

# hopelink

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## HOPELINK MEDICAID TRANSPORTATION

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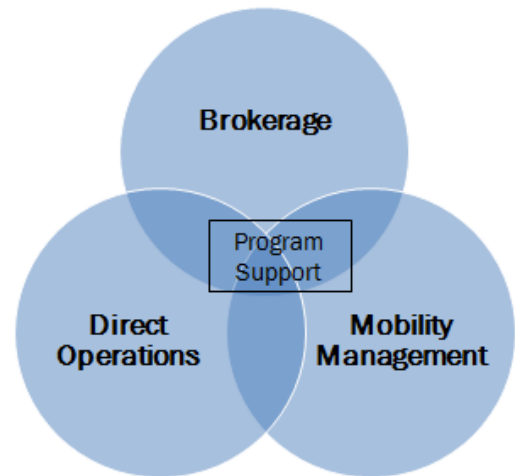
Field Trip #3



NOVEMBER 3, 2017  
EDUCATION AND OUTREACH SUBCOMMITTEE  
King County Mobility Coalition

## Hopelink Transportation Overview

- Hopelink has a variety of transportation programs, including Medicaid Transportation (Brokerage), Mobility Management and DART Transit (Direct Operations).
- Hopelink provides public DART Transit through a contract with King County Metro. It aims at achieving equity in transportation and serves less dense areas in North King County, South King County, East King County and West Seattle. DART mini buses operate on a fixed schedule, but can go off regular routes to pick up and drop off passengers.
- The next field trip on December 8<sup>th</sup> visits the DART Maintenance Facility in Kent!



## Hopelink Medicaid Transportation

- Non-Emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT) is part of the Medicaid entitlement program. It is managed through the states. Washington operates through a regional Brokerage program with six regional Brokers across eight regions. They are very well integrated in their local communities.
- Hopelink has a contract with the Washington State Health Care Authority to serve as Broker for King and Snohomish Counties. It doesn't provide transportation directly, but has built a network of sub-contractors. The system is organized competitively to ensure market-rate prices. Hopelink is paid a fixed administrative rate, while it depends on the number of trips how much it is paid for the service.
- Hopelink's Medicaid Transportation provides transportation assistance to and from medical appointments. Clients have to provide:
  - Provider One Number,
  - Name of medical provider,
  - Name, address and phone number of medical facility,
  - Appointment date and time,
  - Appointment reason.

## Broker Duties

- Screening: Eligibility? Is the service covered? (Not all transportation to dental appointments, occupation therapy etc. is covered). Distance? (Usually the medical facility has to be the closest available, but there are exceptions.) Mode? (Hopelink aims the least costly and most appropriate mode of transportation for each client.)
- Fulfillment (ride assignment; gas card; public transit)
- Quality Control (client concerns; monitoring subcontracted service providers).
- Invoicing, Reporting, Analysis.

## Public Transit

- Clients are considered to be able to use public transit, if
  - They live within ¾ miles from the bus,
  - The bus route does not involve more than two transfers or a total of three buses, and
  - They are physically capable of navigating public transportation.
- Language and cultural barriers can make it challenging for clients to use public transit. In this case they are usually referred to Mobility Management to participate in public transit orientation trainings.
- Usually ORCA cards are issued and electronic funds are loaded to them within 14 business days (E-Purse). In some cases clients receive a monthly pass that they can also use for non-medical trips. Sometimes single use tickets are provided, but this is less common.

## Gas Card Reimbursement

- Gas card reimbursement can give clients more flexibility. They are eligible, if
  - They transport themselves in their own personal vehicle or have a private party transport them; and
  - Can provide a valid driver's license, vehicle registration, and current liability insurance.
- Within seven business days after the trip clients receive Arco fuel cards, calculated based on shortest distance at \$0.35 per mile.

## Door-to-Door Service

- Clients qualify for the door-to-door service, if
  - They do not have access to a personal vehicle or the public transit system,
  - They have a medical condition that makes bus/gas cards not an appropriate mode,
  - They have documentation on file from the doctor verifying medical condition.
- Clients can be accompanied by an escort or their children. If clients are under sedation after an appointment an escort is required, because the drivers are not medically trained.
- The vehicles that are used include sedans, taxis, passenger vans and lift vehicles. Uber/Lyft are not used currently. In the past volunteer drivers were used, but not currently.
- Drivers pick clients up at their residences; assist them to get into the vehicle and to enter the medical facility. They are not allowed to go inside the client's home. Because accidents can happen easily, drivers need to be very professional. Drivers are supposed to wait at least five minutes when they pick up a client. Given the tight schedule waiting times can be a challenge.
- Medicaid does not cover trips that go only to a pharmacy, but trips to medical appointments can be combined with stopping at a pharmacy on the way back.
- As for many other transportation providers it is a challenge for Hopelink to find enough drivers.

## Customer Service Center

- Clients can contact the service center via calls, emails and soon text messages to schedule a ride. There work around 40 agents at the service center, plus coordinators and supervisors. They receive daily more than 2,000 calls and schedule roughly 3,500 door-to-door trips per day.
- Transportation is offered 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Customers can reach out anytime, although most of the contacts are made Monday to Friday between 8am and 5pm. Except for emergencies clients are supposed to contact the service center at least one or two days in advance. The best time to call is later in the week in the late morning or early afternoon.
- Customers who prefer to communicate in Spanish or Russian can speak with bilingual agents. To communicate with clients who speak other languages a live interpreter is used through the language line. Many drivers are bilingual as well.
- Hopelink uses PureCloud as cloud call center software. Although there were some hiccups in the beginning it works very well now.
- Via MyRideOnline clients can check the status of a ride, cancel a trip and provide feedback.
- RouteMatch software is used to schedule rides.



## For More Information

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