



## Tips for Transportation Providers

### Serving People with Dementia or Memory Loss

To help reduce the crash rate for Florida's aging population, the Safe Mobility for Life Coalition is implementing a very broad Aging Road User Strategic Safety Plan with ten emphasis areas each containing their own goals and objectives.

The goal of our Transitioning from Driving Emphasis Area is "to help bridge the gap between driving retirement and mobility independence." An important element in achieving this goal is to increase the number of transportation providers that have active dementia-friendly transportation plans.

The recommendations contained in this document are research-based<sup>1</sup> and provide transportation providers valuable suggestions on how to serve customers with dementia or memory loss.

### Recommendations for Transit Providers Providing Dementia-Friendly Transportation

**Dementia-Friendly Transportation:** Going beyond senior-friendliness, a transportation service that considers the special needs of passengers with all stages of memory loss.

#### DRIVERS

- ☀ Provide driver training specific to memory loss, as well as aging sensitivity and problem solving.
- ☀ Drivers may need access to information about regular clients, in order to understand certain behaviors which may occur.
- ☀ Provide training on strategies for safe assistance of passengers (in or out of vehicle, walking into destinations, etc.)



#### PASSENGERS

- ☀ Consider expanding assistance and supportive services through partners in the community.
- ☀ Be knowledgeable of individual passengers' needs.
- ☀ Stopping to rest on long journeys may prevent behavior problems.
- ☀ Some passengers with memory loss may benefit from a reminder call shortly before a scheduled pick-up.

FAMILY

- ☀ Consider family members as your customers, just as you do your passengers.
- ☀ Allow companions of dementia passengers to ride free of additional charge.
- ☀ Family members of dementia passengers may appear to be anxious as a scheduled trip is happening.
- ☀ Encourage family or other contact persons to share information with you regarding their passenger; they know them very well and may be of great help to you in resolving issues.

SYSTEM CHARACTERISTICS

- ☀ Investigate expanding service capacity for passengers needing door-to-door and door-through-door support at destination.
- ☀ Develop written assistance policies for drivers and provide orientation training on an ongoing basis.
- ☀ Orient drivers to “Safe Return” or similar programs for characteristics, benefits.

POLICY MATTERS

- ☀ Jurisdictional linking methods may not be effective for passengers with memory loss. Such changes may be disruptive, unsettling, and trigger behavior problems.
- ☀ Some passengers with memory loss may require more service than curb-to-curb or bus stop.

## What is Dementia?

Memory Loss	Difficulty Performing Tasks	Problem with Language		Loss of Initiative
Disorientation to Time and Places		Problem with Abstract Thinking	Misplacing Things	
Changes in Mood/Behavior	Changes in Personality	Poor or Decreased Judgment		

To learn more about Florida’s Safe Mobility for Life Coalition or our Aging Road User Strategic Safety Plan, please visit: [www.FLsams.org](http://www.FLsams.org).

<sup>1</sup>Dept. of Elder Affairs, Florida Dementia Friendly Transportation Research Project, 2010