

Special Needs Transportation Coordination Study

Joint Transportation Committee Policy Study
Group Meeting
May 13, 2008

Summary of Study Tasks

- Develop inventory of special needs transportation services
- Identify federal funding & related barriers to special needs coordination
- Examine service models in & out of state
- Review siting of facilities serving persons with special transportation needs
- Identify methods to improve coordination among agencies and providers

Research Steps to Date:

- 18 stakeholder interviews conducted to date:
 - DOT staff and Secretary of Transportation
 - Legislators and Governor's Staff
 - DSHS and other state agency staff
 - OSPI (Pupil Instruction)
 - Transit Operators
 - Medicaid Brokers
 - Tribal Programs
- Data collection and analysis
- 2 Forums: Yakima and Everett

Who are Users of Special Needs Transportation?

- "Those people, including their attendants, who because of physical or mental disability, income status, or age, are unable to transport themselves or purchase transportation."

RCW 47.06B.012

State of Washington: Basic Population Demographics

- 24% age 18 or under
- 11.5% age 65 or older
- 16% report a disability
- 11.8% at or below federal poverty level
- 21% of disabled at or below poverty level
- 42% of older adults have a disability

Tasks 1 and 2: Preliminary Findings

- Task 1: Conduct inventory of special needs transportation services
- Task 2: Identify funding and related barriers to special needs transportation coordination

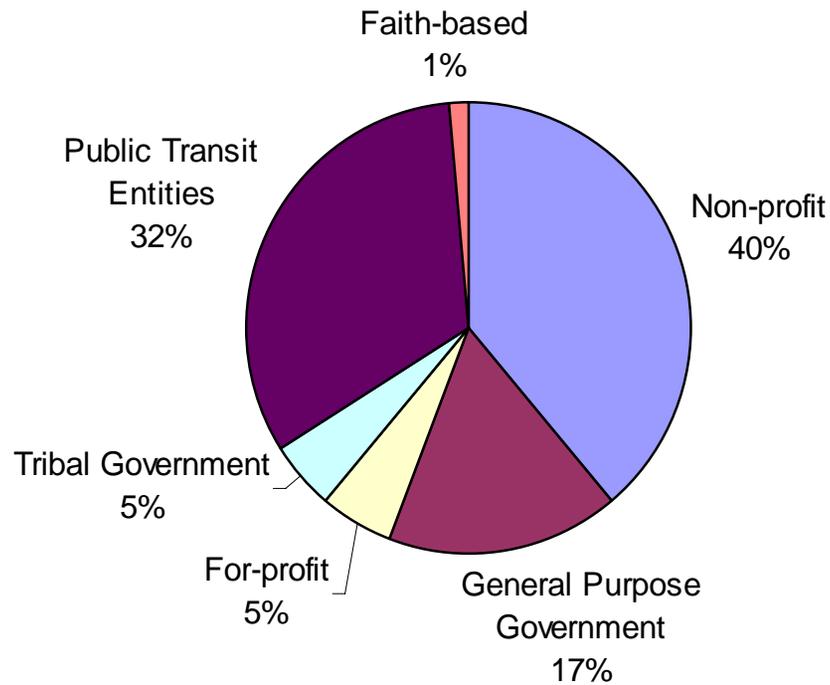
Task 1: Human Service Transportation Inventory

- Washington State Summary of Public Transportation
- Washington State Summary of Community and Brokered Transportation
- Coordinated Public Transit Human Services Coordination Plans (13)
- Washington State 211 Social Service Information Network
- Puget Sound FindaRide.org
- Superintendent of Pupil Instruction

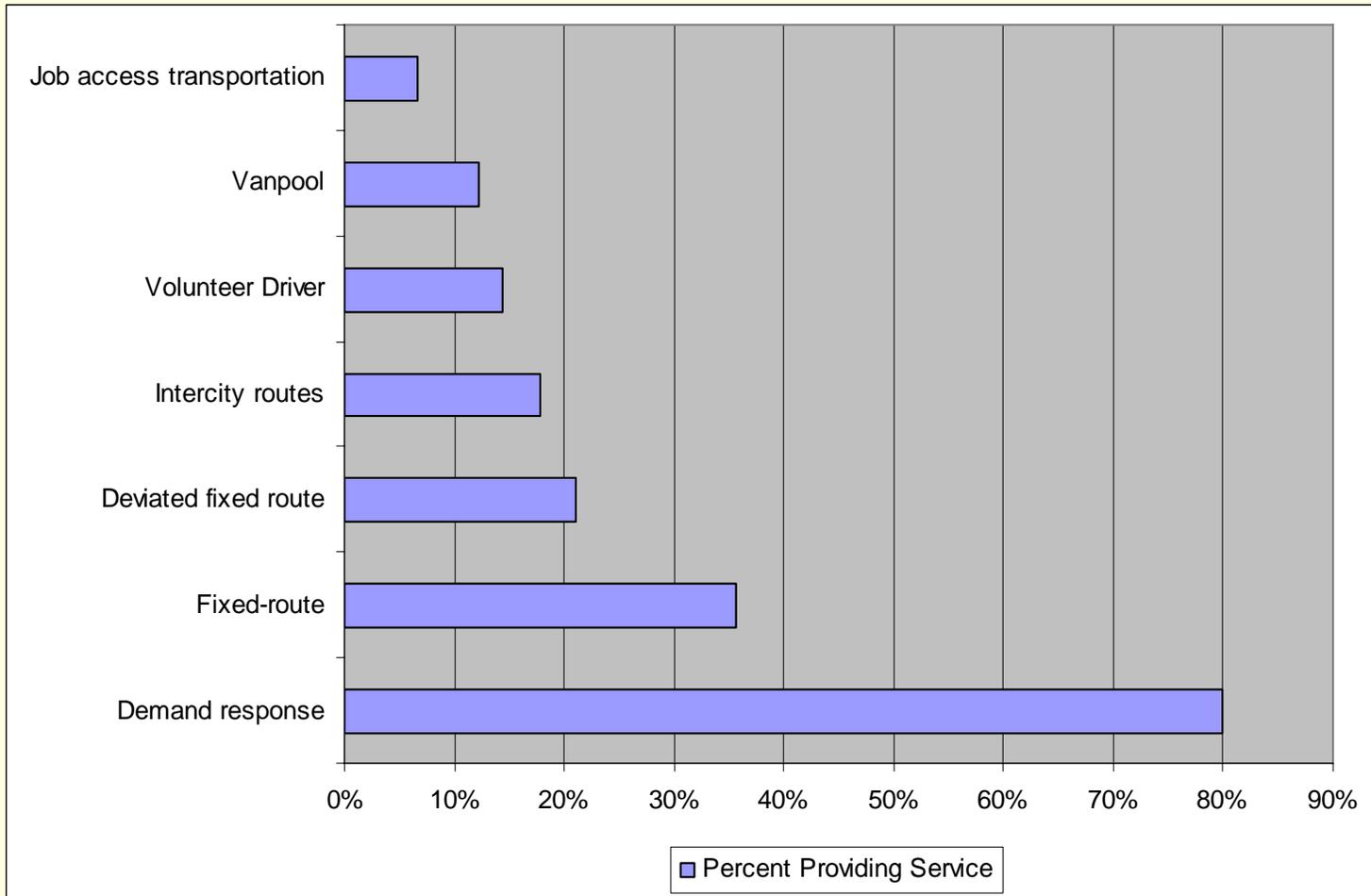
Key Findings

- 205 organizations (excluding schools) identified that provide special needs transportation
- There is no “typical” provider
- Non-profits account for more than 1/3 of all providers
- Many non-profits serve general public in rural areas
- Most providers specifically serve seniors and persons with disabilities

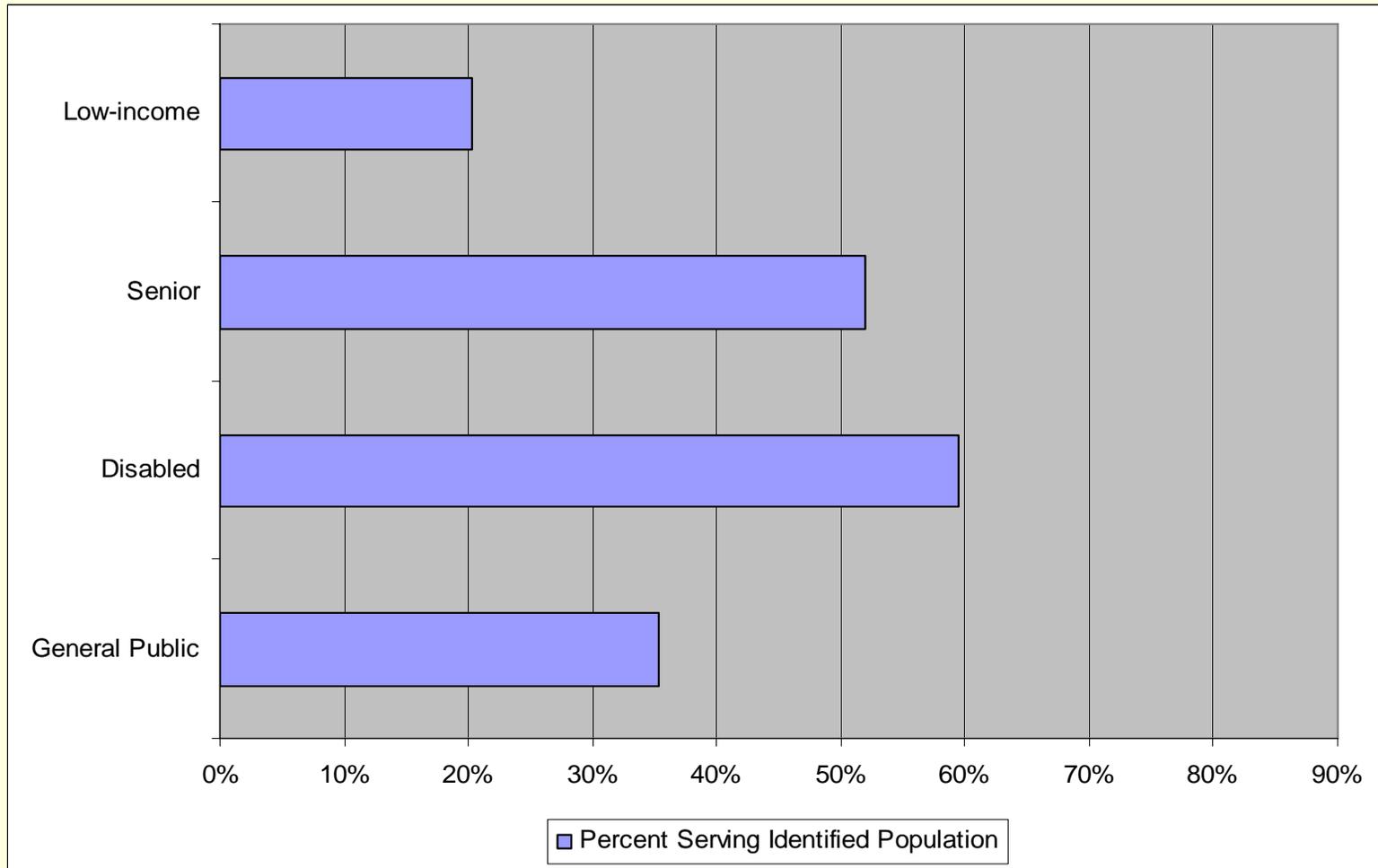
Agency Provider by Type



Providers by Service Type



Providers by Passenger Type



3 Principal Sponsors of Special Needs Transportation in Washington State

- Public Transportation Agencies
- Social Service Agencies
- Superintendent of Pupil Instruction (OSPI)/Local School Districts

Public Transportation

- Provides many trips for special needs customers on regular fixed route services
- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires accessibility for persons with wheelchairs, and other accommodations for persons with disabilities
- Transit agencies receiving federal funds must provide seniors and persons with disabilities 50% fare discount during off-peak hours
- Accessible public transit allows equal service and mainstreams persons with disabilities into society

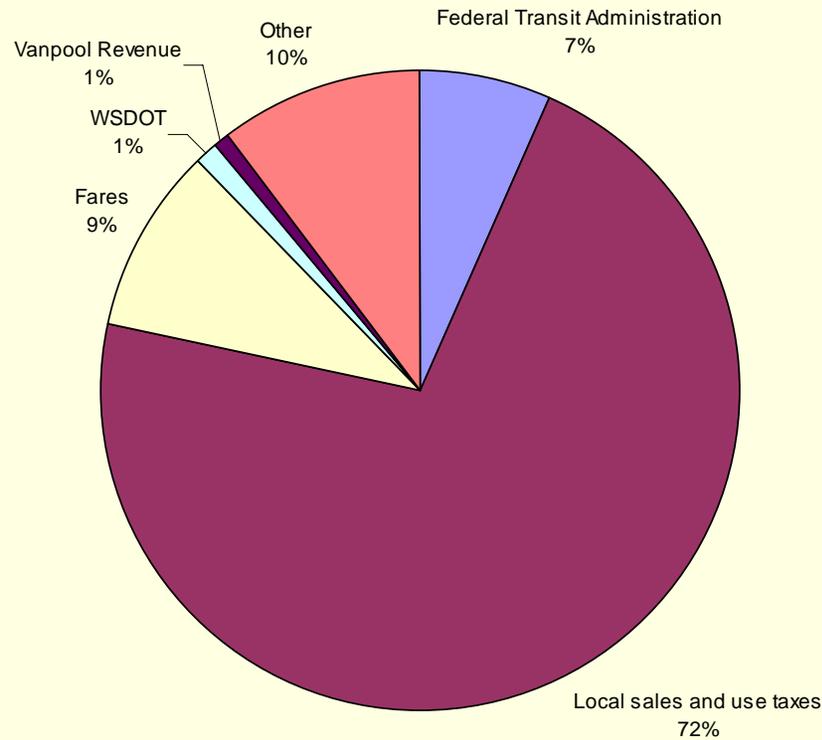
ADA Paratransit Minimal Requirements

- For persons whose disability prevents use of fixed route, ADA paratransit required
- Most transit agencies conduct eligibility process to assess based on ability (or inability) to use fixed route
- Complementary to fixed route (same hours and service area)
- Curb to curb service

Public Paratransit Doesn't Meet all Needs

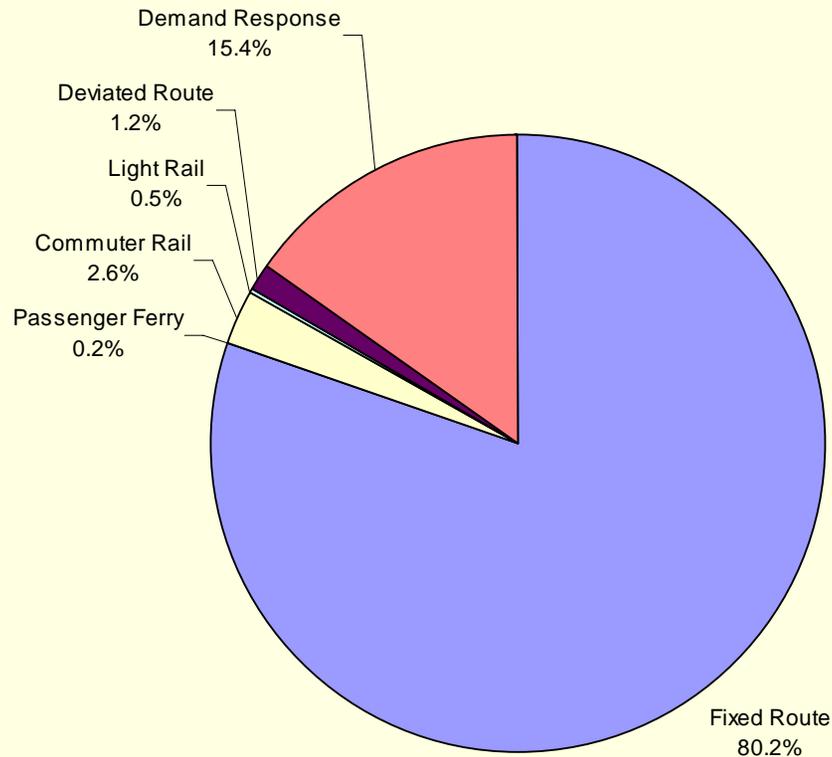
- Not all persons who need paratransit are eligible according to the ADA
- Similar limits as for users of fixed route (limited hours, service area)
- Many people need a higher level of service than what is required

Sources of Revenues to Support Public Transit in Washington State: 2006



Public Transit Operating Expenditures by Mode: Total \$882 million in 2006 (excluding

Washington State Ferries



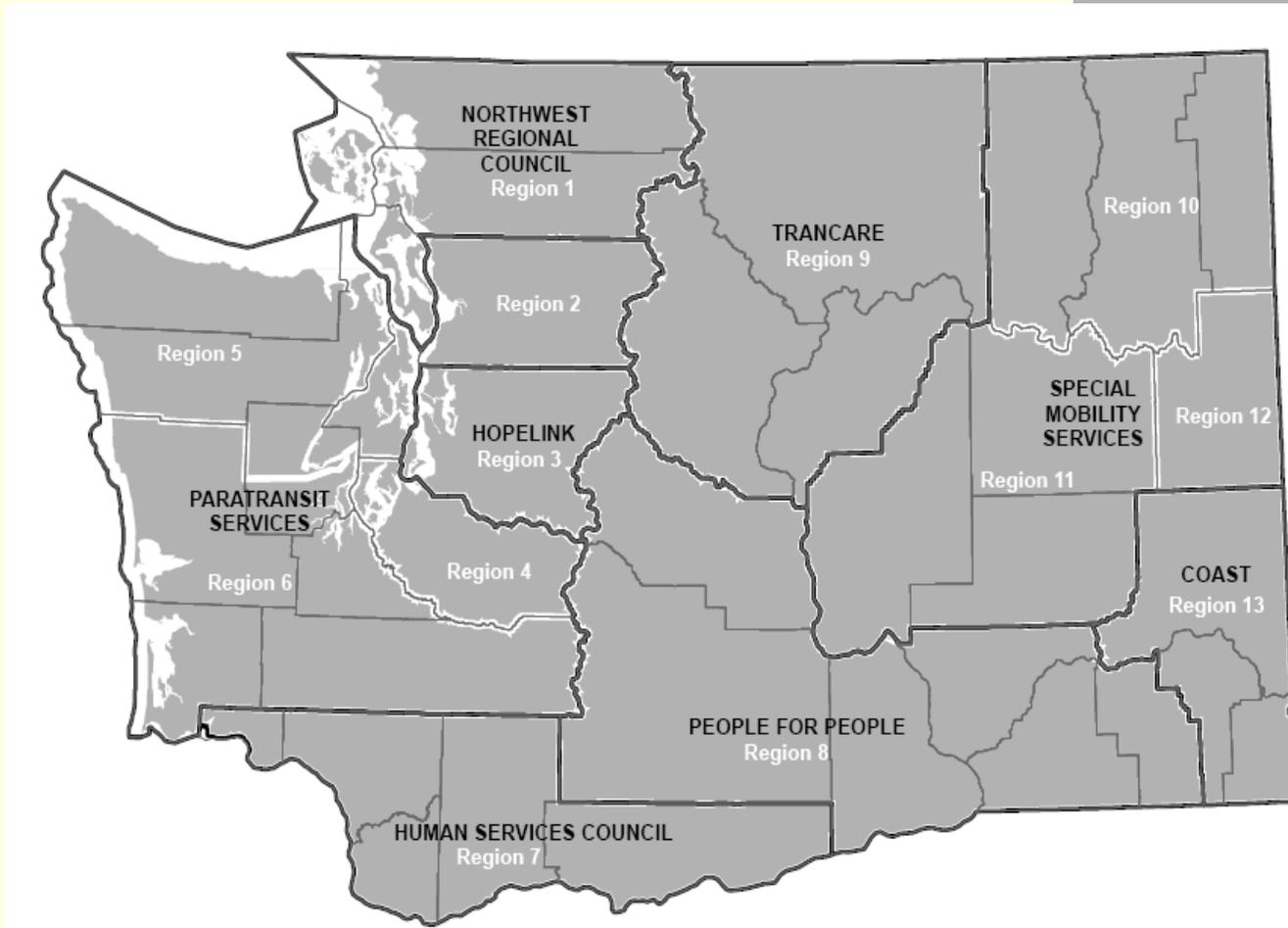
Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) Administrations:

- Health and Recovery Services (Medicaid non-emergency medical trips)
- Aging and Disability Services
- Economic Services
- Children's Administration
- Juvenile Rehabilitation
- Vocational Rehabilitation

Medicaid Non-Emergency Medical Transportation

- Administered by DSHS
- Federal requirement to provide access to authorized medical services for Medicaid-eligible persons
- In Washington, services provided through a brokerage arrangement

8 Medicaid brokers statewide



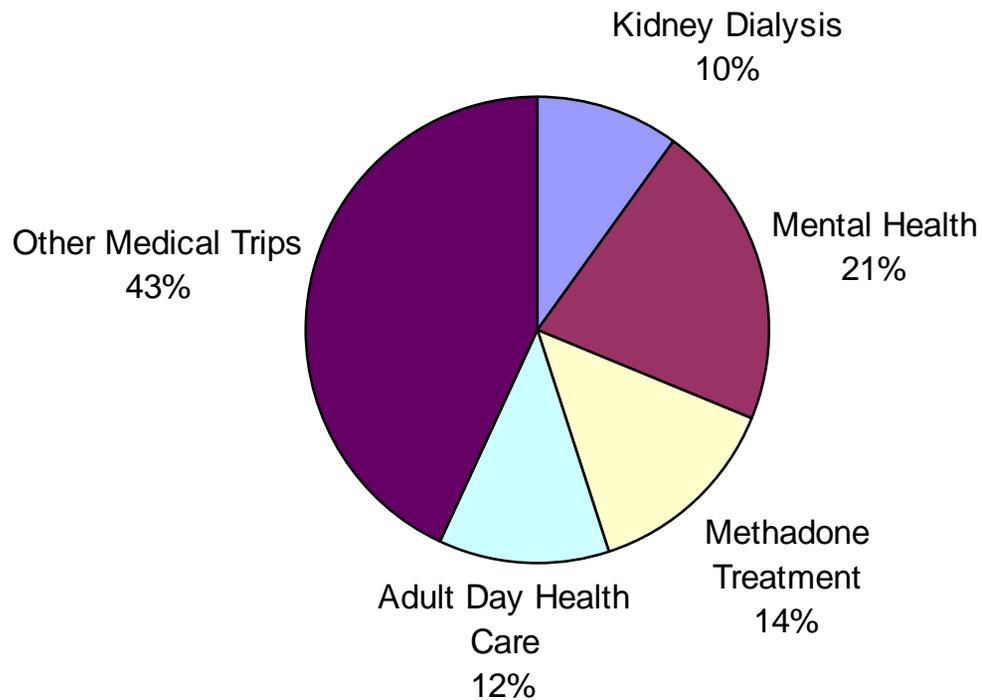
Brokers' Roles and Responsibilities

- Operation of toll-free telephone number for scheduling services
- Evaluation and verification of client eligibility, provided service coverage, and appropriate level of transportation
- Contract for and monitor transportation and interpreter services

Medicaid Transportation: Funding

- 50% federal Medicaid, 50% state funds
- \$65.5 million expended annually (FY 2006)
- Includes both direct services and administrative fees
- Average cost per trip: \$20

Types of Medicaid Trips



Other Human Service Agencies

- Identification of specific agencies still under investigation
- Not all agencies track expenditures for transportation
- No central clearinghouse or inventory to identify relevant agencies
- Project goal—identify state or federal programs that authorize use of their funds for client transportation

Sources of Funds for Social Service Programs

- Medicaid—federal Title 19
- Medicaid—state
- Older Americans Act
- OTHER? Exact number, sources, and funding amounts is unknown
- According to GAO, 60+ federal agencies sponsor transportation

Pupil Transportation: 3 categories

- Basic transportation to and from school
- Special transportation to and from school
 - Students with a disability or condition that requires transportation to specialized facilities
 - Students in special education programs
 - Homeless students to “school of origin”
- Other transportation
 - Field trips, athletics etc.

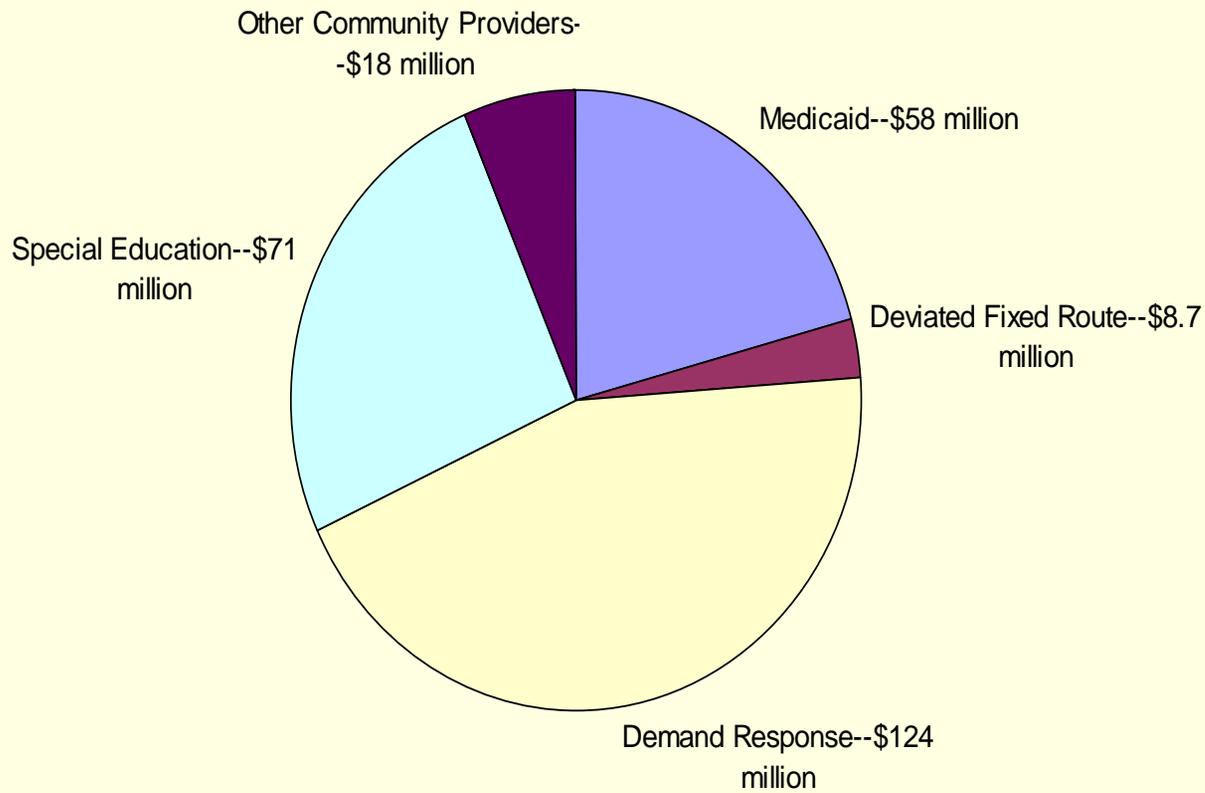
Pupil Transportation: Funding

- Over \$300 million annually spent on basic transportation
- State responsible for funding basic transportation
- Transportation costs covered 2/3 by State and 1/3 by local funds
- State allocation provides an addition \$40 million annually for vehicle procurements

Pupil Transportation: Special Programs

- Special program allocations are about 1/3rd of total allocations
- Special program allocations growing at a faster rate than basic program allocations

2005 Specialized Transportation Funding Snapshot: \$280 million



Coordination Barriers: Customer's Perspective

- Confusing and inconsistent eligibility standards for various programs
- (Often) no clearinghouse to find out about options
- Travel across county lines is difficult and time consuming, especially if a transfer is involved
- Social service caseworkers don't always know full range of mobility options

Coordination Barriers

- Funding restrictions—funds often dedicated to one client group with “strings” attached
- Vehicle requirements aren’t always compatible for mixing clients
- Insurance costs, or concerns about liability prevent coordination
- Inconsistent driver requirements

Coordination Barriers, cont.

- Inconsistent planning and reporting requirements for transportation and human service agencies
- Unique customer needs don't always allow for grouping passengers
- Contract or labor union restrictions sometimes limit flexibility

Coordination Opportunities

- Build on local coordination planning and coalitions
- WSDOT—flexible funding and consolidated grant program
- Economic climate is renewing interest in coordination
- Medicaid Brokerage Infrastructure

Next Steps

- Conduct additional stakeholder interviews
- Convene workshop with disability advocates and other customer groups
- Investigate further state and federally funded human service programs that sponsor transportation
- Develop 4 case studies to examine issues in more detail (Snohomish, Yakima, Lincoln, Pierce Counties)
- Identify and describe best practices

Study Content:

Policy issues, goals and expected outcomes

- What is “coordination” and what is the state’s role in coordination?
 - Coordination covers a broad spectrum of activities
 - Identify how current programs coordinate with one another.
 - What is an appropriate level of coordination?
 - What is the needed role of the state in coordination?

Barriers to Coordination:

- Efficiency versus quality of service — how best to balance these sometimes competing objectives?
- What prevents providers from coordinating?
- Inter-jurisdictional travel — Goal is to make travel between jurisdictions as seamless for transit customers as it is for auto drivers.
- What is the appropriate state role?
- How much emphasis should be placed on coordinating pupil transportation?

Location of Facilities

- Location of facilities to serve people with special needs is an indirect barrier.
- Intend to present “best practices” and “problem practices” from “case study” counties.
- What factors influence facility site decisions? Inexpensive real estate, local zoning codes, ease of development, attitude, “if we build it, they (public transportation) will come.”
- What would it take to encourage—or mandate—changes to the current processes?

Record Keeping and Reporting Requirements

- Document current procedures
- Agencies providing or needing transportation are not required to keep specific records or report transportation as an activity.
- Provide examples of best practices in record keeping and reporting.
- What would it take to streamline recordkeeping procedures at the state level?

Best Practices:

- The Medicaid broker model provides opportunity to provide a variety of services under one umbrella—could this concept be further developed, understanding it may, or may not, include public transit?
- What are some service delivery models relevant to this study? Pittsburgh ACCESS, others.
- What are some models of statewide coordination councils? How are they structured, what are their mandates, how effective are they?
- What would it take to apply these models to Washington State?

Recommendations:

- Blueprint to identify a series of actions intended to promote coordination.
- How should these actions be implemented?