Transport

Background summary

An ageing population is a significant issue for both Banyule and Nillumbik local government areas, and less pronounced for Darebin. Older people who are disadvantaged, vulnerable and face inequity are more likely to experience poor health and are less likely to access appropriate support (World Health Organisation, 2017). Both Darebin and Banyule have areas experiencing significant disadvantage.

At the North East Healthy Communities healthy ageing forum in February, three broad priority areas were identified:

- Social connectivity and isolation;
- Transport; and
- Older carers.

What we know

- Stopping driving and giving up the car are important losses of independence and can affect social inclusion (Clough, Manthorpe, Green, Fox, Raymond, Wilson, Raymond, Sumner, Bright, and Hay, 2007)
- Dr Matthew Parsons, a leading gerontological researcher in New Zealand, identified several key points of change for older people that posed risks, particularly of social isolation, depression and loss of confidence, including when older people stopped driving. He also stated that timely interventions can mitigate the risks
- The research shows a clear link between transport options, social connection, community connectedness and psychological wellbeing (Commissioner for Senior Victorians, 2016)
- Victoria invests approximately $6.15 per capita in community transport, as compared to approximately $12.75 in NSW, $15 in Tasmania and $15 in

Queensland (estimates quoted at a COTA Vic transport forum by Link Community Transport)

- Approximately a third of volunteer and community transport is used to assist people get to health services (estimates quoted at a COTA Vic transport forum)
- As people age, their mobility may decline but their need for transport does not
- Lack of access to transport due to problems of affordability, safety, availability, convenience, lack of confidence and information, and appropriateness of the type transport available can act as a barrier to older people's community participation (COTA Tasmania, 2013)
- It is important that transport is accessible, reliable and affordable and that older people feel safe and comfortable using it
- Supported transport options such as community or volunteer transport often do not address the need of getting to activities in the evening or weekend (Pope, 2018)
- The demand for community transport is declining, as people prefer to have the flexibility of taxis or Ubers. It has been suggested that a way to provide subsidised Uber rides would allow people to build rapport with a local driver (Pope, 2018)
- COTA Tasmania are considering a peer education model to inform older people about public and community transport options, use of taxis as an alternative method of transport, carpooling, and getting about without a car (COTA Tasmania, 2013)
- Barriers to public transport use can include environmental concerns such as adequate lighting and seating, and being familiar with the technology such as MYKI cards and accessing electronic timetables.

Those most at risk

Older people at particular risk of accessing suitable transport include those:
- Transitioning from one mode of transport to another (e.g. stopping driving or using public transport)
- On low incomes
- Living with disability
- Living in low socioeconomic and/or rural areas
- Living with housing stress or homelessness
- Who are single, childless or living alone

- With low levels of literacy where this reduces access to information and services
- With limited or no information and communication technology skills, where this reduces their ability to locate and access services.

Useful transport program examples

1. Public transport training and support
   https://www.travellersaid.org.au/training/community-travel-training
   https://easylink.com.au/transport-services/travel-training/
   http://firststop.transportnsw.info/travel-training.html
   https://therapyfocus.org.au/public-transport-training-promotes-community-inclusion/

2. Community transport
   www.linkcommunitytransport.org
   http://www.communitytransport.net.au/
   https://communitytransport.org.au/
   https://lincnational.org.au/lincnorthern/?page_id=14

Useful links

1. Clough, R., Manthorpe, J., Green, B., Fox, D., Raymond, G., Wilson, P., Raymond, V., Sumner, K., Bright, L., and Hay, J., (2007). *The support older people want and the services they need.* Joseph Rowntree Foundation: York. Available at: https://www.jrf.org.uk/sites/default/files/jrf/migrated/files/1954-older-people-services.pdf
2. Commissioner for Senior Victorians, (2016). *Ageing is everyone's business: a report on social isolation and loneliness among senior Victorians.* Commissioner for Senior Victorians: Melbourne. Available at: https://www.seniorsonline.vic.gov.au/-/media/seniors/files/commissioner-for-senior-victorians/ageing-is-everyones-businessweb.pdf?la=en&hash=E7A9C37DB2DEA4D1ACDA9EE2D52670C644B24635
3. Council on the Ageing Tasmania, (2013). *Addressing transport issues for older people.* Council on the Ageing Tasmania: Hobart. Available at: http://www.cotatas.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/Addressing-Transport-Issues-For-Older-People-Position-Paper-2013.pdf

4. Marsden, G., Jopson, A., Cattan, M., and Woodward, J., (200). *Older people and transport: Integrating transport planning tools and user needs.* Available at: http://ageactionalliance.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/Older-People-and-Transport.exec_summary_marsden.pdf

5. Pope, J., (2018). Review of the needs of older people. City of Darebin: Preston. Available from the https://www.yoursaydarebin.com.au/29105/documents/68780

6. Whelan, M., Langford, J., Oxley, J., Koppel, S., and Charlton, J., (2006). *The elderly and mobility: a review of the literature.* Monash University Accident Research Centre: Clayton. Available at: https://www.monash.edu/__data/assets/pdf_file/0017/216530/muarc255.pdf