

Accessible COVID-19 Vaccination Transportation in Toronto, Canada

Geography and scale:	Residents of the city of Toronto, Canada.	Involved actors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Toronto • Toronto Public Health • Community Organizations (Toronto Ride, iRide, Scarborough Ride) • Toronto's Accessibility Task Force on COVID-19 Vaccines • Uber
Type of disability:	Any type of disability	

Best practice description

The Accessible COVID-19 Vaccination program allows people with disabilities and those over 75 years of age to request free, accessible transportation to COVID-19 vaccination clinics. Individuals are eligible if they "are frail or have underlying conditions which make them at greater risk from COVID-19 and/or unable to safely access other modes of public transportation". The program is available to residents of Toronto if they meet the criteria and have an appointment at a city-run or health partner clinic. Community partners have been selected to ensure those who need to be vaccinated will be reached and Uber has donated \$150,000 CAD of vouchers to community organizations. Metro and bus passes were also given to those who could take public transport but could not afford it.

Origin / impetus for best practice

- Limited accessible transport options in Toronto city.
- Recognition that some individuals may not be comfortable using public transport because of their risk status, but need accessible and affordable transport to and from the vaccination centres.
- Input from people with disabilities on Toronto's Accessibility Task Force on COVID-19 Vaccines and their desire to remove barriers to vaccination.

Impact / results of implementing best practice

- Increased accessibility of vaccination.
- Reduced financial barriers to vaccination.

Critical success factors for best practice

- Political will to remove barriers to vaccination.
- Involvement of community organizations.
- Strong disability involvement and dedicated accessibility task-force.
- Health equity considerations that included disability.

Impact statement

"At the City of Toronto, we are committed to ensuring that every resident in every area of in this city can easily access a COVID-19 vaccine when it's their turn. To make this possible, we have adopted a Team Toronto approach that builds on partnerships and active collaborations and delivers on-the-ground support. The Vaccine Equity Transportation Plan is a great example of working together to help our community and remove barriers to accessing vaccines." – Councillor Joe Cressy (Spadina-Fort York), Chair of the Toronto Board of Health

Lessons learned

- Importance of disability representation on task forces and equitable, accessible approaches to COVID-19 response programs.
- Incorporating multiple accessible modalities of transport (i.e. public, private) and partnerships are key to reach individuals with disabilities.

Sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ontario Extending Free Rides to Vaccination Sites for People with Mobility Issues 	Further links & information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Toronto's Vaccine Equity Program • Backgrounder on Toronto's Accessibility Task Force on COVID-19 Vaccination
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