



This year, we welcome your support as we launch the 2025 Penn Highlands Healthcare Annual Giving Campaign— Transportation Accessibility for our Patients

In the last 90 days at Penn Highlands Healthcare:

6+ HOURS

115 Patients waited greater than 6 hours to be discharged home, due to a lack of transportation

1,900



Rides coordinated to transport patients for appointments and home after discharge

Nationally each year:

3,600,000

people in the United States do not obtain medical care due to **lack of transportation**

To date, Penn Highlands Healthcare Hospitals have received invoices totaling

\$337,000.00

For EMS Services needed to transport non-emergent patients home. This places a strain on local EMS, to remain available for emergency transports. Penn Highlands Healthcare will utilize funding to provide alternate sources of transportation, freeing up EMS for emergency use.

Penn Highlands Healthcare, like many health systems across the country, is committed to providing **high-quality care to all patients in the communities we serve.**

This steadfast commitment has never been more apparent than during the last three years battling the greatest public health crisis of the century. Rural communities are facing significant barriers to health care including high insurance rates, transportation challenges, changing rules and regulations, a shortage of health care providers and overall workforce shortages. Penn Highlands Healthcare continues to face these challenges head on to ensure our patients have access to healthcare close to home.

Did you know, in the United States, 3.6 million people do not obtain medical care due to transportation barriers; four percent of children miss a health care appointment each year due to unavailable transportation; and transportation is the third most commonly cited barrier to accessing health care services for the elderly?

For vulnerable populations, transportation can be unaffordable. Lack of transportation options can leave a nursing home patient in the hospital beyond a normal discharge time. If family or friends are unavailable, the coordination of a ride back to the facility can take hours or even days. Patients are often brought in for emergency care by EMS, but have no means of transportation back home. Until a ride is coordinated, patients will wait long periods of time in the hospital, taking up a bed and delaying the admissions of other patients to the floor. Lack of transportation can cause patients to miss appointments, delay filling prescriptions, or not seek emergency care, potentially leading to worsening health conditions.

“A 48 year old woman was recently diagnosed with cancer and lives 45 minutes away from the oncology center where she receives care. Transportation is a barrier, as she does not have friends or family close by to take her back and forth to her many upcoming appointments. To keep her treatment consistent, our staff was able to coordinate a courtesy van to get her to and from the oncology center. While this patient is fighting to get healthy, planning how she will get to crucial cancer treatment appointments should not be a concern.”

—Penn Highlands Healthcare Staff



To address these challenges, Penn Highlands Healthcare has undertaken a grassroots effort to alleviate transportation as a barrier to healthcare in our rural communities.

Funding is needed for transportation services to be available, but it’s a costly endeavor...

Penn Highlands Healthcare Connect is a centralized oversight and management center that oversees bed management, inter-facility transport of patients, paramedicine and other associated discharge planning and transport services throughout the Penn Highlands Healthcare system and surrounding communities.

When patients are ready for discharge, Penn Highlands Healthcare Connect is a single point of contact to arrange patient transport, paramedicine services, home medication delivery and arrange follow up care. These services work in synergy to improve the process from admission through discharge. This improves all residents' access to care throughout the community by getting them to the right level of service, the right bed type and then back home safely and timely with the services they require to recover and reduce the probability of a readmission. **Funding is needed to cover the costs associated with getting a patient to an appointment, or home after discharge, when no other means of transportation is available.**

By making the commitment to address transportation barriers and building partnerships with community organizations and other entities, Penn Highlands Healthcare is committed to improving transportation and health care access for patients and families, creating healthier communities.

12+
HOURS Spent
waiting to
go home

- Patient discharged unable to find transport back to assisted living facility.
- Patient is a resident in a local assisted living facility with no transportation available.
- Emergency Department staff called multiple community partners, all unavailable for transport back to assisted living facility.
- Patient waited greater than 6 hours for EMS transportation.

You can help to ensure these patients make it home both safely and timely.



“As our community continues to grow and thrive, we are experiencing an increased need for transportation for patients to and from doctor’s appointments, outpatient procedures and inpatient hospital stays. As the director of the Transfer Center and Connect Center, as well as a twenty three year paramedic within our community, I see this need continuing to grow with resources becoming more limited. By supporting the Penn Highlands Healthcare Annual Giving Campaign with your generous gifts, you are in turn helping to provide your neighbors, family and loved ones with much needed access to transportation that will meet their medical needs.”

–Patrick Cooley

Director of PHH Transfer and Connect Center

By making a gift in support of the 2025 Penn Highlands Healthcare Annual Giving Campaign, you are helping to ensure that transportation is not a barrier to health care and that no one person withholds seeking care because of limited options available. Join us in giving the greatest gift this holiday season as we ask for your consideration and participation in this year’s campaign.

With our sincere appreciation,

Penn Highlands Healthcare System
Fund Development

www.phhealthcare.org/giving



PENN HIGHLANDS HEALTHCARE SYSTEM FUND DEVELOPMENT

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