It would be of benefit to us both, and TRIP will help with the

gas money."

- "She told me that she needed to help with going to the doctors and other trips."
- "She asked if I could help her. She said she is on the TRIP the program that can help pay for the gas, so I decided to help."
- "She said I would be helping her in a tremendous way - she wouldn't feel so home bound."

The common thread is that the rider asked for help. Sometimes in not such a direct way, like this one:

- "She asked if anyone lived in her area, and could pick her up for Church and sometimes other errands. I decided that I could be that 'someone'"

The other question we asked the volunteer drivers was, "*If things were different and you wanted to ask a neighbor or friend to volunteer to be your TRIP driver, what would you say to them?*"

Here are some of the things that volunteer drivers told us they would say if they needed a driver:

- "Could you help me by giving me a lift to where I need to get?"

- "If they could drive me for my errands they would be reimbursed for the miles."
- "I would tell them that I can help with gas."
- "I can no longer drive - can you help me? You will be helping someone remain part of the community."
- "That it's a wonderful feeling to help someone get the basic needs, and to open your heart to love and help someone who is alone."

Our thanks to all the volunteers who helped look at the TRIP program from the inside out.

As a little way of showing our appreciation, the names of ten of the volunteers who helped us were drawn at random and received a \$50 Stater Bros. gift certificate. The lucky winners were:

Aida N., Corona  
Rosa C., Riverside  
Gloria P., Moreno Valley  
Jennifer S., Beaumont  
Richard P., Perris  
Lynda M., Riverside  
Diane J., Desert Hot Springs  
Beverly B., Cathedral City  
Karen G., Hemet  
Isabell J., Hemet

We think there are definitely lessons to be learned



from what the volunteer drivers told us. People are very willing to help if they are asked. The mileage reimbursement may help, but people volunteer because they care about their friends and neighbors. It is clear that the real spirit of community is pretty basic and very profound—it is people wanting to help each other.

#### **ASSISTED TRANSPORTATION**

**You may qualify for special TRIP assistance to help you secure a volunteer escort-driver.**

**Call 1-800-510-2020 and tell the HelpLink Services Specialist that you need help with transportation.**

**You will be asked a few questions and, if appropriate, will be referred to TRIP. Once referred, you will be required to complete an application, and if you are determined to be eligible for TRIP assistance, you will receive monthly cash mileage reimbursements for your volunteer.**

The volunteer escort-driver TRIP program is supported by Measure A tax funds through the Riverside County Transportation Commission, Older Americans Act funds through the Riverside County Office on Aging, New Freedom funds through SunLine Transit Agency and local funds from the City of Blythe.

### **WHAT'S HAPPENING TO IHSS?**

by Richard Smith, Editor

**C**alifornia was hugely in debt, unable to pay its bills, and the future looked bleak. Without going into bankruptcy, a state like all of us can do two things to become solvent again: get more money coming in or reduce the amount of our bills, or both.

The California Assembly agreed to a budget that mostly cut spending by reducing services. And then on July 28th Governor Schwarzenegger, using his line item veto power, further reduced funding for programs and services. One thing he did was to increase reductions in funding for local health, aging services, and public social services programs.

“IHSS”, In-Home Support Services, and those who have been receiving IHSS services will be impacted beginning on September 1st.

According to the California State Association of Counties (CSAC), IHSS is “a state administered, county run program that provides state, county, and federal funding to enable program recipients to hire a caregiver. Individuals eligible for IHSS services are disabled, age 65 or older, or blind, and are

unable to live safely at home without assistance.”

According to the State of California Executive Office, cost savings from IHSS service cuts will be realized by “Targeting services to neediest consumers by: (1) limiting domestic and related services (housework, shopping and errands, and meal preparation and clean-up) only to individuals assessed to have the greatest need for those services, and (2) limiting all services to individuals with greater needs based on an assessment of their ability to function within 11 Activities of Daily Living.” Further, that all caregivers and service recipients will be required to be fingerprinted, that timesheets will be required to be signed under a statement acknowledging that false timesheets are subject to civil penalties, and that checks will no longer be able to be delivered to PO Boxes, among other anti-fraud measures.

The CSAC press release advises that other changes will include elimination of service to current recipients with a “Functional Index score” of 2 or less, and increases in “share of cost”.

## **Living Fully**

by Anna Christian

**F**rances E. Williams was eighty-nine when she died. She had been an actress, activist, organizer, and community worker among other things. Working with her on her biography, I got to know this wonderful lady who led such a rich life. From her I learned the value of living fully. By that I mean not being afraid to stretch yourself beyond the confines of what you know; letting go and experiencing the unknown; freeing yourself from fear, prejudice, age, or what other people will say.

One of the prerequisites to living life fully is to know yourself. What makes you happy? What do you fear? What do you like to do? What are your strengths? What are your weaknesses? Answers to these questions can give you insight into your attitude towards life.

Being open to change is another important factor. If you are not open to change, you limit yourself.

- Go back to school should you desire.  
Learning is a lifetime

endeavor. Whether it is to learn to play a musical instrument, sing, paint, dance, speak another language, or to study history or whatever you choose - taking a class can be a way to expand your world.

- Don't let age stop you. Don't feel that you are too old. To that old saying, "you can't teach an old dog new tricks," I say, if you are open, anything is possible. I've heard of people getting their high school diploma and college degree in their eighties and nineties. The only things that may hinder is your health and/or finances; however, these obstacles can be overcome.
- Overcome prejudice. Drawing conclusions based on unfounded notions. To live fully means not to prejudge people or expect a certain outcome. Prejudice creates barriers. Have you ever wanted to do something but were afraid of what others would think or say?
- Understand fear. J. Khristnamurti said, "Thought breeds fear," and I have seen times when my thoughts have kept me from going to certain

places or doing certain things which I was capable and prepared to do. "I can't do that," I'd tell myself. "Yes, I can," I'd counter. Recognizing my fear and facing it has allowed me to go through doors I never imagined I'd enter.

- Going it alone. When I was young, I wouldn't go anywhere without my friends. When they wouldn't go with me, I'd stay home. If I wanted to see a movie or visit a museum and they didn't, I'd give in and do what they wanted to do. Consequently, I missed out on things I cared about. As an adult, if there is something I want to do or some place I want to go, if I can't get anyone to go with me, I go anyway. While it's pleasurable having a companion to share in some experiences, I will not cancel because of having to go alone.

These are just a few things I tell myself in my attempt to live life fully. Recently I've learned to snorkel and scuba dive. I'm also learning to paint and play the guitar. Watching my children grow, spending quality time

(Continued from page 6)

with my husband are priorities, of course. But making time for me is just as important. When I live life fully, I teach my children to love life.

Anna Christian is an author, educator, and freelance writer.

"Celebrating Life" is an entry from her Internet blog at <http://anadoodlin.blogspot.com>

Her books include "The Biography of Frances E. Williams, Actress/Activist", "Mrs. Griffin is Missing, a Bobby and Sonny Mystery" for preteens, and "The Big Table", a picture book. She also teaches a life story, creative writing class at the Moreno Valley Senior Center.

## **Update on the H1N1 Virus** **From the Centers for Disease Control**

**H**uman infections of the H1N1 virus (sometimes called the Swine Flu) are ongoing, according to the CDC in Washington. California is one of eight states that is now reported to have "regional influenza activity" (one step below "wide spread").

As Fall approaches, increasing outbreaks of the contagious H1N1 flu are expected everywhere and as many as 90,000 deaths are forecast as possible.

"One thing that appears to be different from seasonal influenza is that adults older than 64 years do not yet appear to be at increased risk of novel H1N1-related complications thus far. CDC laboratory studies have shown that no children and very few adults younger than 60 years old have existing antibody to novel H1N1 flu virus; however, *about one-third of adults older than 60 may have antibodies against this virus.* It is unknown how much, if any, protection may be afforded against novel H1N1 flu by any existing antibody."

The flu season that is coming and the spread of the H1N1 virus poses a considerable risk to us all.

A vaccine is in production and is already available at some sites.

We do not think that taking a chance with this flu is a good idea and we urge everyone of all ages to take appropriate precautions.

***"Those who say  
it cannot be done,  
should not interrupt  
the person doing it".***

- Chinese proverb

### **How Did Medicare Get Started?**

**I**n 1945 President Harry Truman sent a message to Congress asking for legislation to establish a *national health insurance plan*. The proposal was debated for 20 years, with many opponents of the proposed plan warning of the dangers of "socialized medicine."

Finally, on July 30, 1965 the government run Medicare health plan and its companion program Medicaid, (which insures indigent recipients), were signed into law by President Lyndon Johnson as part of his "Great Society." Former President Harry S. Truman was the first to enroll in Medicare.

In 1972 payments to HMOs were authorized. An HMO is a "Health Maintenance Organization". A Medicare HMO provides Medicare paid-for health benefits to persons eligible for Medicare that choose to enroll in an HMO instead of receiving their benefits and care directly through the traditional fee for service Medicare program.

[SOURCE: SeniorJournal.com; medicarehmo.com]

## ***Staying in Your Home as Long as Possible***

Michael Barnard, CEO, Desert Samaritans for the Elderly

**E**verybody wants to live in their home as long as possible. Whether you own a house or a mobile home or rent a condo or apartment, it is your home with your furniture and your neighborhood. Throw in the hassle and expense and stress of moving, it makes a person want to stay home even more.

Unfortunately, there comes the time in life when a person needs to make a change, due to finances, health issues, divorce or becoming a widow. It is always best to plan ahead and not wait until it becomes a crisis and you need to move tomorrow! The best decisions are not made while under stress, so take the time to learn about your options now.

If health issues become a factor, then several options can accommodate these and allow a person to stay at home. If you have trouble shopping or cooking, you can have groceries delivered to your home, have meals delivered each day or find a friend to do your shopping for you. Albertsons, Vons

and some local grocery stores provide home delivery and the senior center in your city will often provide the home delivered meals.

Hiring someone to come to the home and help with cooking, cleaning, bathing and dressing is often a good solution if your budget allows. There are many companies that provide this service. The benefit to hiring a company is that the caregiver is an employee of the company, but they often have a daily minimum number of hours and will charge a higher rate than a private individual caregiver. If you decide on a private caregiver, make sure you get references from people that you trust. Letting someone into the privacy of your home and with access to the personal and financial aspects of your life is scary to many people. It is easy to let the caregiver earn your trust too quickly, be careful with financial information and any private information. Don't leave bank statements, checkbooks or credit cards out in the open.

Government services have been reduced with the State financial meltdown; this affects most county and city

programs. The Riverside Office on Aging provides Care Coordination through several programs that are designed to fit your specific medical and financial situation and involves social workers, nurses and caregivers. The Riverside Department of Public Social Services manages the In-Home Supportive Services program which assists thousands of elderly and disabled persons with in-home care. The Public Authority provides a Registry Service for home care workers and clients under the IHSS IP program. The registry provides a list of screened caregivers for someone wanting to hire a caregiver. Depending on your income level and if you qualify for Medi-Cal, some hours of the in-home care you receive may be paid by IHSS. Call 800 510-2020 for any of these phone numbers.

A few hours of help each day or a few days each a week may be all that a senior needs to stay at home. This is often a good solution for couples, where one person is caring for the other and it becomes more than they can handle.

***Call TRIP at 1-800-510-2020 to apply for TRIP Escort-Driver Volunteer assistance***



Maybe the caregiver needs a break or gets sick or gets hurt; getting some help, even for a short-time, is a good alternative.

Another solution is to make modifications to your home, especially if wheelchair access is required or problems with balance or standing become an issue. Widening doorways, building a wheelchair ramp, installing grab bars in the bathrooms, installing a threshold ramp or installing a walk-in bath or shower will allow a person with some disabilities to stay at home.

Begin now to assess your current and future living situation and decide how you can stay in your home with some of assistance or modifications mentioned.

Desert Samaritans for the Elderly is located in Palm Desert and provides a variety of services for seniors to maintain their independence including financial aid, transportation, information and referral, grocery delivery, in-home social worker assessments, and prevention and treatment for problem gambling and alcohol and prescription drug abuses. View additional information at their website: [www.dsfte.org](http://www.dsfte.org) or call 760-837-9066.

### **Driver Refresher Courses are Designed to Help Keep Us Driving Safely, Longer**

*“There is nothing permanent except change.”*  
- Heraclitus, Greek philosopher

One of the things that people say when it is suggested they take a “driving refresher” course is “I have been driving all my life and I don’t need a class.”

In a way that is true—those of us who have been driving for a long time successfully, without major accidents, are probably mostly good and safe drivers.

But, things have changed a lot over the years:

- Bigger, wider, faster highways
- More traffic everywhere
- More aggressive drivers to watch out for.

And we have changed too!

- Our eyes aren’t quite what they used to be.
- Our reaction time is a little slower (in a much faster world)
- We can’t bend and twist and look over our shoulder as easily as once we could
- Some of our medications could be affecting our driving ability
- Maybe we have developed some habits that we don’t even know we have?

Driver refresher courses

are a good way to prevent any problems from arising and to help keep us driving safely, longer. It is a good idea to tune-up both our car and our skills.

Everybody knows that losing our license and not being able to drive makes life a great deal more complicated and is a good thing to avoid.

Here are some reliable resources to help:

- AARP’s Driver Safety Program is AARP has offered the course in the classroom for 25 years and now offers the same course online. Call 1-888-OUR-AARP and ask about courses available in your area. You can also find a location in your area or take the on-line course at [www.aarp.org](http://www.aarp.org) .
- Automobile Association of America Auto Clubs can provide a detailed evaluation of our driving skills and areas where we could use some brush up. They also have instructors who can provide behind-the-wheel re-training if necessary. Call the Auto Club at 888-260-7996 for your local Auto Club or go to [www.aaa.com](http://www.aaa.com) on the web.
- For safe driving tips on the web visit [www.tsfbcaa.com/safe\\_driving\\_tips](http://www.tsfbcaa.com/safe_driving_tips) .

## **Symptoms of Alzheimer's Disease**

by Cathy Wong

**T**here are differences between normal age-related disruptions in cognitive functioning and signs of Alzheimer's disease. Cognitive functioning is a term used to describe the functions of your brain that basically affects everything you do, such as the ability to: remember, think, focus and concentrate, learn new information, speak and process language, and plan and implement problem-solving.

According to the Alzheimer's Association, the symptoms of Alzheimer's disease are more severe than mild forgetfulness. The symptoms of Alzheimer's disease are serious to the extent that it causes significant impairment in social or occupational functioning. And there is a noticeable decline in cognitive functioning from the previous level of functioning. Serious cognitive decline may be demonstrated by the inability to perform everyday life activities.

<b>Symptoms of Alzheimer's Disease</b>	<b>Normal Age-Related Memory Changes</b>
Forgets entire experiences.	Forgets part of an experience.
Problems with remembering recently learned information, such as names of common things, people, and places.	Often remembers familiar people and places. Forgetting names or appointments only occasionally.
Getting very confused about time, places, and people. Disorientation in their own neighborhood, or not knowing how to get back home.	Is not normally confused about time, people, and places.
Is gradually unable to follow written or spoken directions. Forgets simple words.	Is usually able to follow written or spoken directions. Sometimes having trouble finding the right word.
Changes in mood or behavior for no apparent reason.	Occasionally feeling sad or moody.
Changes in personality. Becoming extremely confused, suspicious, fearful, or dependent on a family member.	People's personalities do change somewhat with age, but not dramatically.
Person is unable to care for himself/herself. (Forgets how to brush their teeth or comb their hair.)	Person is able to care for himself/herself.

Source: The Alzheimer's Association. *10 warning signs of Alzheimer's disease.*

At any age if you or a family member is concerned about forgetfulness that is causing problems in social, occupational, or other important areas of functioning it is important to see your physician. Also, contacting the Alzheimer's Association at 1-800-272-3900 is highly-recommended.

**24 HOUR CRISIS LINE FOR ALTERNATIVES TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE 1-800-339-7233**

## Medications that Can Cause Driving Problems

**D**riving is a complex process. When we first begin to drive, we are very aware of how important it is to see, to think clearly, to react and to efficiently perform the physical movements necessary to keep the vehicle safe as we maneuver it through traffic and bring it safely to rest where we want to be. It seems like juggling and keeping everything in the air at the same time. The more practice we have, the simpler it becomes and soon we do not have to consciously think about managing the bundle of tasks that are required for safe driving.

According to Earl Miller, a professor of neuroscience at MIT, when we age some of our ability to multi-task diminishes gradually, as does our ability to efficiently coordinate physical actions with the things we see. On top of this, it is harder to keep our minds from wandering. So, even though we usually say something like "I can drive as good now as I ever have", it is simply not true.

Add to this the fact that we may also be taking medications for a variety of reasons that can have a negative effect on our driving. We can become a real danger

to ourselves and others *and not even know it!*

A driver with untreated depression is at high risk due to decreased concentration and slower decision making. However, taking an anti-anxiety medication can produce more driving impairment than drinking alcohol over the legal limit.

Medications for anxiety or insomnia have side effects that include drowsiness, impaired motor function and confusion. People taking pain medications for arthritis or rheumatism that contain codeine or propoxyphene slow us down and lessen our ability to concentrate. Heart and blood pressure medicines can cause blurred vision and dizziness.

Over-the-counter drugs for allergies can cause drowsiness and increase the tendency of our minds to wander away from the life and death activity of driving. Antihistamines include a group of active ingredients with a variety of names that are contained in all of the popular brands (Clairton, Benadryl, Sudafed, etc.). These ingredients are also found in cough medicines, cold tablets, flu therapies, or just about any drug that "helps you rest." Tran-

quilizers or cold remedies, such as cold tablets, cough syrup, and sleeping pills, can reduce driving ability.

Driving is a complicated task, so don't let yourself be impaired by any kind of medication, including over-the-counter drugs and herbal or alternative remedies. Combinations of drugs can produce unexpected side effects and bad reactions. If you have more than one doctor prescribing medications, you could be in grave danger.

Ask your pharmacist if the combination of your medications, including over-the-counter drugs, will interfere with your driving ability. Ask if even a small amount of alcohol will increase the effect of any of the medications. Always take medications according to instructions. If the label on any medication says "Do not use while operating heavy machinery", do not drive after taking the medication.

Believing that you can drive as well now as you ever did or ignoring the dangers posed by some of the medications we are taking can be deadly for ourselves and others. Maybe it is time to identify alternative transportation.

[SOURCES: Canada Safety Council; dmv.org; US Food and Drug Administration]

## **Transportation and Older Adults**

by Ivet Woolridge, Assistant TRIP Manager

It is second nature for most people to get in their cars and go where they need to go, but what happens when getting in the car is impossible? Older adults are often the population that faces this challenge.

Most of the public transportation options are designed for people who are able to get around with no problems. Some of the transportation options are somewhat designed for the disabled and older population, but these accommodations do not work for everyone.

Younger people can easily walk to the bus stop and get to where they need to go. The bus is very helpful in the community by having routes that get people to their destinations.

Older adults find themselves in more need of public transportation than the rest of the population. According to [publictransportation.org](http://publictransportation.org), 1 in 5 Americans who are 65+ do not drive. Declining health, eyesight, physical or mental abilities are some of the reasons older adults stop driving.

From talking to clients over the phone, I have learned that older adults who do not drive find themselves in a tough situation if public transportation is not successful in meeting their needs. Many of them have wheelchairs, very serious health conditions, and treatments they need to receive. Having to wait for public transportation to arrive can be unsafe for people who suffer serious medical conditions or who are not strong enough due to their age.

After numerous TRIP Eligibility Determination Committee meetings, I have learned that the places older adults need to go are different from the rest of the population. They like to go to Senior Centers in their communities, various medical appointments, visit a spouse in a rest home, etc. Many of them need to have an escort in order to get around. Older adults find themselves with many doctor appointments and therapy sessions. Older adults tend to be very frail and this has to be taken into consideration when searching for appropriate transportation. They might not be strong enough to carry more than 1 grocery bag, or to get in and out of the vehicle or van. Their physical status might limit them from waiting for the public transportation to arrive.

The resources the younger population has are greater than the older population. Younger people tend to have a stronger social circle. Friends and family can make a difference when help is needed. Usually older adults are retired and many have limited incomes. Younger people are usually employed and able to keep up with their social network. Older adults might find themselves with very few family and friends.

Most of the time older adults are affected by their physical limitations and the lack of transportation to keep up with the life they used to have. Different communities and cities have different transportation available. Living in a rural area also worsens the transportation options someone has.

Frailty is very important when dealing with older adults. Older adults are weaker than the younger population. Some of them have disabilities that are new to them and they



are learning to deal with them. Older adults might have disabilities from their younger years, but coupled with aging makes it worse and any form of public transportation becomes impossible to use.

In order to meet the transportation needs of the older population, we need to think about all the issues mentioned before. Using existing public transportation can work for many, but can be a physical impossibility for others to use. If the existing available transportation does not meet the needs of the older population, they will stay at home not able to get to their doctors appointments and their treatments.

The TRIP program is successful in solving many of the problems people have with public transportation. Older adults dealing with serious health issues, physical limitations, and lack of service in their geographical area benefit from the TRIP program because they can count on someone to help them by giving them a ride. For those with limitations, having someone show up at their home to give them a ride is much easier and safer than trying to schedule and take trips with public transportation.

Not only does the TRIP program provide a good transportation alternative for those who can't use public transportation, but its use of volunteer drivers also helps create friendships that can change someone's life. Many older adults find themselves alone and become depressed, but meeting someone or spending time with neighbors who volunteer help improve their lives and attitude. Volunteer drivers become friends for most of the older adults who receive their help.

Another advantage of the TRIP program is that rides can be arranged according to the schedule of the client and of the volunteer driver. Shopping becomes easier for older adults since they have someone with them to help and the transportation that will allow them to get the things they want and not worry about how much they can carry or have on board.

Public transportation is a vital resource for any community. People who do not drive rely on public transportation to get to where they need to go, but the rest of the people who have trouble using the available transportation are faced with serious challenges. Fortunately for Riverside County, the TRIP program is available to meet the serious transportation challenges many older adults face.



***Providing transportation information and support for volunteer assistance for adults 60+ and people with disabilities living in Riverside County. ...If you or someone you know needs transportation assistance, call 1-800-510-2020 today.....***

## Superando nuestros retos.....

### Transportacion y Personas Mayores

by Ivet Woolridge, Assistant TRIP Manager

**E**s muy natural para la mayoría de personas subirse a sus carros e ir a donde sea necesario, pero que pasa cuando el subirse al carro es imposible? Personas mayores son las que enfrentan este problema.

La mayoría de las opciones de transportacion publica son diseñadas para personas que no tienen dificultades fisicas. Algunas opciones de tranportacion son mas o menos diseñadas para personas con discapacidades o personas mayores, pero estos diseños no siempre son serviciales.

Para personas mas jovenes es facial caminar a la parada del autobus y llegar a donde tienen que ir. El autobus es muy servicial en la comunidad al tener rutas que ayudan a personas a llegar a su destino.

Personas mayores tienen mas necesidad de transportacion publica. Segun publictransportation.org, 1 en cada 5 Americanos quien son 65 o mayores no manejan. Estado de salud, vision, abilidad fisica o mental son algunas de las razones las cuales personas mayores dejan de

manejar.

El hablar con clientes por telefono, he aprendido que personas mayores que no manejan se encuentran en una dura situacion si transportacion publica no es suficiente para sus necesidades. Muchas de estas personas usan silla de ruedas, tienen enfermedades cronicas, y tratamientos frecuentes que tienen que recibir. El estar esperando el autobus es riesgo para las personas que tienen serias condiciones medicas o que no son lo suficientemente fuertes por su edad.

Despues de numerosas juntas del Comite de Eligibilidad de TRIP, he aprendido que los lugares de destino de personas mayores son diferentes de el resto de la comunidad. A ellos les gusta ir a los Centros para Ancianos de sus comunidades, citas medicas, visitar a un familiar o pareja a un asilo, etc. Muchos de ellos necesitan asistencia de alguna persona cuando salen de su casa. Personas mayores tienen varias citas medicas y diferentes terapias. Tambien estan muy debiles y esto tiene que ser tomado en

consideracion cuando pensamos en transportacion apropiada para ellos. Alomejor, no son lo suficientemente fuertes para cargar mas de una bolsa despues de haber ido a la tienda o para subir y bajar de un vehiculo. Su estado fisico les puede limitar la resistencia de esperar por el autobus.

Los recursos que la poblacion mas joven tiene son muchos mas que la poblacion de personas mayores. Personas mas jovenes usualmente tienen una vida social mas activa. Amigos y familiares hacen la diferencia cuando de ayudar se trata. Usualmente, personas mayores estan retirados y tienen ingresos limitados. Personas mas jovenes, usualmente tienen empleo y pueden mantener su circulo social. Personas mayores se encuentran con un minimo de familia y amigos.

La mayoría del tiempo, personas mayores son afectados por sus dificultades fisicas y la falta de transportacion para mantener la vida que llevaban antes. Diferentes comunidades y ciudades tienen diferentes medios de

.....**Superando nuestros retos**

transportacion disponible. El vivir en una area rural empeora las opciones de transportacion.

Fragilidad is muy importante cuando hablamos de personas mayores. Personas mayores son mas debiles que la poblacion joven. Algunos de ellos tienen nuevas discapacidades y estan aprendiendo a vivir con ellas. Personas mayores tienen discapacidades desde años pasados, pero complicado con la vejez hace la situacion mas complicada cuando se trata de encontrar la transportacion adecuada.

A fin de proporcionar transportacion adecuada para las personas mayores, necesitamos pensar en las cuestiones mencionadas. Usar la transportacion publica que existe es servicial para muchos, pero puede ser un imposible para otros. Si la transportacion no es adecuada para personas mayores, se quedaran en casa y no podran ir a sus citas medicas y tratamientos.

El Programa TRIP es exitoso en resolver muchos de los problemas que personas tienen con transportacion publica. Personas mayores que sufren de serios problemas de

salud, limitaciones fisicas, y la falta de servicio publico en su area se benefician del programa TRIP porque pueden contar con alguien que les va a proveer el viaje. Para esos con limitaciones, el tener a alguien que llegue a su casa a ofrecer un viaje en mucho mas facil y seguro que tratar de planear el viaje con agencias del transportacion publica.

TRIP no solamente provee una buena opcion para personas que no pueden usar transportacion publica, pero la ayuda de los choferes voluntarios ayuda a crear amistades que pueden cambiar la vida de alguien. Muchas personas mayores se encuentran solos y caen en la depression, pero el conocer a alguien y hacer amigos puede mejorar la vida de una persona. Choferes voluntarios se convierten en amigos de la ma-

yoria de las personas que recibir su ayuda.

Otra ventaja de el programa TRIP es que los viajes son planeados entre el chofer voluntario y el cliente. El ir de compras con un acompañate facilita el viaje porque no tienen un limite de cuantas bolsas pueden cargar y cuentan con la asistencia de el chofer.

Transportacion publica es un servicio esencial para cualquier comunidad. Personas que no manejar dependen en transportacion publica, pero las personas que tienen dificultad para usar la transportacion disponible enfrentan serios obstaculos. Afortunadamente para el Condado de Riverside, el programa TRIP es disponible para las personas mayores y personas con discapacidades para suplementar los obstaculos de transportacion que enfrentan.

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Asistencia en asesoria de las necesidades individuales y coordinacion de servicios de cuidado, asi permitiendo a personas fragiles de salud o adultos desabilitados a permanecer en sus hogares. Estos servicios pueden ser gratuitos o bajos en costo, dependiendo de su edad, ingresos y condicion fisica.

**1-800-510-2020**

*Superando nuestros retos* EDITOR— Ivet Woolridge / Challenges Associate Editor

**Recursos Para Personas Mayores.....AYUDA CONEXION...1-800-510-2020**

### *A Short History of the Ancient Olive*

Before there was written language anywhere, there were olive trees! More than 6,000 years ago it was a native of the area that is now Iran, Palestine and Syria. Cultivation of the ancient tree then spread to the Mediterranean basin and may have been the source of wealth in the Minoan civilization on the Greek island of Crete. Thereafter olive growing spread to Africa and Europe. Olives have even been discovered in Egyptian tombs. In the last several hundred years, the olive came to the Americas, Japan, and Australia. Olive groves were planted at the California Missions. Now olives are cured in many ways and olive oil is considered one of the most healthy oils that can be used for cooking. Eating an olive is a historical adventure!! [SOURCE: oliveoilsource.com]

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