

Driving retirement for seniors

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Public safety should win against personal choice especially when it comes to elderly seniors who shouldn't drive, states an editorial in *CMAJ* (*Canadian Medical Association Journal*).

Seniors can be the safest drivers but that decreases with age as a growing number of medical conditions can lower a person's ability to drive.

By 2025, one in four Canadians will be 65 or older.

"Just as planning for job retirement is the social norm, we should be planning for [driving](#) retirement by creating programs to help seniors drive safely as long as possible and when they can't, to help them get around," states Dr. Noni MacDonald, Section Editor and Dr. Paul C Hebert, Editor-in-Chief, *CMAJ*.

In many industrialized countries physicians are often required to assess when a person's condition is severe enough to impair their driving. However, this is difficult as doctors do not have objective assessment tools to help them. "Development and validation of a simple, widely applicable screening assessment tool is sorely needed," write the authors.

Municipalities, health care authorities, community groups, charities and all levels of government can develop solutions for driving retirees. These can include tax or [financial incentives](#) for car pooling, a reverse graduated license, urban planning for seniors' needs and subsidized shuttle services to help seniors run errands and get back home safely.

The authors conclude that without such programs, [seniors](#) will prematurely find themselves in nursing homes at significant personal costs and public expense, unless solutions to the driving dilemma are found.

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