



CCSM Issues Committee

First Draft : Access to Car Repair Services for people on low or fixed incomes for 8/10/22

The Issue:

Many people struggle to maintain a vehicle when living on a fixed income. When choosing between food, housing, and other basic needs, owning and maintaining a vehicle is often out of reach because car repairs can be costly and there are not enough resources to help with expensive repairs.

This is an important issue to address because when people have access to their own transportation, they become more self-reliant and are better able to meet their own medical and other transportation needs. Additionally, they can transport friends and family building community and reducing strain on the public care system.

Recommendations:

1. Work with all State Community College Automotive Programs to prioritize people in need to gain support from their talents.
 2. Work with all Regional High School Automotive Programs to develop ways for people to readily access.
 3. Expanding programs like Don't Despair Car Repair Program through United Way: [Don't Despair Car Repair Program - UWTVA](#)
 4. Supporting people to access TANF Alternative Aid Assistance if eligible. [Temporary Assistance for Needy Families \(TANF\) | Department of Health](#)
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[and Human Services \(maine.gov\)](http://maine.gov)

5. Local Libraries that loan items could loan basic tools needed to do DIY car repair. [Equipment Lending & Passes — Bangor Public Library](#), [Resources - Norway Memorial Library](#) (snowshoe rental)
6. Veterans' groups [Financial Assistance for Veterans and Service Members: Bureau of Maine Veterans' Services](#)
7. Recommend that a coalition be developed to create a guide that is region specific, including town/city, for the multitude of small programs available. This would help people who are struggling to navigate the maze of small organizations doing this kind of work. A plan upkeep of the document needs to be created. While DHHS has put a lot of resources into 211, we continue to hear that it is hard to navigate so people just do not go to them.
8. DHHS will disseminate this guide to service providers to help the people they serve.

Expected outcomes

By having a safe and reliable vehicle especially in rural parts of Maine opens up a myriad of opportunities for self-reliance and freedom including personal safety to be in charge of your own life; including work, school, family supports, healthcare access, volunteering, spiritual care and many more. If people had their own vehicles they would be saving the State funds for transportation as well as the decrease needs for mental health care as we all know how stressful it can be to not know how you are going to get from point A to B on a constant basis.

To submit feedback, ideas or a personal story relating to this issue statement, please send to the CCSM either by mail at: 219 Capitol St. Suite 7 Augusta, ME 04330 or email at vmccarty@maineccsm.org



Consumer Council System of Maine
A Voice for Consumers of Mental Health Services

DEADLINE TO RESPOND September 12th 2022

Thank you.