

Expanding Public Transportation for ED Discharge Patients in Buffalo, WY



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Hypothesis

Expansion of current public transit services would alleviate lack of reliable transportation for select Johnson County Healthcare Center (JCHC) Emergency Department (ED) discharged patients

Background



Buffalo, WY.

- ❑ Johnson County population: 8,460
- ❑ 23.7% of the population is over 65, higher than the state (17.9%) and national average (16.8%)
- ❑ JCHC has the only ED
- ❑ JCHC staff identified a lack of transportation upon discharge from the ED as a significant problem
 - Currently ED nurses using personal vehicles to take patients home/to a hotel
 - Greater problem for tourists and travelers on the interstate who end up in ED

Community Profile Assets

- ❑ Buffalo Area Transit System (BATS) provided by the Buffalo Senior Center
 - Government funded, cheap fares
 - On demand rides weekdays, 8 am - 5 pm
 - Scheduled trips weekly for medical appointments to Sheridan and Gillette
 - Wheelchair accessible
- ❑ Other assets in the community:
 - Veterans' Home of Wyoming
 - JCHC



One of the vans BATS uses for their transit service

Literature Review

- ❑ A case study in 2017 looked at 7 rural communities and the public transportation services provided to older adults
 - Identified common transportation themes for rural communities
 - Less population dense communities benefited from Flexible Transport Services (FTS), specifically, paratransit and volunteer driver programs
 - Partnerships also effective for program finances and marketing services to the public
- Limitations: small case quantity (7) and lack of data on older adult ridership usage

Conclusions

- ❑ Buffalo already has a FTS in the form of BATS that uses paratransit and volunteer drivers
 - Expanding this service to cover weekends and nights would provide transit for all patients discharged from the ED
 - Expansion of this well-known service would be easier than establishing a new service
- ❑ Main challenge would be lack of resources
 - Finding enough volunteer drivers to be available all night, especially when usage tends to be low



Picture of JCHC