

The Chestertown Lions Club Drive For Sight Program  
Provides Free Rides To and From Eye Doctor Appointments

The Chestertown Lions Club Drive for Sight program is a free service provided by the Chestertown Lions Club. Drivers in the program are Chestertown Lions Club volunteers who drive eligible patients to and from eye doctor appointments located in the prescribed geographic area described below.

Eligible patients include any resident of Kent County Maryland as well as Queen Anne County residents living in the 21620 zip code area, who need a ride to an eye doctor appointment.

The prescribed geographic area for the eye doctor office extends from Chestertown as far north as Middletown DE, as far west as Kent Island MD, as far south as Easton, MD, and as far east as Dover DE. So for example the program will not drive an eligible patient as far as an eye doctor appointment in Annapolis or Baltimore, although exceptions may be made on rare occasion upon request.

To request a ride to an eye appointment, an eligible patient simply calls the program phone number, 410-864-6880, at least 72 hours before the appointment.

Upon receiving a call or voice mail message requesting a ride, the program coordinator will contact the participating volunteer drivers asking them if they can provide the ride. Typically the program coordinator will confirm to the patient within 2 days that a ride has been arranged. While the program cannot guarantee that it can obtain a driver to provide the ride, to date, in the one year history of the program, it has always been able to provide a ride when requested, provided that the request comes from an eligible patient and is for an eye doctor appointment located in the above-prescribed geographic area.

The program currently has 5 approved drivers and on average each driver probably drives less than one appointment per month. An appointment can be 3 hours as it entails driving to pick up the patient, driving them to their appointment, waiting at the doctor's office during the appointment, and driving them home. The Chestertown Lions Club hopes to expand the program in the next year by adding drivers from its Club and from other Lions Clubs in Kent County Maryland.

Drivers who participate in the program have to go through a relatively simple application process which entails a criminal background check and watching one or two 15 minute instructional videos that show how to help vision patients who may have trouble getting out of and into their homes, car, or Doctor's office.

One of the major challenges facing Kent County is the lack of an extensive public transportation program. The Chestertown Lions Club Drive for Sight Program is intended to help alleviate this problem for those with vision care needs. Helping those with vision problems is a major service objective of the Lions Organization.