

Volunteer Drivers in the Greater Victoria Area

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Efforts are underway throughout British Columbia to create communities in which people of all ages and levels of ability can engage and access services to enhance their quality of life. In the Greater Victoria area, transportation has been identified as an issue, particularly with respect to older adults and persons with disabilities. While many older adults remain safe to drive well into later life, some will need to retire from driving, primarily for reasons of impaired health. People with significant health challenges may require “supportive transportation” that includes assistance outside the vehicle (e.g., escorting the person into their destination, waiting with the person at the destination). One way such support is offered within the Greater Victoria area is through service organizations that provide volunteer drivers.

Volunteers from the James Bay Community Project, Saanich Volunteer Services Society, and Capital City Volunteers were interviewed in person or by telephone regarding their experiences as volunteer drivers as well as their perceptions of the positive and negative aspects of this involvement.

Significant motivators for becoming volunteer drivers included beneficence (i.e., being able to help someone in need), a desire to engage in a pleasurable experience (i.e., driving) and possibly one that utilized skills (e.g., first aid qualification), and a desire to meet new people. Selected challenges that were raised included the difficult reality of assisting individuals with complex care issues, the physical demands of managing assistive devices (e.g., walkers and wheelchairs), scheduling issues, and time spent waiting for clients.

In terms of attracting new volunteer drivers and improving the experience, respondents recommended highlighting the many ways in which providing this service benefits those in need within the community and benefits the drivers. Being able to meet new people, to engage in something they find enjoyable (e.g., driving), and to make a palpable difference to the lives of others were some of the messages they wished to convey to others. The volunteer drivers felt appreciated by the service agencies and the ride recipients. Suggestions for recruitment and retention of drivers included a mentoring program to connect novice and senior volunteer drivers, and inviting people with driving and health care–related experience to become involved as they may wish to continue to exercise their skills in a new, very rewarding way.

INTRODUCTION

Volunteer Drivers

Why Volunteer Drivers?

Efforts are underway throughout British Columbia to create communities in which people of all ages and levels of ability can engage and access services to enhance their quality of life (BC Healthy Communities, bchealthycommunities.ca). In Victoria, Saanich, and other municipalities on southern Vancouver Island, transportation is an identified issue, particularly with respect to older adults and persons with disabilities (Allan & McGee, 2003). Continued challenges are likely to be seen as the demographic profile of this region continues to age. In 2009, 18.7% of the population of this region was aged 65 years and older and this is expected to double by 2026 (BC Statistics, Populations Projections retrieved June 2015).

While many older adults remain safe to drive well into later life, some will need to retire from driving primarily for reasons of impaired health. Alternative transportation options such as public transit and private taxi exist, however, these options can be difficult for individuals already facing many health issues (Kerschner & Rousseau, 2008). People with significant health challenges may require “supportive transportation” that includes assistance outside the vehicle (e.g., escorting the person into their destination, waiting with the person at the destination). Such support is provided within Victoria and Saanich through private transportation services and through organizations that offer volunteer drivers, a “low cost and low maintenance” approach to providing life-sustaining and life-enriching connections within the community.

Regardless of the type of volunteering in which people engage, volunteers provide valuable time to their organizations. The process through which agencies secure a happy, long-term commitment can differ depending on the skill set and background of volunteers and their reasons for volunteering.

AGENCY DETAILS

James Bay Community Project

James Bay Community Project (JBCP) is a non-profit community organization with a volunteer Board of Directors that helps seniors, youth, and families by providing counselling services, community support, and volunteer services. The programs and services offered seek to improve community, family, and individual health through a variety of programs and services for all ages. JBCP provides diverse opportunities for volunteerism and participation in community life by coordinating 300 volunteers, and works in partnership with many other agencies and organizations. As well as other types of assistance, volunteers provide assisted drives for seniors and people with disabilities.

Capital City Volunteers

Capital City Volunteers (CCV), operated under the auspices of the James Bay Community Project with governance by a CCV Board of Directors, recruits volunteers to provide services to seniors and adults with disabilities that will allow them to maintain their independence and continue living in their own homes for as long as possible. This is achieved through the services of an Outreach Worker as well as a number of volunteers.

Saanich Volunteer Services Society

Saanich Volunteer Services Society was founded in the fall of 1992 and began operation with initial funding from the Municipality of Saanich. The Volunteer Services Sub-Committee of Healthy Saanich 2000 and the Victoria Volunteer Bureau identified the need for one-to-one volunteer services in Saanich. The Society meets these needs by matching trained volunteers with Saanich residents of all ages who request service. The Society provides high quality volunteer training to volunteers, all of whom provide their volunteer service without remuneration. One of the services provided is drives to medical and other appointments in the Greater Victoria area. This service is limited to one drive per week, and individuals in wheelchairs must be able to transfer.

METHODS

Purpose

Volunteer drivers provide an essential service and make valuable contributions to the organizations with which they are involved. To maintain a satisfied and productive staff of volunteers, agencies must understand their motivations and needs. The Executive Director of the James Bay Community Project approached the Director of the Centre on Aging at the University of Victoria to jointly undertake a project to describe the characteristics and qualities of volunteer drivers (who drive seniors to medical appointments), and to understand the facilitators and barriers to engage in this activity. This project was extended to involve drivers from Saanich Volunteer Services Society and Capital City Volunteers as well.

Procedure



METHODS

Questions

The Executive Director and Coordinator of Volunteers of the James Bay Community Project met with the Director and Research Coordinator from the Centre on Aging at the University of Victoria to design a project to describe the characteristics and qualities of volunteer drivers (who drive seniors to medical appointments), and to understand the facilitators and barriers to engage in this activity. These meetings involved providing details about the volunteer driver program, as well as other programs carried out by the James Bay Community Project.

The specific questions to be asked were derived from these consultations, and through additional meetings held with Saanich Volunteer Services Society, and were expected to address the needs of the associations (see Appendix A).

General Guiding Questions for the Proposed Project:

- What prompts people to become involved as a volunteer driver? What are the most rewarding or positive aspects of being a volunteer driver?
- What are the obstacles or challenges associated with being a volunteer driver?
- Do volunteer drivers feel prepared to perform the service (i.e., adequately trained)?
- What might be attractive to or facilitate the recruitment of new volunteer drivers?
- How could the volunteer driver program be improved? What strategies could be used to enhance the volunteer driver program?

METHODS

Methodology

With input and assistance from the executive directors and coordinators of volunteers of the James Bay Community Project, Capital City Volunteers, and Saanich Volunteer Services, and representatives from the Centre on Aging, a questionnaire (see Appendix B) was designed to explore the motivations and needs of volunteer drivers. The questionnaire was reviewed and approved by the executive directors of these community organizations.

Before data collection commenced the volunteer agencies sent out a letter (see Appendix A) to all current and past volunteer drivers informing them of the option to participate in the study.

Interviews were carried out face-to-face ($n = 4$) or by telephone ($n = 11$). Following consent (signed for face-to-face; verbal for telephone; see Appendices C and D, respectively) from the volunteers, interviews were recorded to ensure that no details were missed. Interviews lasted from 30 to approximately 90 minutes depending on the depth of information that the volunteer chose to disclose to the interviewer. In total, 15 interviews were completed between the months of March and April, 2014. See Appendix E for descriptive information about the volunteer drivers.

Following the completion of data collection, each interview was transcribed and patterns of responses were examined.

RESULTS

Data and Findings

Why Volunteer? What are the most rewarding or positive aspects of being a volunteer driver?

Beneficence, or wanting to assist another person in need, was the main motivator for involvement as a volunteer driver. Many people noted that they also volunteered in other capacities at other points in their lives. Volunteer drivers expressed an interest in wanting to make a difference in the lives of people living in their community with a need for the services they could provide. Others were simply looking for a way to contribute to their community.

A desire to engage in something they find enjoyable (i.e., driving) and possibly utilize existing skills (e.g., first aid qualification) was the second most common motivator for involvement as a volunteer driver. Some had been professional drivers and others had been working within the health care field before becoming a volunteer driver. They brought with them their previous training as well as a familiarity with the region and the challenges faced by people with significant health concerns. These individuals viewed the volunteer position as providing opportunities for them to exercise some of their career-related abilities.

A third motivator for volunteering as a driver was a desire to meet new people. Meeting others with diverse backgrounds and histories, engaging socially while driving, and developing new relationships were identified by many as the most rewarding aspects of being a volunteer driver. It was noted that most people receiving rides were generally very thankful and expressed their appreciation to the drivers. The volunteer drivers indicated that being able to provide this service to those in need brought them a sense of accomplishment and reward.

Some volunteer drivers found that route learning and exploring the locations of offices and residential neighbourhoods were interesting and helpful to them in their own daily lives.

RESULTS

Data and Findings, continued

Challenges Associated with Volunteering as a Driver

Some of the aspects of volunteering as a driver that were perceived as possible challenges for new or future volunteers included breakdowns in communication between the agency and the driver, or managing particularly difficult or demanding situations with clients.

Although not a frequent occurrence, at times, volunteer drivers felt unheard or devalued when they had informed the agency of physical limitations that precluded them from lifting assistive devices, such as walkers or wheelchairs, but then were assigned someone with an assistive device. Similarly, some vehicles can be difficult for some clients to enter or exit, and assigning a client with major mobility limitations to the driver of such a vehicle can be problematic for all concerned. The availability of the volunteer driver is an important consideration when scheduling. Some prefer to be kept very busy on their selected days, while others prefer providing fewer rides and having greater flexibility.

Some volunteer drivers noted the difficult reality of working with individuals with significant health challenges. Sometimes boundary issues arose with clients who did not understand the limitations of the volunteer drivers' roles and who had unreasonable expectations of what volunteers were able to do for them. For individuals without a background in health care or a related profession, learning how to manage these unrealistic expectations can be challenging and not all volunteers have the interpersonal qualities required. Other times, volunteer drivers mentioned clients who seemed unappreciative, ill-tempered, or difficult to please. Knowing how to handle these situations, and to whom to express concerns, was noted as an issue.

A few volunteer drivers noted that traffic conditions (at particular times of day) and that waiting for clients can be very frustrating. Others noted that not having enough clients to fill their day was discouraging to them.

RESULTS

Data and Findings, continued

Do volunteer drivers feel prepared to perform the service (i.e., adequately trained)?

Many volunteer drivers who were interviewed noted that they received no training. Some felt no training is needed and others reported that the training could have been better with respect to techniques for assisting people into and out of vehicles, communicating with people who have limitations, providing a refresher on safety issues, and route planning. Others characterized the training as more of a discussion about the roles of volunteer drivers, guidelines for assisting people into and out of the vehicle, protection for seats, confidentiality, and insurance issues. However, it was noted that training could be time consuming, and this time might be better spent providing the service.

What would make the volunteer driver program more attractive to potential volunteers?

The volunteer drivers suggested that highlighting the ways in which providing this service helps people in need might make it more attractive to potential volunteers. They noted that many of the people receiving the service may not be able to attend appointments without door-to-door service and assistance. By providing the service, the volunteer driver is able to make a palpable difference within his or her community. The recipients of this service truly appreciate the efforts made on their behalf and are very interesting and engaging people in their own rights. Many volunteer drivers reported that the opportunity for social engagement contributes to their enjoyment of providing this service and others may also find this appealing. Certainly, for those who enjoy people and driving, this may be a good fit. Other features that may attract volunteers are the flexible scheduling and the availability of reimbursement for gasoline. It was also suggested that having a small van available for volunteer drivers to use may help overcome some of the challenges experienced by drivers when assisting ride recipients to enter and exit vehicles.

It was suggested that enhanced advertising, perhaps with the assistance of someone with marketing experience, may attract more volunteers. In addition, a public event that extended an invitation to community members to come and hear about the opportunities available for them was also forwarded as a possible strategy for increasing interest in volunteering. Some groups may be targeted for invitation such as professional drivers and people with experience in health-related fields (e.g., retired individuals or those looking for volunteer opportunities) as these people may already possess or be familiar with many of the skills required.

RESULTS

Data and Findings, continued

How could the volunteer driver program be improved? What strategies could be used to enhance the volunteer driver program?

In general, the volunteer drivers felt that the programs were very well run and that they were welcomed and very supported by the agencies involved. They believe that the agencies make a difference to the community through the volunteer driver and other programs, and they are proud to be affiliated with these agencies.

The areas identified for improvement mirrored the challenges experienced by the volunteer drivers. Specifically, issues concerning communication between the agency and the volunteer driver (e.g., about desired workload, physical capabilities of the drivers) were viewed as important for volunteer retention and developing a sense of belonging.

Ensuring repeated opportunities for education that can address techniques for assisting people into and out of vehicles, communicating with all kinds of people, a refresher on safety issues, and route planning were identified as key. Similarly, having the opportunity to learn about assistive devices and the best ways to manage them on behalf of the service recipient was noted as important. Central to any education for new volunteer drivers is an appreciation of the roles of the driver and the time needed to assist people with mobility concerns into and out of the vehicle, into the appointment (if needed), and waiting for the person to complete their visit. Many people become anxious about arriving on time, so ensuring the new volunteers are aware of these concerns is paramount. Another concern that was expressed by the volunteer drivers was what to do in case of emergency and who to contact. For example, if someone needs to be taken to emergency at the hospital, who should be notified? Should the driver stay with the person until a determination about hospitalization is made?

It was also suggested that new volunteers reflect on what they expect of the experience and to be open and warm toward the ride receiver. Another suggestion was that of establishing a mentoring program in which new volunteer drivers could speak with a more senior volunteer driver should or when they have questions or concerns.

CONCLUSIONS

What's Working?

Expectations Regarding Volunteer Time Commitment

Research has identified time and location restrictions as the main barriers for volunteerism in older adulthood. After retirement, individuals quickly find ways to fill their time and are more likely to have the flexibility and resources for travel relative to individuals who are pre-retirement. The agencies involved with volunteer drivers have circumvented these barriers by allowing their volunteers to involve themselves as little (or as much) as they like with their program, and allowing volunteers the freedom to take leaves of absence.

Educational Aspects of Volunteer Training

Those volunteers who took part in the training opportunities found them very useful and the areas covered seemed to be those identified as important by volunteer drivers who had not received training.

Volunteer Appreciation

Generally, volunteers feel well appreciated by the agencies involved and the ride recipients, and are happy with their involvement with the program. Many interviewees stressed the fact that satisfaction and enjoyment are important for retaining volunteers, and expressing appreciation for the work that volunteers put into their programs is an important way for organizations to ensure that they find their work rewarding. Based on responses, it appears that each agency involved with volunteer drivers does an excellent job of making volunteers feel appreciated.

CONCLUSIONS

Summary

Volunteers involve themselves with the driving programs for many different reasons. In our interviews the desire to make a difference in their community emerged as a main motivator for volunteers, but they have other incentives as well, including personal enjoyment of driving, the social interaction that takes place with the ride recipients, and for some, the desire to continue making use of the abilities that they acquired over the course of their careers. These secondary incentives for volunteering should be recognized, and organizations may be able to capitalize on them to meet the needs of the volunteers, the program, and the service recipients.

The volunteer activities that people seek out depend on whether they wish to continue with what they know or as a way of exploring newer interests in more depth. Further, volunteers differ in the amount of “work” that they plan to invest in their volunteer activity and the amount of time that they hope to spend socializing and engaging with others. It should be acknowledged that issues related to volunteer retention and satisfaction that emerged from the volunteer drivers are similar to those faced by other volunteer programs. Unique to the volunteer driving programs is the need for ‘supportive transportation’ that involves not only transport from one place to another but engaging in a relationship with the ride recipient.

REFERENCES

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BC Statistics, Population Projections. Retrieved June, 2015, from <http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/StatisticsBySubject/Demography/PopulationProjections.aspx>.

Kerschner, H., & Rousseau, M-H. (2008). Volunteer drivers: Their contributions to older adults and to themselves. *Gerontology & Geriatrics Education*, 29, 383-397. doi:10.1080/02701960802497969

APPENDIX A

Invitation Letter

Service Agency Project on Volunteer Drivers

Dear [Name of current or former volunteer driver],

As a current or former volunteer driver you are invited to participate in a research project designed to foster understanding of the facilitators and barriers associated with becoming or being a volunteer driver for older adults. The study is being conducted by Dr. Holly Tuokko, professor in the Department of Psychology and Director of the Centre on Aging, and Dr. Vincenza Gruppuso, Research Coordinator at the Centre on Aging, in collaboration with the James Bay Community Project, Capital City Volunteers, and Saanich Volunteer Services Society.

This research is expected to benefit the current state of knowledge in the field of volunteerism. Specific benefits may include an opportunity to talk about your experiences as a volunteer driver, and the opportunity for your experience and views to influence the recruitment of future volunteer drivers or an organization's ability to retain drivers who may assist the older adult population in Victoria, BC, or other communities.

Please note that confidentiality during the recruitment phase cannot be fully guaranteed as the volunteer driver coordinators and executive directors of the service agencies were instrumental in identifying potential participants. At this time, Drs. Tuokko and Gruppuso do not have any access to your name and contact information. We have provided this invitation letter for distribution to current or former volunteer drivers. After the invitation phase of the study, the volunteer driver coordinators and the executive directors will have no knowledge of those who agreed to participate as they are not involved in data collection.

If you consent to participate in this research, your participation will include a 30-45 minute interview with a University of Victoria (UVIC) research team member to be conducted in a convenient location of your choice or via telephone. With your permission, conversations will be audio-taped for ease of analysis of responses. Your responses will be coded with an identification number to ensure anonymity. Audio-recordings of the interview will be transcribed into written format and no identifying information will be linked to your responses. Your responses and information will be stored in a locked file cabinet in a locked office at the Centre of Aging, University of Victoria. Data stored on a computer will require a password to gain access. Only the UVIC research team affiliated with this study will have access to these data.

Your participation in this research must be completely voluntary. If you participate, you may withdraw from the study at any time without explanation. If you withdraw, your audio-taped interview and associated transcripts will be destroyed and not used in data analysis.

Please note that your participation in this research study, the content of your responses, or your withdrawal from the study will not result in repercussions or impact services from the James Bay Community Project, Capital City Volunteers, or Saanich Volunteer Services Society.


If you would like to participate or have any questions or concerns about the study, please contact Dr. Vincenza Gruppuso (vincenza@uvic.ca or (250) 472-5697).

In addition, you may verify the ethical approval of this study, or raise any concerns you may have, by contacting the Human Research Ethics Office at the University of Victoria (250-472-4545 or ethics@uvic.ca).

Sincerely,



Holly Tuokko, PhD, RPsych
Director, Centre on Aging
University of Victoria, PO Box 1700 STN CSC
Victoria, BC, Canada V8W 2Y2



Vincenza Gruppuso, PhD
Research Coordinator, Centre on Aging

APPENDIX B

Questionnaire

Service Agency Project on Volunteer Drivers

Interview Questions

The James Bay Community Project (JBCP), Capital City Volunteers (CCV), and Saanich Volunteer Services (SVS) are interested in understanding the experiences of the volunteer drivers in the volunteer driver programs. Because you are a current or former volunteer driver, you have the best understanding of this volunteer experience and ways in which it works well, or in which it might be improved. As mentioned earlier, your opinions and responses will be anonymous. Please feel free to provide your honest feedback.

- Tell me about your involvement as a volunteer driver with [Service Agency].
- How long have you been volunteering as a volunteer driver?
- What prompted you to volunteer? How did you become aware of [Service Agency] volunteer driver program?
- We all have expectations of new activities that we take on. Tell me about the hopes that you had when you first started volunteering as a volunteer driver. What did you expect to learn or experience by volunteering?
Probe: Have those expectations been met so far?
- What have you found to be the best of most rewarding parts of volunteering as a volunteer driver? **Probe:** How would you suggest that this be strengthened or made even better?
- Can you tell me some things about being a volunteer driver that might discourage people from volunteering or cause them to stop volunteering? **Probe:** Do you have any suggestions on ways in which [Service Agency] could work around this?
- Can you tell me some things about being a volunteer driver that can encourage people to volunteer or make volunteering more attractive? **Probe:** How do you think [Service Agency] could make these things even better?
- There is always room for improvement. What things have you found to be the least enjoyable or most problematic part of volunteering in the volunteer driver program at [Service Agency]. **Probe:** How do you think [Service Agency] could improve in these areas?
- Volunteering often involves learning new skills and doing things that may be new or unfamiliar. Can you share your thoughts about the training that you received for your program? **Probe:** How do you think the training could be improved?
- Looking to the future, how do you see your involvement as a volunteer driver continuing? What are your plans for the future regarding [Service Agency's] volunteer driver program?
- What advice would you have for someone who has just begun volunteering as a volunteer driver or who is thinking about volunteering?

I have a few questions remaining. These will assist us further to describe volunteer drivers.

- What is your current age?
- When did you first started volunteering (not necessarily driving)?
- How many hours per month do you spend volunteering as a volunteer driver?
- When did you first started volunteer driving?

[Interviewer: Please note gender of participant, Male, Female, or Transgendered (if participant discloses this information)]

-
- Is there anything else (anything at all) that you would like to share about your experience with [Service Agency's] volunteer driver program?

Those are all of the questions that I have for you. Do you have any questions or final comments for me?

It is possible that we will contact volunteers a second time with additional or more specific questions. Would you be willing to be contacted again?

Yes

No

Thank you very much for your feedback. It is valued by [Service Agency] and the University of Victoria.

APPENDIX C

Consent Form

Service Agency Project on Volunteer Drivers

You are invited to participate in a study conducted by Dr. Holly Tuokko, professor in the Department of Psychology and Director of the Centre on Aging, and Dr. Vincenza Gruppuso, Research Coordinator at the Centre on Aging in collaboration with the James Bay Community Project, Capital City Volunteers, and Saanich Volunteer Services Society.

Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of this research project is for researchers and current or former volunteer drivers to work closely together to understand the facilitators and barriers associated with becoming or being a volunteer driver for older adults.

Participant Selection

You are being asked to participate in this study because you are a current or former volunteer driver of the [Service Agency].

Importance and Benefits of this Research

Your participation in this research will benefit the current state of knowledge in the field of volunteerism. Specific benefits may include an opportunity to talk about your experiences as a volunteer driver, and the opportunity for your experience and views to influence the recruitment of future volunteer drivers or an organization's ability to retain drivers who may assist the older adult population in Victoria, BC, or other communities.

What is involved

If you consent to participate in this research, your participation will include a 30-45 minute interview with a research team member to be conducted in a convenient location of your choice or via telephone. Conversations will be audio-taped and transcribed for data analysis.

Inconvenience

You may be inconvenienced by having to devote time to attend the interview session. However, it is our intention to provide you with a positive, educational experience, and this may offset any inconvenience.

Risks

There are no known or anticipated risks to you by participating in this research.

Voluntary Participation

Your participation in this research must be completely voluntary. If you participate, you may withdraw from the study at any time without explanation. If you withdraw, your audio-taped interview and associated transcripts will be destroyed and not used in data analysis.

On-going Consent

You may want or need to complete the interview in two sessions rather than one. In this case, we will ask for your verbal consent to set up the additional session.

It is also possible that you may be contacted after completing the initial interview session(s) to arrange a new meeting in which we will ask additional or more specific questions relating to the study. If you are contacted again, you will be provided with a new consent form or verbal consent statement (in the case of a telephone interview) prior to this new meeting.

Anonymity

Your name will not be linked to your responses. They will be coded with an identification number to ensure anonymity. Audio-recordings of the interview will be transcribed into written format and no identifying information will be linked to your responses.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality during the recruitment phase cannot be fully guaranteed as the volunteer driver coordinator was instrumental in identifying potential participants. However, after the invitation phase of the study, the volunteer driver coordinator and the executive director will have no knowledge of those participants who agreed to participate. Your responses and information will be stored in a locked file cabinet in a locked office at the Centre of Aging, University of Victoria. Data stored on a computer will require a password to gain access. Only the university research team affiliated with this study will have access to these data.

Please note that your participation in this research study, the content of your responses, or your withdrawal from the study will not result in repercussions or impact services from the James Bay Community Project, Capital City Volunteers, or Saanich Volunteer Services.

Dissemination of Results

The results of this study may be used in scholarly papers for submission to journals for publication and presentations at academic conferences. In addition, results may be shared in class presentations at the University of Victoria. A summary of the results will be posted on the Centre on Aging website after the completion of the study. You may request a copy of this summary to be sent to you.

Disposal of Data

Data from this study will be disposed after 5 years: Transcripts will be shredded and audio recordings will be erased.

Contacts

If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, please contact Dr. Vincenza Gruppuso (vincenza@uvic.ca or (250) 472-5697).

In addition, you may verify the ethical approval of this study, or raise any concerns you may have, by contacting the Human Research Ethics Office at the University of Victoria (250-472-4545 or ethics@uvic.ca).

Your signature below indicates that you understand the above conditions of participation in this study, that you have had the opportunity to have your questions answered by the researchers, and that you consent to participate in this research project.

Name of Participant

Signature

Date

A copy of this consent will be left with you, and a copy will be taken by the researcher.

APPENDIX D

Verbal Consent Form

Service Agency Project on Volunteer Drivers Phone Interview

Script:

Hello, may I please speak with Mr./Ms. _____.

If the participant answers the phone, continue with the script. If there is no answer, try calling again at a later time.

This is _____, a member of the University of Victoria's Centre on Aging research team. We are conducting a study on volunteer drivers associated with the James Bay Community Project, Capital City Volunteers, or Saanich Volunteer Services Society. You expressed interest in participating in a telephone interview.

Before I describe the study, I want to inform you that if, at any time, you have any questions, comments, or concerns before or during the interview, if you choose to be interviewed, I will stop the session and provide you with the response or responses you need. If I am unable to address these, I will provide you with contact information for the University of Victoria researchers affiliated with this study: Dr. Tuokko or Dr. Gruppuso (htuokko@uvic.ca or (250) 721-6576; vincenza@uvic.ca or (250) 472-5697). In addition, if you want to verify the ethical approval of the study, you may contact the Human Research Ethics Office at the university. I will provide you with the contact information (250-472-4545 or ethics@uvic.ca).

I will read a description of the study and, once I'm finished, you will be asked whether or not you wish to be interviewed and have the conversation audio-taped.

The purpose of this research project is for researchers and current or former volunteer drivers to work closely together to understand the facilitators and barriers associated with becoming or being a volunteer driver for older adults.

You are being asked to participate in this study because you are a current or former volunteer driver with the [Service Agency].

Your participation in this research will benefit the current state of knowledge in the field of volunteerism. Specific benefits may include an opportunity to talk about your experiences as a volunteer driver, and the opportunity for your experience and views to influence the recruitment of future volunteer drivers or an organization's ability to retain drivers who may assist the older adult population in Victoria, BC, or other communities.

If you consent to participate in this research, your participation will include a 30-45 minute interview. Conversations will be audio-taped and transcribed for data analysis.

You may be inconvenienced by having to devote time for this interview session. However, it is our intention to provide you with a positive, educational experience, and this may offset any inconvenience.

There are no known or anticipated risks to you by participating in this research.

Your participation in this research must be completely voluntary. If you participate, you may withdraw from the study at any time without explanation. If you withdraw, your audio-taped interview and associated transcripts will be destroyed and not used in data analysis.

You may want or need to complete the interview in two sessions rather than one. In this case, we will ask for your verbal consent to set up the additional session.

It is also possible that you may be contacted after completing the initial interview session(s) to arrange a new meeting in which we will ask additional or more specific questions relating to the study. If you are contacted again, you will be provided with a new consent form or verbal consent statement (in the case of a telephone interview) prior to this new meeting.

Your name will not be linked to your responses. They will be coded with an identification number to ensure anonymity. Audio-recordings of the interview will be transcribed into written format and no identifying information will be linked to your responses.

Confidentiality during the recruitment phase cannot be fully guaranteed as the volunteer driver coordinator was instrumental in identifying potential participants. However, after the invitation phase of the study, the volunteer driver coordinator and the executive director of [Service Agency] will have no knowledge of those participants who agreed to participate. Your responses and information will be stored in a locked file cabinet in a locked office at the Centre of Aging, University of Victoria. Data stored on a computer will require a password to gain access. Only the university research team affiliated with this study will have access to these data.

Please note that your participation in this research study, the content of your responses, or your withdrawal from the study will not result in repercussions or impact services from [Service Agency].

The results of this study may be used in scholarly papers for submission to journals for publication and presentations at academic conferences. In addition, results may be shared in class presentations at the University of Victoria. A summary of the results will be posted on the Centre on Aging website after the completion of the study. You may request a copy of this summary to be sent to you.

Data from this study will be disposed after 5 years: Transcripts will be shredded and audio recordings will be erased.

Do you have any questions?

Do you agree to participate in the interview and have this conversation audio-taped?

YES NO

Name of the Participant:

Signature of researcher:

Date: _____

APPENDIX E

Description of Volunteer Drivers in this Study

Description of Volunteer Drivers in this Study

Length of Involvement:

Volunteering, in general:

Most of the people involved in this study reported that volunteering has been part of their lives for more than 15 years.

Volunteer Driving:

Volunteers reported lengths of involvement with volunteer driving from under a year to more than twenty-five years. The average for the 15 people interviewed was 6.5 years. The number of hours engaged in volunteer driving ranged from 2 to 18 hours per month with five people reporting less than 8 hours per month, four people reporting 8 hours per month, and six people reporting more than 8 hours per month.

Age of volunteer drivers:

The volunteer drivers were all aged 60 years and older:

Age (years)	Number of Drivers*
60-64	1
65-69	6
70-74	2
75-79	2
80-84	3

*A section of one of the recorded interviews was inadvertently destroyed during transcription resulting in a loss of some information.

Continued involvement with volunteer driving:

Most volunteers indicated that they would continue to volunteer as drivers until they were no longer able. Some of the older volunteers indicated that they planned to 'retire' from volunteer driving within the next few years.

