

RESEARCH SUMMARY

Title	Dial-a-Ride usage and member profile
Objective	Extent to which free fares account for the increase in registrations and usage within four key groups
Date	October 2008
Methodology	Telephone interviews with 407 registered users of DaR from four groups: those who registered between October – December 2007 (following the announcement of free fares); registered from January 2008 onwards (following the introduction of free fares); inactive users who re-registered from January 2008 onwards; and those who joined between December 2005 and September 2007

Key findings

- The service being free is a very minor reason for people deciding to register with Dial-a-Ride after the announcement and introduction of free fares. Only 2% mentioned this spontaneously. After specific prompting with a list, around a third of those who had joined since January 2008 and just over a quarter of those who joined between October and December 2007 said the free fares were a reason for them registering. However, the importance of free fares as a reason for joining was relatively low – thirteen other reasons were ranked higher.
- The DaR service becoming free was a minor reason for people deciding to use the service more since the introduction of free fares. When asked to name one main reason for using DaR more since the introduction of free fares, around a quarter said it was due to their illness becoming worse, followed by one in seven naming inconvenience. Just under one in twenty stated the service becoming free as their main reason, indicating that it is significantly less important than other factors.
- The majority of DaR members (over half to two thirds) said that the introduction of free fares would not impact on the amount they use the service in the future. Just over a quarter of those who joined DaR between December 2005 and October 2007 said the introduction of free travel would result in them using Dial-a-Ride more in the future. Joiners since the announcement were similarly likely to say so as were members who became active again

Job number: 08019