



Community Transport

Transport and Community Needs

Groups with limited mobility can look to local governments to provide some means of transport.

Local governments often find that community members are unable to get to local services and activities due to transport unavailability. In addition, community planning work can highlight lack of transport as a major community issue.

Service Provision

To alleviate isolation and facilitate access, many local governments either provide a community bus service or coordinate with a local provider. These services are funded to some extent by the Federal Health and Community Care (HACC) allowance which is available for frail, elderly, those with disabilities and their carers. A portion of this funding can be allocated for transport to essential services, which usually takes the form of community transport as either a bus or system of volunteer drivers. Local governments often either act as providers or support other providers to undertake this service and may inject resources to extend the service to a wider market. However funding limitations usually mean that such services are heavily restricted.

Funding

Subsidy arrangements do not accommodate younger non drivers, particularly secondary and tertiary level students and first job employees or apprentices. The shortage of public transport in rural situations often places additional pressure on local governments to provide access and relieve isolation. Current subsidy arrangements do not accommodate transport needs of geographically isolated groups who do not have private car access; young school leavers fall into this category.

The value of community provision is in providing a flexible need responsive service. However, locally provided transport can diminish support for existing state provided services and threaten the market for other local providers such as taxis.

Local governments are best positioned to take a more integrated approach to local provision and take account of all forms of transport available in the community, recognising the value of the various commercial, state and local service opportunities and mobility benefits.