

WISCONSIN ASSOCIATION OF MOBILITY MANAGERS

NEW DIRECTIONS IN TRANSPORTATION
FEDERAL PRIORITIES 2020



WAMM SUPPORTS KEY ACTIONS THAT WILL CREATE LASTING CHANGE TO IMPROVE SPECIALIZED TRANSPORTATION



PROTECT NON-EMERGENCY MEDICAL TRANSPORTATION

Uphold the requirement for States to offer transportation to all Medicaid beneficiaries.



CREATE AN INCENTIVE FOR CHARITABLE DRIVING

Increase the charitable driving reimbursement rate.



HELP MOBILITY MANAGERS SERVE THOSE NEEDING TRANSPORTATION

Increase funding for the FTA Section 5310 program for capital or operating assistance.

PROTECT NON-EMERGENCY MEDICAL TRANSPORTATION

THE SITUATION

Non-Emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT) is a benefit that provides Medicaid beneficiaries with rides to Medicaid covered services. Medicaid provides healthcare and long-term care for low income individuals playing a critical role for the economically disadvantaged, children with special healthcare needs, and adults with disabilities. This service is an essential component of our Nation's healthcare delivery system, especially in rural areas. Over half of all Medicaid transportation services are utilized by patients with the highest burden of chronic diseases. Without this service, many would be unable to access vital medical treatments and services that allow them to remain at home and out of costly hospital and nursing home placements.

The NEMT benefit has been in place since Medicaid's inception and has been upheld in the Courts. The elimination of the benefit could lead to inconsistent and unequal access to health services for some of the most vulnerable Americans.

THE FIX

WAMM supports a two-pronged approach to protecting Non-Emergency Medical Transportation - 1) Prevent CMS from publishing a rule that would make NEMT optional at the state level. 2) Write the NEMT benefit into Medicaid Statute.

INCENTIVIZE CHARITABLE DRIVING

THE SITUATION

Volunteer driver programs play a key role in the transportation network for older adults, people with disabilities, Veterans, and individuals living in rural areas, who otherwise would not be able to reach medical appointments, obtain groceries, get to Job Centers or Division of Vocational Rehabilitation appointments, and other essential services. In some cases, volunteer driver programs are the only option for the rider. Current law allows for reimbursement of volunteers on a nontaxable basis up to the charitable mileage rate of \$0.14 per mile. Unlike the business and medical/moving rate, which are regulated by the IRS and adjusted to account for the increasing cost of operating a vehicle, the charitable rate can only be adjusted through the legislative process. Even though volunteers experience these same increasing costs, the charitable mileage reimbursement rate has not been adjusted since 1997.

THE FIX

Raise the charitable driving reimbursement rate for the first time in over 20 years to equal the current standard business mileage.

HELP MOBILITY MANAGERS SERVE THOSE NEEDING TRANSPORTATION

THE SITUATION

Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act is set to expire on September 30th, 2020. This Act was the first Federal law in over a decade to provide long-term funding certainty for surface transportation infrastructure planning and investment. The FAST Act includes the Section 5310 program, Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities, which provides funds for transportation services for those who are unable to be served by more conventional public transit and paratransit programs.

Section 5310 funding is used for capital and operating projects that improve the mobility of seniors and persons with disabilities. This specialized transportation program helps fund the acquisition of buses and vans and other capital assets, supports mobility management and travel training programs, and helps expand the accessibility of transportation services. Each year, funding requests for this competitive grant far exceeds funds available. This is expected to continue and increase as more communities realize the benefit of mobility management, grow services, and need replacement vehicles.

THE FIX

WAMM asks Congress to authorize predictable, sustainable growth of this program and to increase the FTA Section 5310 funding and to continue to allow funds to be used for either capital assistance or operating assistance.