

Benzie Bus delivers nearly 8,000 medical rides in 2023

By Record Patriot Staff Feb 5, 2024
Gift Article



Benzie Bus' Health Rides offers direct non-emergency medical transportation to appointments in neighboring Grand Traverse, Leelanau, Manistee and Wexford counties.
Photo credit: Jacqueline Southby

BENZIE COUNTY — Benzie Bus announced recently that it delivered nearly 8,000 medical rides in 2023. This represents a 67% increase in medical rides from 2022.

Benzie Bus has seen demand increase for services overall, with a 20% increase overall in the same time period.

Medical trips accounted for only 8% of total ridership in 2023.

“We’ve never seen a year-over-year increase in a single trip purpose as substantial as last years’ medical rides,” executive director Jessica Carland said in a news release. “We’re still looking at the data and trying to wrap our heads

around where exactly this growth is coming from so we can respond accordingly moving forward.

Carland does know a small part of the growth can be attributed to Benzie Bus' Health Rides service, which started in April 2022. Health Rides offers direct non-emergency medical transportation to appointments in neighboring Grand Traverse, Leelanau, Manistee and Wexford counties.

According to the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, access to public transportation may reduce health disparities and promote health equity by increasing access to healthier food options, medical care, vital services and employment.

"Health and well-being can be greatly impacted by choices offered and decisions made in the health care services, public health, social services and transportation sectors," Carland said. "We look forward to expanding our non-emergency medical transportation services in order to meet the growing needs of our community."

Rounding out the top five areas of ridership growth in 2023 was school (31%), recreation (17%), shopping (14%) and work (10%).

Feb 5, 2024
Record Patriot Staff