



The National Blueprint for Injury Prevention in Older Drivers

The Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists (CAOT), together with McGill University is pleased to announce the launch of a new project to develop a *National Blueprint for Injury Prevention in Older Drivers*. This project is funded by the Public Health Agency of Canada with a purpose of promoting mobility and safety amongst older drivers.

Why look at older driver safety?

Persons over 65 years of age are the fastest growing segment of the driving population. Because of the aging of the Canadian population and the importance of driving for daily activities, it is projected that by 2040 there will be almost double the current number of older drivers in Canada. With the rising number of older drivers there is also an increase in older driver traffic incidents. Today the leading cause of accidental deaths for persons 65 to 75 years old in Canada is driving-related accidents. Individuals over 75 have a 3.5 times higher crash rate compared to 35 to 44 year olds (Canada Safety Council, 2005).

Who will be interested in this project?

This project will address ways to promote driving safety and will be of particular interest to older drivers and their families, policy-makers and health professionals and other driving service providers.

How will the Older Driver Blueprint be developed?

Specific skills needed to operate a car are known to decline with age, although recent research suggests many factors can be modified to sustain safe driving as long as possible. CAOT will work with older drivers and their families, expert driving researchers and health professionals and other driving service providers to examine health needs of older drivers and programs and resources designed to promote safe driving. The *Older Driver Blueprint* will include a vision, guiding principles, priority goals, and identified directions for action.



What are the main activities of this project?

1. To create an Advisory Committee of key stakeholders to assist in the development and dissemination of the National Blueprint.
2. To conduct systematic reviews to identify the scientific evidence regarding the effectiveness of driving-related injury prevention interventions, and, the impact of medical conditions on driving safety of older drivers. These reviews will be used to inform various stakeholders using knowledge translation strategies tailored for each stakeholder group.
3. To hold focus groups of older drivers across the nation to identify their perceived needs for refresher programs, variations in need across the country, and the structure and content that would be acceptable to older adults.
4. To conduct a national survey to identify existing driver refresher programs across Canada, their content and structure and, the facilitators and barriers to providing services to older drivers.
5. To identify, using survey methodology, occupational therapists' and other health professionals' capacity building (training, education etc.) needs as related to the provision of older driver safety programs in Canada.

This project is lead by Dr. Nicol Korner-Bitensky of McGill University, in collaboration with Dr. Claudia von Zweck, CAOT Executive Director and Kathy Van Benthem, CAOT Project Manager. This project has been launched during National Safe Driving Week – an awareness initiative by the Canada Safety Council that focuses on safe driving.



The views expressed herein do not necessarily represent the views of the Public Health Agency of Canada

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