

Rides to Wellness Pilot Program Summary

February 2017-August 2018

The Atlanta Regional Commission, funded by the Federal Transit Administration, developed the Rides to Wellness program to increase access to care, improve health outcomes, and reduce health care cost. In partnership with Grady Health Systems, Mercy Care, Morehouse School of Medicine, Choice Health Care Network and MARTA, the Atlanta Regional Commission developed a program that empowers participants to use public transportation with confidence through travel training and increases the opportunity for eligible patients to access healthcare services and other quality of life destinations by providing free transit passes over a 6-month period and assisting with enrollment into MARTA's paratransit and reduced fare programs.

- 213 participants were served through Rides to Wellness
 - Average age was 46 years old
 - 56% of participants were male
 - 92% of participants were African American
 - 32% of participants had a disability
- 36,386 one-way trips were provided through Rides to Wellness
- 68% of participants improved their appointment adherence over 6 months
 - 47.37% decreased their appointment cancellation rate
 - 39.48% decreased their no-show rate
 - 38.55% increased their attendance rate
- After completing Rides to Wellness, participants reported in general that their health was “good” as opposed to “fair” before entering the program.
- There was a statistically significant ($p < .01$) improvement of approximately 3 healthy days gained by participants in the Rides to Wellness program.
- Providing breeze cards through Rides to Wellness is a cost-effective method to improve patient's health related quality of life.
 - Average cost of a breeze card per participant each month is \$32.54.
 - Average round trip cost for Rides to Wellness participants is \$2.00.
 - Average cost of missed appointment is \$154*
 - The cost per day of good health for Rides to Wellness participants is only \$11.00.

**Cost associated with a missed appointment would be a Medicare reimbursement cost. Actual cost of missed appointment would be greater than \$154.*

Testimonials

"[R2W] helped me out a lot, allowed me to get to my appointments and allowed me to get to interviews and now I have a good job. [R2W] let me get back on my feet while not having to worry about getting around. I am blessed to be a part of rides to wellness. MARTA drops me off right in front of my job and right in front of Grady. This was a great program."

"This was a great program. I truly appreciate not having to spend my own money and not having to worry about getting around. [R2W] has been a great help in helping me turn my life around."

"[R2W] is a very convenient program. R2W gave me a good chance to improve my financial situation. I was able to benefit because I was able to improve my income without having to worry about my MARTA card. My health has been good because I go to a program every day. I can get anywhere MARTA travels to, I just have to ask questions, if need to. I haven't missed an appointment in a long time."

"Everything was really good. It was reassuring to know that I have trips. One less thing to worry about and appreciated you checking in each month. This program made a big difference."

"This [R2W] was a stepping stone. it is stressful to not know how to get to the doctor. I vividly recall getting into the program. I needed the program. I had no financial support to get to my appointments. This was a life saver."

"When I first got into the program I could barely use MARTA. I have come a long way. This program empowered me and gave me courage to even ride my bike and take my bike on the MARTA and meet new people. I am getting out more and I am able to see the different wonders in our city. It is amazing when you ride MARTA to see what you miss in a car. "

"[R2W] was very helpful. I really appreciate your help. It used to be hard to ask for help but you all have been wonderful. I really enjoyed having the option to go to the doctor and keep appointments. I was able to get around without having to pay someone outrageous amounts."

"I didn't have any money, so this program really helped. I am now able to go to therapy every week instead of every two weeks. I was also able to go to some preventive appointments like to get a colonoscopy and a mammogram which were both overdue."

"The program helped me when I really couldn't afford anything and now that I have SSI I can keep bus fare on a regular basis. I was really struggling before, it was very touch and go but now I can provide more things for myself. Making things work for me now with SSI. I can get the things I need. it is a real blessing."

"This is a great program. A lot of help to a lot of people who can't get 2 dollars together to get back and forth. Wonderful job what you are doing."

"This program helped out a lot. I didn't have money to get to the doctor or get a job, but this helped me get back on my feet and now I am working again."

"It helped me immensely. I used to have to pay people to take me to appointment and now I am more independent"