



Feedback to the Inquiry into the Multi Purpose Taxi Program

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National Disability Services

- National Disability Services (NDS) is the peak body in Victoria and Australia for non-government disability service providers.
- NDS has more than 250 members in Victoria and over 1,080 members nationally.



Multi Purpose Taxi Program

“The Multi Purpose Taxi Program is my ticket to the outside world. Its how I get to the footy, to concerts, my dance group, my choir. And for me, its also my ticket to work, its how I can get to my workplace and keep a roof over my head.”

- Multi Purpose Taxi Program User



Multi Purpose Taxi Program

- The Multi Purpose Taxi Program plays an important role in providing access to low-cost transport for Victorians with disabilities.
- Many people with disabilities rely on the Multi Purpose Taxi Program (MPTP) for transport to work, community activities, to day service programs, and to medical and allied health appointments.
- In recent years NDS has welcomed the continuation of the Multi Purpose Taxi Program to people with disabilities, including NDIS participants, and extension to ride sharing platforms.
- As we look to a 'living with COVID-19' world, with focus on safety and IPC, and individualised supports, taxis will continue to be critical to enabling Victoria to meet its inclusion objectives of the Disability State Plan.



Key Issues and Recommendations

1. Taxi Wait Times

Recommendation:

Invest in a greater number of accessible vehicles (across taxis and rideshare)

"The taxi is usually late and not just by 5 minutes, they are often 45 minutes late and this can happen multiple times a week... Every time they make our participants wait this means that we need to have staff to wait with them and depending on which staff member stays behind this could be over time which is then charged against the participants NDIS plan. Most people do not have the ability to pay an extra hour or more every week of over time rates from their NDIS plan."

- Support Coordinator



2. Customer Experience

Recommendation:

Review driver training to ensure they have sufficient skills and understanding of disability in order to provide appropriate and quality service to people with disabilities.

Susan was in a MPTP subsidized vehicle with a client, Lisa, who has an intellectual disability and is non-verbal. Lisa was making grunting noises on the journey home. The driver became agitated and asked Susan to 'get her to be quiet.' This was upsetting for Lisa and created unnecessary stress for both Lisa and Susan.

- Case study from Support Coordinator



3. Application Issues

Recommendation:

Provide greater information to the applicant as to why their application has been denied.

Provide the option for an advocate to liaise with the Department on issues related to the application.

"If an application is denied, the participant gets a note to say that their application has been declined but they don't provide a reason why. Often it could just be that the paperwork was completed incorrectly, or some other sort of administrative issue."

- Support Coordinator



4. Lack of awareness around expansion to rideshare

Recommendation: Ensure that users of the MPTP are made aware of the expansion to rideshare platforms and there is sufficient accessible information on how to use rideshare platforms with MPTP funding.

"I didn't even know that the [MPTP] program had been expanded to Uber."

- Support Coordinator



5. Card Misuse

Recommendation: Consider including photo identification on the MPTP card to reduce instances of misuse

NDS received concerning feedback that some workers in group homes and residential facilities have adopted the practice of using another participants MPTP card if they cannot locate a participant's own card.



6. Interface with General Practitioners

Recommendation: Consider ways in which the application could be made easier to complete for GPs to reduce administrative errors.

“Many of our participants are having trouble getting approved for the MPTP. When I have enquired with the MPTP as to why the applications have not been approved, I have been told that the GP has incorrectly completed the forms. This doesn't seem to be followed up by the MPTP and the application is left dormant. Does the form need to be simpler for the GP to fill out?”

- Support Coordinator

