

Comments on Special Needs Transportation Study

Commenter	Representing	Comment
Christie Scheffer	Paratransit Services (WA State Brokers)	<p>The response includes both recommendations and comments regarding consultant recommendations. They propose to enhance the current brokerage system. Concerns include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Restructuring DSHS Medicaid program threatens to disrupt a mature system; well-functioning coordination of special needs transportation services could be lost during restructuring. 2. The suggested replacement of experienced brokers with new entities will result in a learning-curve slowdown of existing services, cause significant startup delays and costs, and extend the timeline for implementation or coordinated program. 3. The bi-level coordination has additional layers that will hinder, rather than facilitate efforts to achieve statewide coordination. 4. The proposed LCB-CAM structure will be more costly than working within existing system. 5. Funding that now directly supports services to clients will be diverted to support administrative hierarchy. 6. Restructuring will not result in more service, or better service, for the State's special needs population.
Marge Tully	Pierce County Coordinated Transportation Coalition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -PCCTC suggests that ACCT receive funding for several pilot projects to test different approaches for coordinating Medicaid and public transit -More detailed information should be gathered regarding methods of cost sharing and types of scheduling software used in successful coordination projects -PCCTC supports recommendation to explore feasibility of expanding Medicaid program beyond medical trips -PCCTC supports recommendation to create a clearinghouse for driver background checks and for enhancing coordination with pupil transportation -PCCTC does not support establishing local coordinating boards using Medicaid service area when defining regions; this could lead to another layer of bureaucracy and higher costs -Rather than deconstructing the existing system, the PCCTC suggests redefining the responsibilities of the organizations, if necessary. -PCCTC also has concerns about the "super-broker" model, which is consolidating, not coordination -Acknowledge that recommendations may lead to a fiscal burden -Does not support recommendation 5a that requires all state and local agencies purchase special needs transportation to contribute to the support of ACCT.

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Lynn Moody	CTA-NW (14 members)	<p>CTA-NW surveyed its members on the proposed recommendations in the draft Final Report. Highlights include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -ACCT: 79% support strengthening ACCT's role as statewide oversight body -Bi-level coordination: 69% do NOT support establishing local coordinating boards and community access managers -DSHS Brokers: 90% support further coordination of public transit and Medicaid services; 69% support requiring all state agencies, not only Medicaid, to purchase transportation through regional broker -Areas of 100% consensus: 6. Improve service connectivity for customers, 6c. Develop, test and implement technology that can promote connectivity, 6d, Eliminate artificial barriers that force transfers, 7a. Take accessibility into account as an operating cost when comparing potential sites.
Kevin Desmond	King County Metro Transit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Would like to include additional information/data about public transit to understand the provision and funding of special transportation services within Washington -Agrees that coordination can enable communities to stretch limited funding, but not that it saves money -Concern about adding an additional layer of administration and duplicating existing planning and oversight functions -Suggests adding service standards as a barrier to coordination (p. 4-9) -If there is a local entity charged with transportation responsibilities regarding coordination, it should reside within an existing transit agency serving the area. -Says that there would be a duplication of effort for ACCT to assume an oversight role in the use of local funding. -Metro supports redefining the regions to align with the transportation planning regions and suggests using the existing coordination councils. -Metro is open to discussions with DSHS in forming a joint brokerage. -Clarification is needed about the commitment of DSHS to the report's recommendation for coordination. Metro supports the concept of coordination between public transit and Medicaid services. -P. 9-7, Requiring agencies to contribute to ACCT--For this requirement to make sense, purchasers need to know that they will realize efficiencies and have their funds go further by coordinating.
Karl Johanson	Broker/Provider speaking as individual	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Chapter 9 needs to make it clear that the Community Access Managers can also be a provider and the RFP/contracting process needs to give weight to existing coordinated multiple funding recipients. 2. AAA funds should be siphoned off at the Governor's level. The amount should be the historical percentage that local planning processes allocated to transportation which is one of the highest priorities for OAA funding. 3. Make it clear that a Local Coordinating Board (LCB) is, in fact, "advisory". 4. Statement 2-3 on page 9-4 contradicts flow chart (9-3). 5. Siting problems are: (a) placing a DD resident in an existing group home that does not have easy access to mobility services, (b) Placing that same client in a job that requires after-hours transportation services, (c) Requiring the client to participate in support services, e.g., group counseling at a time when mobility services are not available and/or do not link between job or residence.
Faith Trimble	private consultant	Weakest area was in school transportation section. Report says limited opportunities, but Trimble says that there are plenty. Agrees that policy changes may be in order, but that under a more coordinated umbrella those changes could happen.