



For Immediate Release

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More ride availability and shorter wait times highlighted in HandyDART survey results

Victoria – BC’s Seniors Advocate released results of a province-wide survey of almost 7,500 HandyDART users in the province today. The survey highlights that while 91% of users are satisfied with the service when they receive it, almost 1/3 of respondents say it is not meeting, or only moderately meeting, their transportation needs.

“Obviously there’s good news here,” said Seniors Advocate Isobel Mackenzie. “People are telling us that across many aspects of this service, things are positive, however we are still concerned that there are a significant number of seniors whose transportation needs are not being met,” Mackenzie added, noting ride availability, wait times for rides, and the booking experience including the time required to book rides in advance are areas where riders feel improvements are most needed.

“The cost of the service is another area that we need to look closely at,” said Mackenzie. “While 83% of respondents told us cost is not an issue, we have to remember that some of our lowest income seniors rely heavily on this service and they clearly are telling us if it cost less, they would use it more.” Currently 53% of users have an income of less than \$20,000 while 15% have incomes less than \$10,000 per year.

HandyDART is a door-to-door service provided by TransLink, BC Transit, and their service providers for passengers with physical or cognitive disabilities who are unable to use conventional public transit without assistance. The majority of users, approximately 78%, are 65 or older. Last year 2.37 million rides were provided, with 51% of these in the Lower Mainland.

The Office of the Seniors Advocate’s survey asked a range of questions about the service including what people think of the application process, the availability of rides, the cost of the service, as well as overall satisfaction levels. The questions for the survey were developed through a consultation process that included users of HandyDART, service funders as well as front-line staff. Highlights from the survey include:

- Almost 80% of HandyDART clients are able to book a roundtrip always or most of the time
- 26% said they were rarely or never able to get a ride when placed on standby
- 28% of riders whose annual income is less than \$10,000 said they would use HandyDART more often if it cost less
- 38% are somewhat or not at all familiar with no-show or cancellation policies – only 75% of BC Transit clients and 69% of Translink clients agree they know how to provide feedback around services
- 60% of clients report they always reach appointment on time - less than 50% report they are always picked up within the 30-minute window

The full HandyDART survey report can be viewed at www.seniorsadvocatebc.ca

The Office of the Seniors Advocate is an independent office of the provincial government with a mandate of monitoring seniors' services and publicly reporting on systemic issues affecting seniors. The Office also provides information and referral: toll-free 1.877.952.3181 or by visiting: www.seniorsadvocatebc.ca

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