



## Existing Transportation Providers

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### INTRODUCTION

Chapter IV provides an overview of the various transportation providers on the Crow Reservation. None of the providers reviewed here are “transit” agencies in the traditional sense of the word. Rather, the various agencies are entities that provide some type of passenger transportation (such as health-related transportation or elderly transportation). Many times agencies do not provide direct transportation services. However, the agencies may provide vouchers, tickets, passes, or some other transportation assistance. These financial resources are as important as identifying the actual agencies which physically transport people.

### CROW RESERVATION SENIOR CENTERS

#### Transportation Services

The Crow Reservation senior centers operate a nutrition (meal) program, a meals-on-wheels program, and other activities for seniors under Titles III and VI of the Older Americans Act. There are four senior centers on the Crow Reservation, with one center in each of the following communities—Crow Agency, Lodge Grass, Saint Xavier, and Pryor. The senior centers currently do not have any vehicles.

The meals-on-wheels program is operated with the use of employee (private) vehicles. The employees receive reimbursements for fuel and mileage costs. Since the program covers the entire Crow Reservation area, the trip lengths to deliver the meals can be high. About 270 meals-on-wheels are served each week, for a total of about 14,000 meals annually. About 5,000 meals per year are served at the senior centers.

The senior centers also transport the seniors to doctor appointments and other needs using private vehicles. The senior centers did not have information on the number of trips they provide to doctor appointments.

## **Transportation Operating Costs and Funding**

The overall cost of operating the transportation service for the Crow Reservation senior centers is about \$15,000 per year. Of this amount, about \$3,000 is the cost of the meal-on-wheels program. The remainder is the cost of transporting seniors to doctor appointments and other activities.

Funding for the transportation service is obtained from Titles III and VI federal grants. About 75 percent of the funding (\$11,250) is from Title VI grants, while 25 percent of the funding (\$3,750) is from Title III grants.

## **Transportation Needs**

The senior centers believe that their greatest transportation need is vehicles, with which the senior centers would be able to fulfill their obligations of Titles III and VI to transport seniors to the senior centers and other activities. The senior centers believe that they need three to five buses, preferably with one bus stationed at each of the senior centers on the Crow Reservation.

## **AKCC NURSING HOME**

### **Transportation Services**

AKCC Nursing Home is located on and operated by the Crow Reservation. The nursing home has about 40 to 45 beds. At this time, there are less than 35 patients at the nursing home.

The nursing home provides transportation services for the patients for all types of trip purposes (medical, shopping, etc.) 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The nursing home operates one five-passenger van and one 12-passenger bus. About 40,000 total vehicle-miles are traveled annually, with about 3,000 total vehicle-hours of operation annually. There are an estimated 4,800 trips (or 2,400 passengers) annually. Over 90 percent of the trips (4,320 trips) are for the elderly, and the remaining 10 percent of the trips (480 trips) are for people under 60 years of age.

## **Transportation Operating Costs and Funding**

The cost of operating the transportation service for the AKCC Nursing Home is about \$36,000 per year. This includes \$20,000 for salaries, \$10,000 over the past year for lift repairs and other maintenance, and \$6,000 for fuel and supplies.

The nursing home did not provide any information regarding funding or revenue sources.

## **Transportation Needs**

The AKCC Nursing Home has one 12-passenger bus purchased in 1995 and one five-passenger van purchased in 1998. Both of these vehicles are beyond their useful life and are in need of replacement.

## **COMMUNITY HEALTH REPRESENTATIVES (CHR)**

### **Transportation Services**

CHR operates three transportation services on the Crow Reservation. The first transportation service is for dialysis patients to and from their treatments, mostly in Billings, Montana and Sheridan, Wyoming with a few at the Crow Reservation Hospital. The Crow Reservation Hospital has limited staff for the dialysis program. CHR also provides transportation for CHR clients with referrals received through the Indian Health Services (IHS) to and from the drug abuse program in Cody, Wyoming. The second element of the transportation that CHR provides is to low-income families and youth for job training and other trips through IHS referrals. The agency also provides transportation for emergency medical technicians (EMT) and for First Responder training.

At this time, the CHR clients do not pay any fee or donation for the transportation service. The transportation service is paid for by CHR and through Indian Health Service (IHS) grants. The transportation service operates Monday through Saturday. The patients must leave at 6:00 a.m. and do not return home until 10:30 p.m. This is due to the limited transportation service and the booking process at the two major dialysis facilities. Transportation to and from the drug abuse program

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is provided on an as-needed basis. At this time, CHR does not provide Medicaid transport due to the billing process.

CHR operates four vans, three SUVs, one car, and one pickup truck. Three of the vehicles are stationed at Crow Agency, one vehicle is in Lodge Grass, and one vehicle is in Pryor. The vehicles do not have lifts or space for wheelchairs. Since the CHR vehicles are all eight-passenger vehicles or less, there is no need for commercial drivers' licenses.

### **Transportation Operating Costs and Funding**

The cost of the service as presented by CHR is \$170,430. This is only the cost for dialysis and IHS referrals trips. This cost covers salaries for 16 drivers and five General Services Administration (GSA) vehicles. Of this amount \$105,600 goes toward salaries, \$12,830 toward benefits, \$7,000 toward cell phone costs, and \$45,000 is in GSA leases. The cost for the diabetic transportation was not reported to LSC at this time.

At this time, CHR programs have not reported any revenue sources. They did state in the interviews that IHS grants and the Tribe fund the program, but provided no details on the breakdown of the revenue.

### **Transportation Needs**

At this time, there is a need for additional transportation service to Billings, Montana and Sheridan, Wyoming.

The CHR vehicles are leased through GSA so vehicle age is not an issue. The lease agreement covers the vehicle maintenance and other vehicle needs.

## **LITTLE BIG HORN COLLEGE**

### **Transportation Services**

Little Big Horn College is a two-year college located in Crow Agency, with about 300 students. Little Big Horn College has developed a transportation service because many of the students either come from low-income families or have no

vehicles available for use. About 36 to 40 students use the transportation service, with an estimated 5,700 to 6,000 passengers per year. The transportation service is free for the students. Little Big Horn College does not charge any student fees or fares for the transportation service.

Little Big Horn College operates two 14-passenger minivans and one 8-passenger minivan on three routes. The routes operate once in the morning in the inbound direction and once in the evening in the outbound direction. The north route operates from Hardin to Little Big Horn College. The south route operates from the Wyola area to Little Big Horn College. The western route operates from Little Big Horn College to Pryor, then travels to Billings, and returns back to Little Big Horn College via Interstate 90. The route drivers are mostly students who are employed by Little Big Horn College.

The transportation service is currently operating at capacity. Little Big Horn College has recognized that there are more students that would like to use the transportation service, but the service is provided on a first-come/first-serve basis. Several employees of Little Big Horn College have stated that they would like to use the transportation service also.

### **Transportation Operating Costs and Funding**

The cost of the transportation service for Little Big Horn College is about \$20,000 per vehicle, for a total annual cost of about \$60,000.

The funding of the transportation service comes from Little Big Horn College general fund. Little Big Horn College currently receives no grants for the transportation service. In the past, Little Big Horn College did receive a grant through the Department of Education for capital and operating costs, but this grant became disallowed for use in transportation services.

### **Transportation Needs**

Little Big Horn College needs to replace the three vehicles and improve the level of service. The transportation service needs to increase the number of passengers

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that the system can carry through more vehicles or higher passenger capacity vehicles. The transportation service also needs to increase the number of operational hours by adding midday service so that the students would not have to wait all day at Little Big Horn College before they could return home.

## **SUMMARY**

Based on the information provided in Chapters III and IV, the Crow Reservation does not currently have enough public transportation services to meet the community's needs. Through meetings, interviews, and transit provider surveys, the LSC team has identified significant transportation needs throughout the Crow Reservation. The existing transportation services are also limited by the grant funding regulations. There is currently no transportation coordination between the different programs/agencies on the Crow Reservation. The transportation services on the Crow Reservation are underfunded and are currently operating at capacity.