Age Friendliness & the 5As Calculator

Volunteer driver programs can be critical to older adults who have limited their driving or have stopped driving altogether. However, it is the degree of "age friendliness" of the volunteer driver program that will determine whether transportation enables older adults to experience a sense of independence, to get where they need to go, and/or to enjoy an acceptable quality of life.

Research conducted by the Beverly Foundation along with policy and program initiatives of government and nonprofit agencies at the national, state, and local levels have identified the 5 As, and today they have been adopted as criteria for standards in older adult volunteer transportation. The 5 As include five key factors described below:

The 5 A's of Senior Friendly Transportation

Availability: Transportation services that are available to older adults: services offered meet expectations of time availability (evenings/weekends) and quantity (rides not limited).

Acceptability: Transportation services that are acceptable to older adults: service quality is deemed satisfactory in terms of advance scheduling, vehicle cleanliness, driver sensitivity to older adults, and wait time.

Accessibility: Transportation services that older aduls can access: services are easy to use because they offer supportive assistance (e.g., driver comes to door) and they provide rides where older adults need to go.

Adaptability: Transportation services that can be adapted to older adult needs: services accommodate older adults' needs for scheduling multiple stops, and providing additional support (assistance with walkers and wheelchairs, help at destination).

Affordability: Transportation services that are affordable for older adults and the program: the potential for low-cost operations can enable programs to offer services free of charge and to be financially sustainable.

CALCULATE AGE FRIENDLINESS

To review your program's age friendliness, check each of the factors below that are respresented within your program. Each check equals one point. When you have completed your review, add up your score and look at the scoring key at the bottom of the page to know where you are on "the road to age friendliness."

Availability: The transportation service...
_____ provides demand response transportation service to passengers
_____ ensures that potential passengers know about the service
_____ provides transportation when needed (day, evenings, and weekends)
_____ takes passengers to desired destinations
_____ can link older adults with "more appropriate" transportation options

Acceptability: The transportation service...
_____ ensures that vehicles are clean and free of litter
_____ uses vehicles that are easy for passengers to access
_____ ensures that vehicles are well maintained
_____ offers an advance scheduling requirement acceptable to passengers
_____ provides driver "sensitivity to passengers" training

Accessibility: The transportation service...
_____ provides passenger assistance to and from the vehicle
_____ provides passenger assistance in and out of vehicle
_____ uses vehicles that are easy for passengers to access
_____ can help passengers with assistive devices
_____ maintains policy of adapting the service to meet the needs of passengers

Adaptability: The transportation service...
_____ offers trip chaining or multiple stops on the same trip
_____ will take the pets of passengers if the volunteer driver is willing
_____ can offer or link with vehicles that accommodate wheelchairs and walkers
_____ offers group transportation to special destinations
_____ undertakes annual passenger survey to promote service improvement

Affordability: The transportation service...
_____ offers reduced fares (or free transportation) to passengers
_____ use of volunteer drivers results in low cost transportation services
_____ use of volunteer vehicles results in low cost transportation services
_____ informs passengers of the actual cost of providing each ride
_____ secures funding from multiple sources to support the volunteer driver program

Total _____ (Possible score = 25)

The Road to Passenger Friendliness

0	5	10	15	20	25
Just Starting	**Out of the Garage**	**On the Road**	**Chugging Along**	**Getting Close**	**Passenger Friendly**