

## LOCAL

# Regional transportation issues discussed at workshop

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CHILLICOTHE – Traci Harris (Ross County Mobility Manager) and Gerod Rickerd (Pickaway County Mobility Manager) hosted a one-day workshop for regional human services agencies and transportation providers at the Ross County Service Center on April 25.

Strategies were brainstormed for overcoming persistent transportation obstacles. Adams, Brown, Highland, Jackson, Pickaway, Pike, Ross and Vinton counties were represented as well as several state level representatives. The workshop's focus centered on employment and medical transportation.

During group break-out exercises, workshop participants discussed solutions to issues such as transportation as a barrier to employment, arranging transportation across county lines, and coordination of non-emergency medical trips. Representatives of Governor Mike DeWine and Lt. Governor Jon Husted participated in the dialogue of seeking transportation solutions for work and medical appointments.

Facilitator Bill Wagner (National Center for Mobility Management Deputy Director) said of the workshop, "My first objective is to engage the people who came here today and increase their awareness of both the issues, the barriers, and the resources available to start trying to match them up."

Wagner conducts similar workshops all over the United States as a representative of CTAA (Community Transportation Association of America).

"This meeting happens all around the country. It's about getting people from Point A to Point B. It's really pretty basic," he said.

"The communication, engagement and participation of different agencies and seeing people from such a broad network who are concerned" was one of the highlights of the day, host Traci Harris concluded after the workshop.

"It was the multiple moments of just watching a group that diverse and of that size really engaged and enthusiastic about finding solutions," host Gerod Rickerd agreed.