



PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release: June 17, 2016

STEPS partners with CSCAA and Seneca County to provide health-related transportation service.

Seneca Towns Engaging People for Solutions (STEPS) is partnering with the Cayuga-Seneca Community Action Agency (CSCAA) and Seneca County to provide a South County Transportation Corps (SCTC). Volunteer drivers will take residents of the towns of Covert, Lodi, Ovid, and Romulus to medical and dental appointments and other health-related destinations if they have no other means of transport.

The SCTC was designed through grassroots community planning by Paul Batman, Harold Bush, David Dresser, Jeffrey Frey and Meg Jastran, all residents of the STEPS neighborhood. The SCTC will fill a need not met by the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), which serves seniors 55 years of age or older, or by county and state transportation services that serve Medicaid-eligible individuals.

Drivers for the SCTC are all residents of the STEPS neighborhood. They include: Jim Anderson, Bill Braunig, Harold Bush, Mary Louise Church, Jean Currie, Gerard DeGaray, Deb DiLallo, David Dresser, Janet Lynch, Jeff Williams, and Gail Zabawski.

They will receive mileage reimbursement from the CSCAA at the federal rate of 54 cents per mile, the cost of which will be underwritten by Seneca County following action by its Board of Supervisors. Each driver has consented to criminal and driver background checks and will be afforded excess automobile liability insurance, the cost of which will be covered by a grant from the Greater Rochester Health Foundation (GRHF).

The SCTC program is funded for a trial period of six months, beginning July 1, 2016. If it proves successful, it is hoped that continued funding will be forthcoming from the GRHF, the CSCAA, and Seneca County. David Dresser, who has volunteered to serve as the SCTC's dispatcher through 2016, recently wrote:

“It was Seneca County Manager John Sheppard who put STEPS on the trail of the CSCAA. It is exciting to know that the Greater Rochester Health Foundation (GRHF) is also interested in the sustainability of the SCTC. Who knows, the program may someday go all-county, with SCTC then standing for the SENECA County Transportation Corps. This could become a model for other counties. That is my dream.”

Residents who need transportation to medical and dental appointments or other health related destinations now have options. Seniors 55 or older should call the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program at 315-665-0131. Medicaid-eligible citizens should call the Medicaid Answering Service at 1-866-753-4437. Other residents of the STEPS towns of Covert, Lodi, Ovid and Romulus may now call the South County Transportation Corps at 607-532-4891. One week advance notice is requested. Donations related to miles driven will be requested to help offset administrative costs.

The SCTC program is designed to remove transportation barriers to improved health outcomes. This STEPS project also provides an opportunity for residents to interact with their neighbors in a manner that will build relationships and a sense community.

STEPS is a S2AY Rural Health Network project made possible by a grant from the Greater Rochester Health Foundation. Anyone with questions about the project or how to get involved in community activities should contact the STEPS office by phone at (607) 403-0069 or by e-mail at stepscommunity@gmail.com.