

Alberta Provincial Transportation Needs Assessment

2016-2017

SOUTH ZONE

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Sections of the Report

Section 1: Demographics

In this section, there are descriptions of those we interviewed in this region – their age, sex, marital status, income, living arrangements, and place of residence. There also is information on health status (e.g., long-term illnesses and disabilities, use of mobility aids, and overall physical health). Information for each of these areas is presented for senior non-drivers and senior drivers.

Section 2: Unmet Transportation Needs

In this section, you will find information on the unmet transportation needs of senior non-drivers and senior drivers in this region. For example, information is provided on the percent of senior non-drivers and senior drivers who do not get to medical appointments or to the grocery store, or who do not attend social events because they do not have a ride. There also is information on the differences between senior non-drivers and senior drivers in terms of quality of life, sense of well-being, and on measures of social isolation (e.g., companionship, feeling left out, and feeling socially isolated). We have included these last 3 measures because lack of adequate transportation is a primary cause of social isolation among seniors who cannot or who choose not to drive.

Section 3: Awareness and Use of Transportation Services

In this section, you will find information on awareness of transportation services for seniors in the community (e.g., senior's van, community bus, handi-van service). We also ask about use of these services for trips such as going to medical appointments, for grocery shopping, recreational activities, visits with family and friends, or attending religious activities. For senior non-drivers, we asked them about their awareness and their use of these types of services. Based on previous research, we know that seniors who drive most often do not use alternate forms of transportation services. As such, we asked senior drivers to "think about seniors in their community" when answering these two sets of questions.

Section 4: The Importance of 'Senior Friendly' Transportation Services

In this section, you will find feedback on the importance of 'senior-friendly' features of transportation services. These features have come to be known as the 5 A's, with these A's consisting of Availability, Acceptability, Accessibility, Adaptability, and Affordability. Again, we asked senior non-drivers to answer from their own perspective. For senior drivers, we asked them to "think about seniors in their community" when answering these questions.

Section 5: Summary

In this section, we provide a summary of the findings and how your community can use these results to develop or improve alternate forms of transportation services for seniors. We also encourage you to access a similar report on the unmet transportation needs of PWD in rural and urban Alberta.

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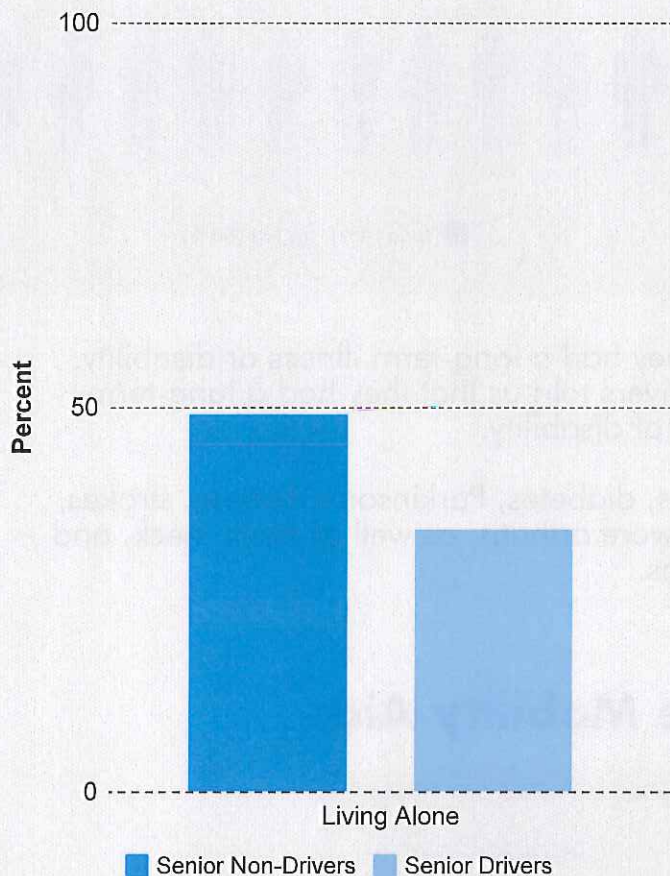
Before You Get Started -- A Bit More About the Data

The results presented in this report are based on responses from 37 senior non-drivers and 147 senior drivers in the South Zone of the province. You might be wondering how 'representative' these two samples are as compared to our sample of senior non-drivers and senior drivers in other regions in the province of Alberta. To determine if there were differences in the responses from senior non-drivers in the South Zone and senior non-drivers in all the other regions of the province, we ran a number of statistical analyses. What we found was that there were no statistically significant differences between senior non-drivers across the 5 regions of the province for all of our 'demographic' measures (e.g., age, sex, living arrangements, place of residence, employment status, income, overall physical health, disability status, physical health interfering with activities of daily living, and use of mobility aids). We used this same process to determine if there were differences between senior drivers in the South Zone and senior drivers in all the other regions of the province. Again, what we found was that there were no statistically significant differences between senior drivers across the 5 regions of the province for all of our demographic measures. What this means is that although the sample sizes of senior non-drivers and senior drivers are smaller in some of the Zones in the province than in other Zones, we can be confident that the results for each of the Zones are representative of what senior non-drivers and senior drivers overall had to say.

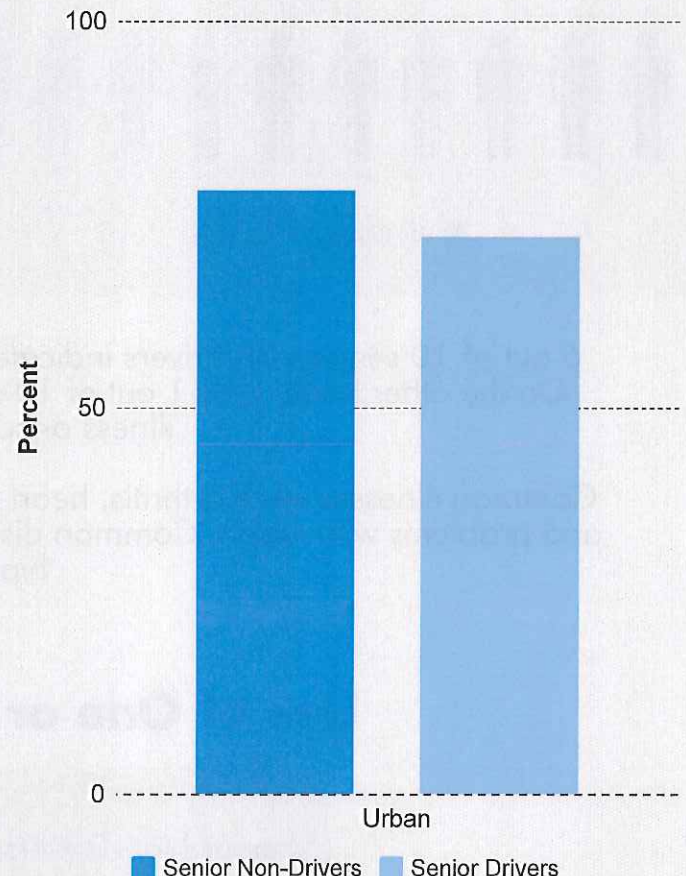
When looking at our sample, you can see that, overall, we have more females than males who participated in the survey. This pattern is consistent with the overall population statistics showing that there are more females than males in the senior population as a whole (women live longer than men on average). When looking at the percent of senior drivers who are female and those who are male, you can see that we have more senior drivers who are female in our sample. This finding is inconsistent with the national trend of there being more senior males who are licensed to drive than there are senior females. The higher proportion of older female drivers in our sample may be due to our sampling strategy. That is, we used what is called random sampling (a technique where each person interviewed is chosen by chance) as opposed to quota sampling (a technique where the final sample has the same proportions of individuals as the entire population). It also may be that older females are more likely to be in the home and, as such, more likely to answer the telephone than are their senior male counterparts, and this may be particularly so in rural areas. Finally, we also have more older female non-drivers in our sample. This pattern is not unexpected as the current cohort of seniors is made up of a large number of women who have never driven.

Finally, on the questions where we asked senior drivers to "think about seniors in their community", when we compared their answers to answers from senior non-drivers, the trend was for senior drivers to 'overestimate' the needs or the importance or use of services for "seniors in their community". The good news is that most often, the answers between senior non-drivers and senior drivers are consistent in that they recognize that there are unmet transportation needs of seniors in the region, and that there is a need for more responsive forms of transportation for seniors in communities throughout the region.

Living Arrangements



Place of Residence

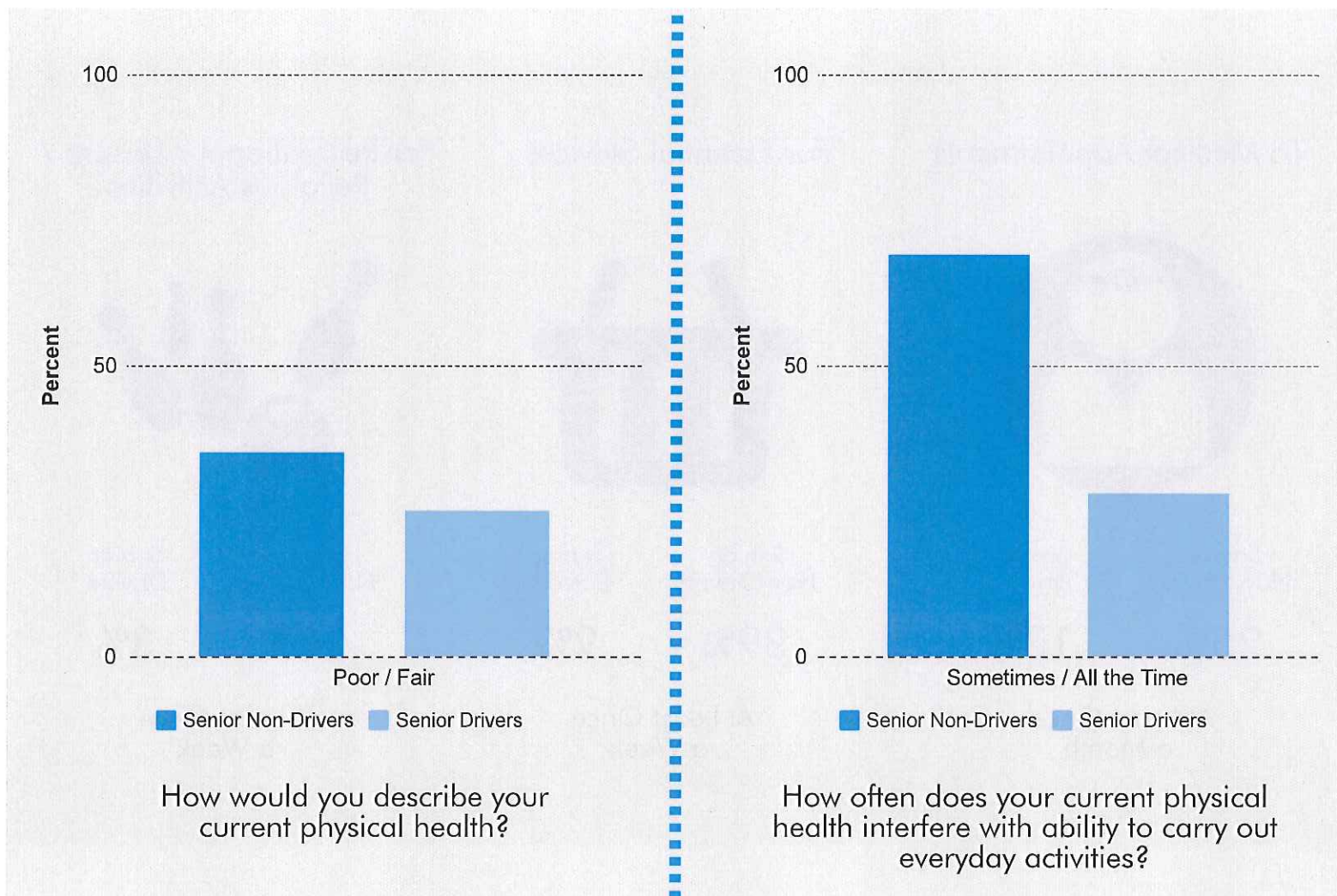


As you can see from the graph to the left, about half (49%) of senior non-drivers lived alone, with about one-third (34%) of senior drivers living alone.

In the graph to the right, you can see that the majority of senior non-drivers and senior drivers that we interviewed in the South Zone lived in a city (e.g., Brooks, Lethbridge, Medicine Hat). You also can see that there were slightly higher percent of senior non-drivers (78%) living in a city than senior drivers (72%). The remainder of the senior non-drivers and senior drivers were living in rural areas (that is, a town*, village, hamlet, or on a farm).

* Note that Alberta Municipal Affairs defines towns as having a population of at least 1,000 people and may exceed 10,000 people unless it requests a change to city status.

Physical Health



When asked about their physical health, about one-third (35%) of senior non-drivers said that it was "poor or fair", with one-quarter (25%) of senior drivers saying their physical health was "poor or fair" (see graph above to the left).

And, as you can see in the graph above to the right, more than two-thirds (69%) of senior non-drivers said that their physical health interfered "sometimes or all the time" with everyday activities as compared to slightly more than one-quarter (28%) of senior drivers having said that their physical health interfered "sometimes or all the time" with everyday activities.

Unable to Access Services / Activities

Medical Appointments



Senior
Non-Drivers

19%

Senior
Drivers

3%

Sometimes / Often

Essential Services



Senior
Non-Drivers

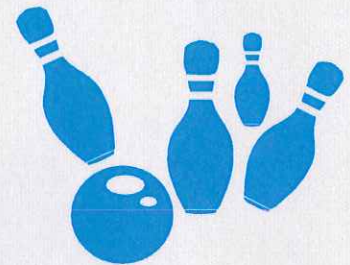
37%

Senior
Drivers

5%

Sometimes / Often

Recreational / Leisure / Religious



Senior
Non-Drivers

31%

Senior
Drivers

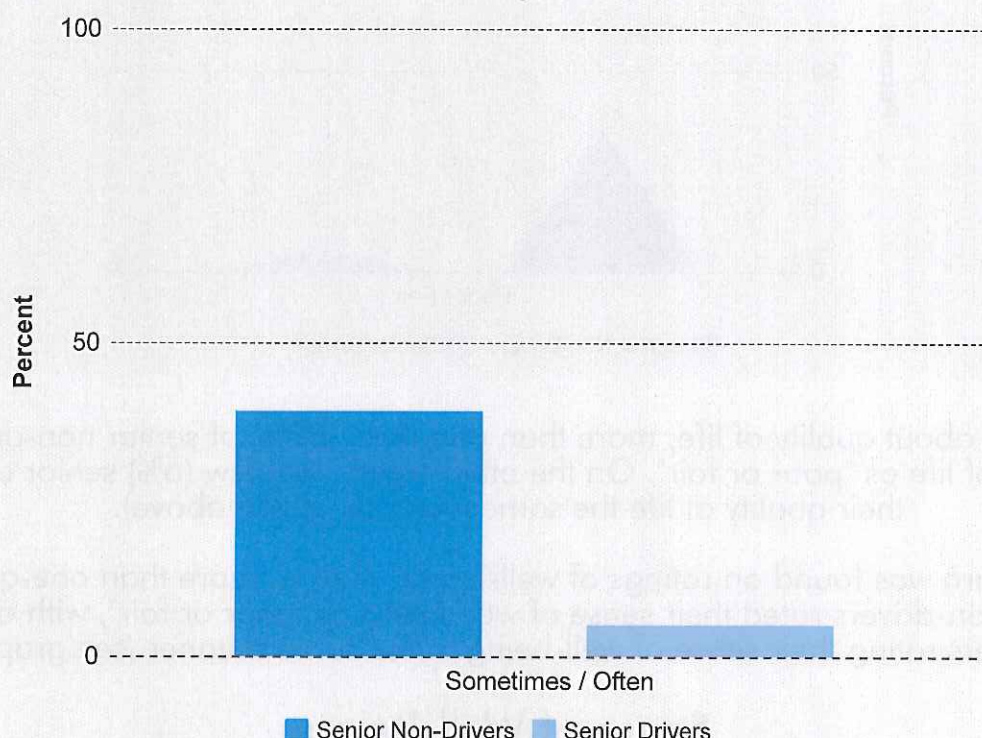
7%

Sometimes / Often

As you can see above, a greater percent of senior non-drivers "sometimes or often" did not get to medical appointments, did not have access to essential services such as getting groceries, or get to recreational, leisure, or religious activities in the last 6 months because they did not have a ride (percents range from 19% to 37% across the three types of services and activities). Conversely, very few senior drivers (3% to 7%) said that they "sometimes or often" were unable to access these same services and activities because they did not have a ride.

Non-Participation in Community Activities

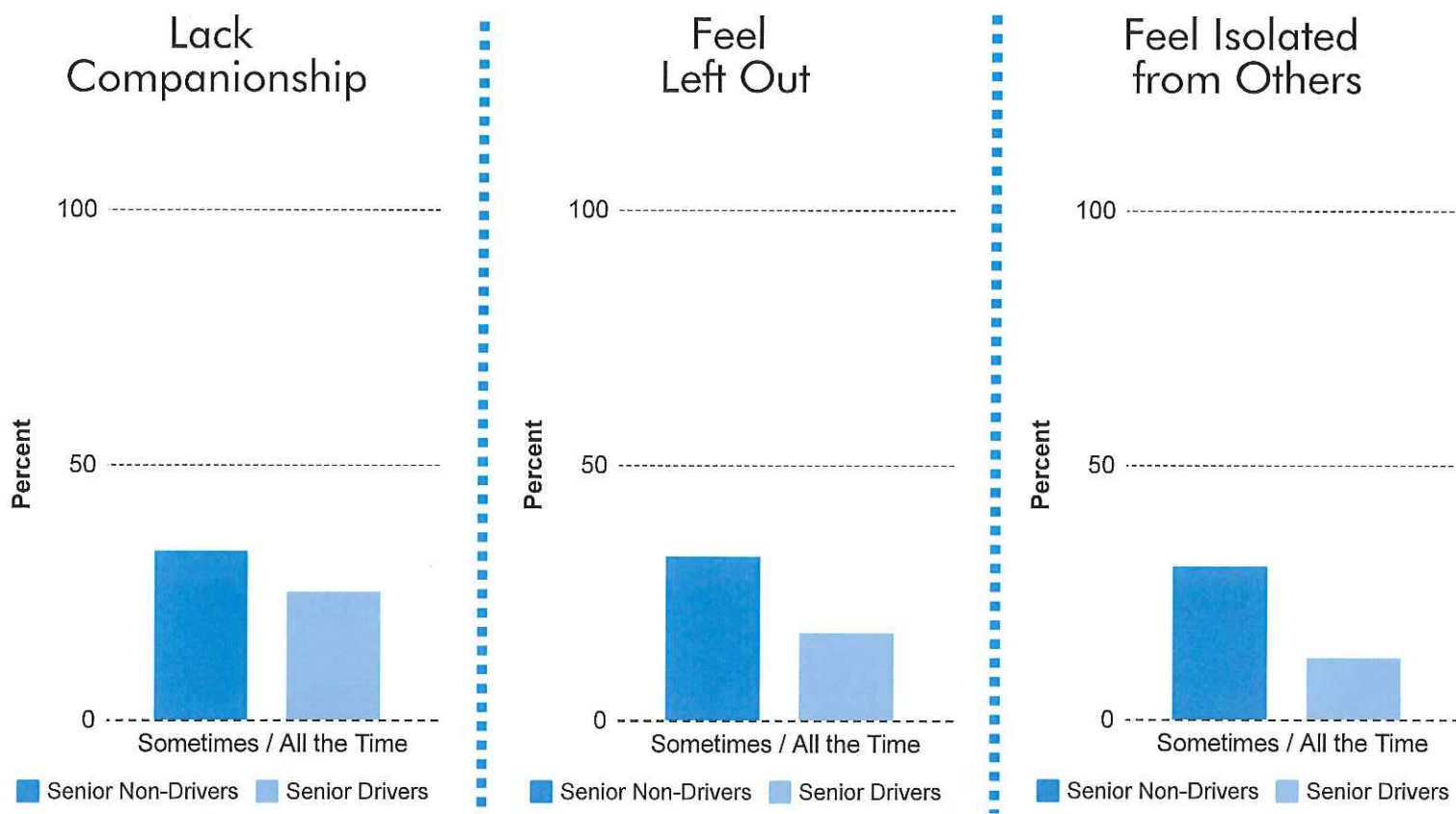
Frequency of Not Participating in More Recreational, Social, Religious, or Other Group Activities Because of Not Having a Ride



When asked how often that they felt like they wanted to participate in more recreational, social, religious, or other group activities but couldn't because they didn't have a ride, 39% of senior non-drivers said "sometimes or often".

Compare this to senior drivers where only 5% said that they "sometimes or often" felt like they wanted to participate in more recreational, social, religious, or other group activities but couldn't because they didn't have a ride.

Companionship, Feeling Left Out, Feeling Isolated



When asked about social isolation, 1/3 (33%) of senior non-drivers told us that they lacked companionship "sometimes or all the time", almost 1/3 (32%) felt left out "sometimes or all the time", and just under 1/3 (30%) felt isolated from others "sometimes or all the time". Compare this to the responses from senior drivers where 25% said that they lacked companionship, 17% felt left out, and 12% felt isolated from others "sometimes or all the time".

Importance of Alternate Transportation Services in the Community

29%

vs.

33%

of senior non-drivers said that if they needed transportation, and none were available, they "would not be able to get where they wanted to go".

of senior drivers said that if seniors in their community needed transportation, and none were available, seniors "would not be able to get where they wanted to go".

86%

vs.

91%

of senior non-drivers said that alternate transportation services are "somewhat or very important" to their quality of life.

of senior drivers said that alternate transportation services are "somewhat or very important" to seniors' quality of life.

44%

vs.

70%

of senior non-drivers said that they were "somewhat or very likely" to use ride-sharing services if they were available in the community.

of senior drivers said that they thought seniors were "somewhat or very likely" to use ride-sharing services if they were available in the community.

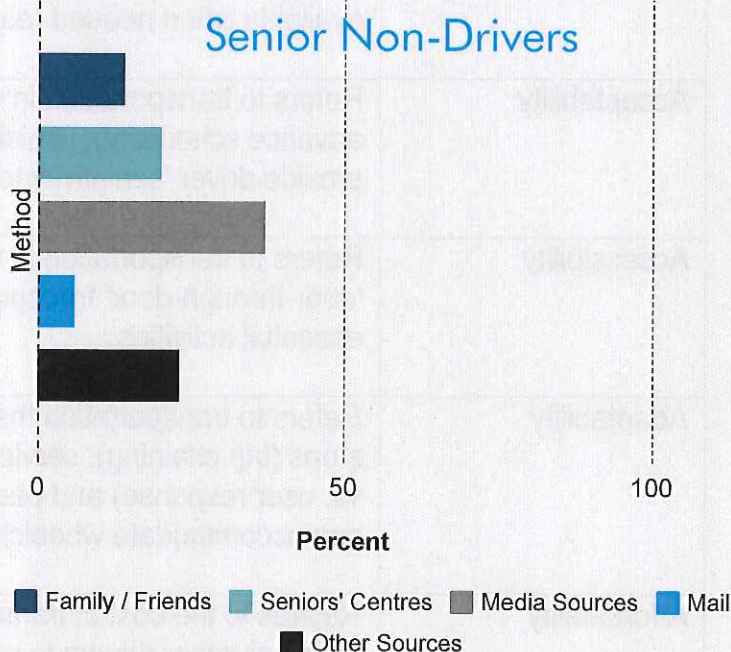
SECTION 4: IMPORTANCE OF 'SENIOR FRIENDLY' TRANSPORTATION

SOUTH ZONE

Preferences for Finding out About Alternate Transportation Services

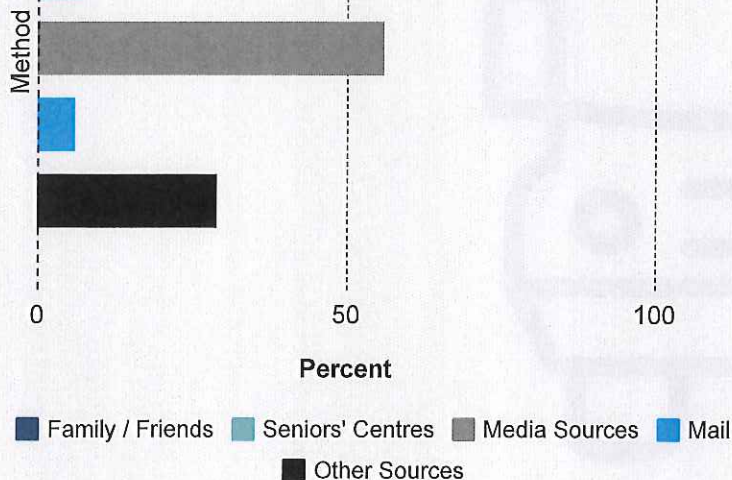
Media Sources Include: Community Newspapers, Television, Radio, Internet

More senior non-drivers would prefer to find out about alternate transportation services through "media sources", followed by "other sources" such as health care referrals, and through the city/town/municipal office, with fewer senior non-drivers identifying sources such as "family or friends", the "mail", or "seniors' centres" (see graph to right).



Senior Drivers

Other Sources Include: Health Care Referral, City/Town/Municipal Office, Pamphlets



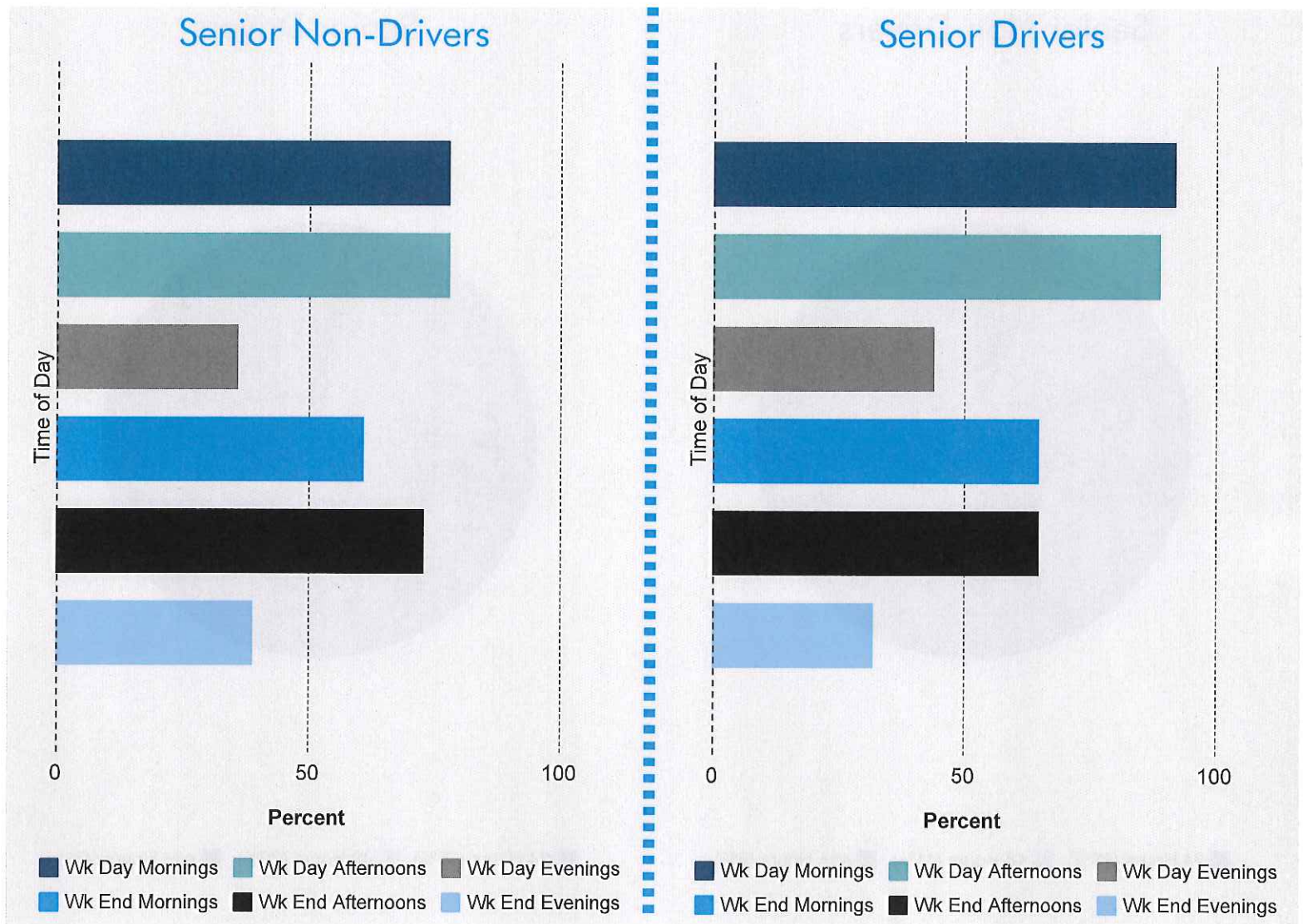
More than half of senior drivers thought that seniors in their community would prefer to find out about alternate transportation services through "media sources" (e.g., newspaper, television, radio, internet) or "other sources", with fewer senior drivers identifying sources such as "seniors' centres", or "family or friends" as a preference (see graph to left).

SECTION 4: IMPORTANCE OF 'SENIOR FRIENDLY' TRANSPORTATION

SOUTH ZONE

Availability

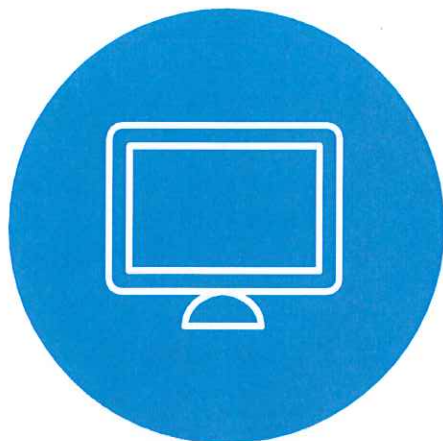
Time of Day that Alternate Transportation Services Should be Available



When asked what time of day that alternate transportation services should be available, senior non-drivers identified weekday mornings and afternoons (78% each), followed by weekend mornings and afternoons (61% and 73%, respectively) (see graph above to the left). Less than half of the senior non-drivers identified evenings (weekday and weekend) as a time period that these types of services should be available. A similar pattern was evident for senior drivers (see graph above to the right).

Acceptability

Booking a Trip Online



34%

of senior non-drivers said that they would be "somewhat or very likely" to book trips online for alternate transportation services.

vs.

57%

of senior drivers said that they thought that seniors would be "somewhat or very likely" to book trips online for alternate transportation services.

Driver Knowledge related to Seniors' Health/Mobility Issues



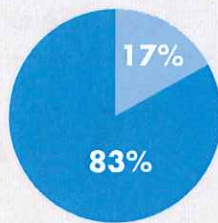
> 85%

Almost all senior non-drivers and senior drivers said that it was "somewhat or very important" for alternate transportation service provider drivers to be knowledgeable about health issues related to seniors (e.g., senior clientele may need assistance getting in and out of the vehicle, may need more time in getting from "A" to "B", etc.).

Adaptability

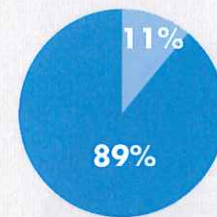
Importance of Alternate Transportation Services that Allow for Multiple Stops

Senior Non-Drivers



Not at all Important (17%) Somewhat / Very Important (83%)

Senior Drivers

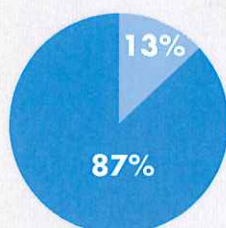


Not at all Important (11%) Somewhat / Very Important (89%)

When asked about the importance of alternate transportation services that allow for multiple stops (e.g., stopping at the bank and then the grocery store on the way home from a medical appointment), you can see in the graphs above that both senior non-drivers and senior drivers rated this feature as being "somewhat or very important" (83% and 89% of senior non-drivers and senior drivers, respectively). This same pattern was evident when asked about alternate transportation services that can accommodate wheelchairs and/or scooters (see graphs below).

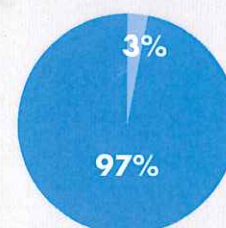
Importance of Alternate Transportation Services that Accommodate Wheelchairs and/or Scooters

Senior Non-Drivers



Not at all Important (13%) Somewhat / Very Important (87%)

Senior Drivers



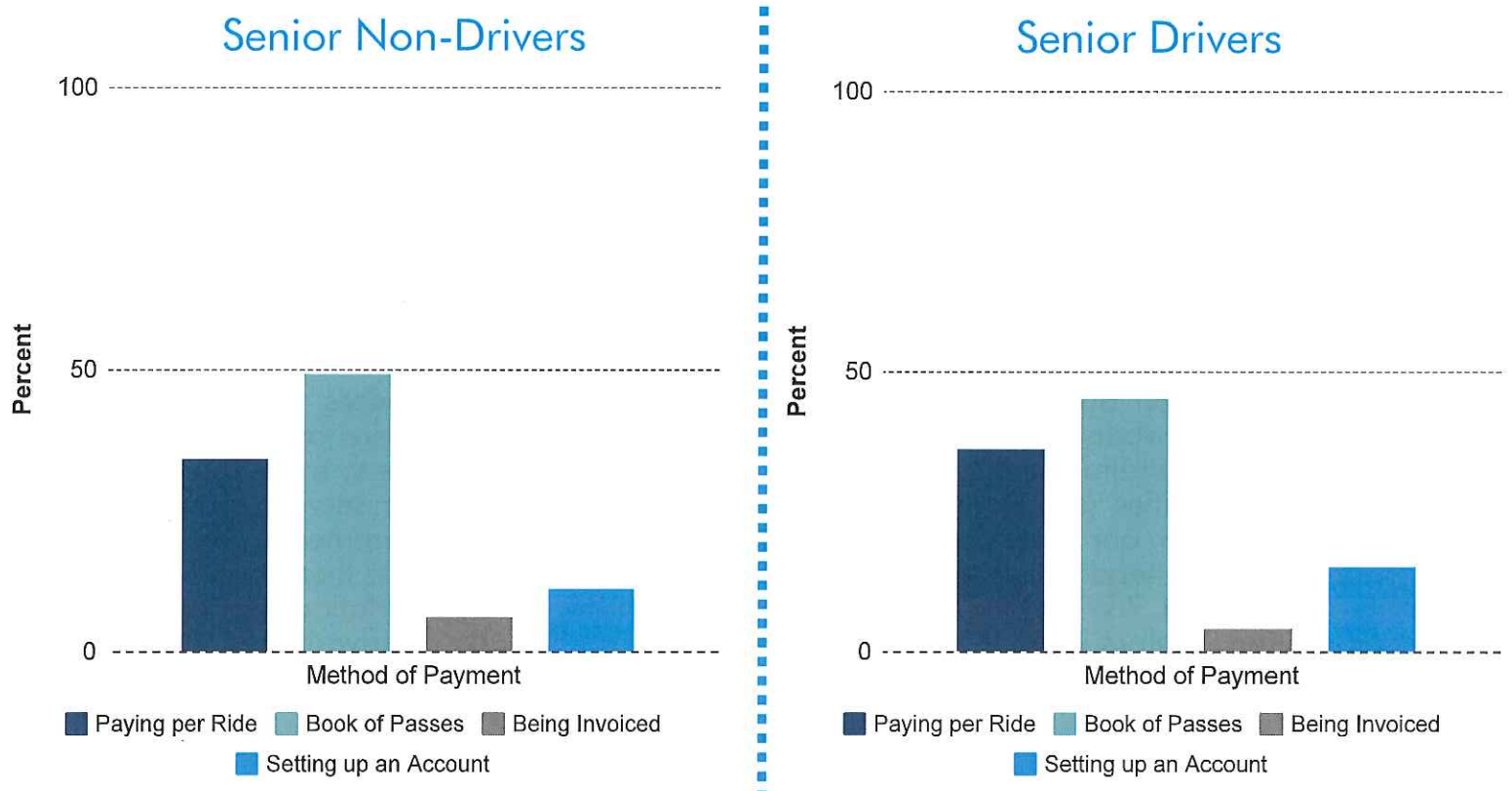
Not at all Important (3%) Somewhat / Very Important (97%)

SECTION 4: IMPORTANCE OF 'SENIOR FRIENDLY' TRANSPORTATION

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Affordability

Preferred Method of Payment



When asked about the preferred method of payment, almost half (49%) of senior non-drivers indicated that they would prefer purchasing a "book of passes" for alternate transportation services, followed by "paying per ride" (34%) (see graph above to the left). A similar pattern was evident for senior drivers (see graph above to the right). Few senior non-drivers and senior drivers chose "being invoiced" or "setting up an account" with the service provider as a preferred method of payment for these types of services.

Citation

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