

# Conversation Planner



moving  
rightalong

Are you worried about someone's driving?



Government of South Australia

Department of Planning,  
Transport and Infrastructure



Many people experience situations where they are concerned about another person's driving. A conversation with the driver is a good starting point. Successful conversations begin with good preparation. You may want to consider:

**Why** are you concerned about the person's ability to drive safely?

You may have noticed their driving skills have deteriorated, or others might have expressed concerns to you. Think about some specific examples. Keep these examples in mind for the conversation.

Signs that someone's driving ability may be reducing include:

- poor judgement
- finding changing lanes difficult or changing lanes without checking
- driving too fast or too slow for the conditions
- having difficulty making turns
- finding roundabouts difficult to use
- struggling with driving procedures
- getting lost on familiar routes
- being nervous about travelling longer distances or on rural roads
- being unaware of wildlife on roads or roadsides
- being more hesitant than usual
- becoming confused, and / or confusing left and right
- not obeying traffic signs and signals
- an increase in unexplained 'dings' or scrapes on their car
- an increase in receiving traffic fines and / or car accidents or near misses.

**Who** would the person be most comfortable having this conversation with? e.g. spouse, GP, adult child, close friend or sibling.

**Who** will participate in the conversation? Some people may be more receptive talking one to one, other situations may work better involving other family and friends or a health professional.

**What** would be the best way to approach the subject sensitively and tactfully to avoid blame?

**What** are some of the ways that changes in their health may have created a decline in driving ability, and could they be accommodated? For more information contact the [Independent Living Centre](#) or search for an Occupational Therapist Driver Assessor through the [Occupational Therapy Australia](#) website.

**What** would be some of the practical issues for the person to overcome when planning for alternative modes of transport, for some or all journeys? Identify any issues and be prepared with some suggestions to respond to any barriers that the person sees that stops them from changing their driving patterns. Obligations and Opportunities for Older Drivers resource and [My Licence](#) website provide information about transport options.

**What** services or concessions is the person eligible for (if any)? This is not an exhaustive list.

- [Public transport concessions](#) – Cheaper public transport fares for certain groups of people
- [Commonwealth Home Support Programme](#) – Support services available at home to help maintain independence
- [National Disability Insurance Scheme](#) – Funding and support for a range of transport related services
- [Patient Assistance Transfer Scheme](#) (PATS) – subsidised travel to medical care for people living in rural and remote areas

- [Subsidised taxi vouchers](#) – subsidised taxi fares for people with certain disabilities
- [Statewide Community Passenger Networks](#) – alternative community transport available in certain regions across SA
- [Australian Red Cross Transport SA](#) – transport services for non-urgent medical appointments and social outings
- Local council community transport services, [click here](#) to locate your Council contact details

**When** would be the most suitable time to talk? It is best to avoid having the conversation during or after a driving incident. Did you know that drivers who hold a class 'C' (car) licence only and do not have a medical condition are sent a self-assessment in the mail annually, to complete from the age of 75 years. This may be an opportunity for a conversation and could also prompt a visit to their doctor.

**Where** would be a comfortable place to have the discussion?

## Where safety is an immediate concern

If you have concerns that another person's driving ability has deteriorated to the point that they are putting themselves and others in immediate danger, encourage the person to speak with their doctor, or go with the person and speak with their doctor together. If a medical condition that affects the ability to drive is identified, with appropriate treatment or restrictions, the person may be able to continue to drive.

A friend or family member can contact Service SA to report concerns about someone's driving ability. The Department may then contact the driver to arrange a driver medical assessment and may recommend a practical driving assessment by an Assessment Officer.

For more information about this process contact Service SA on 13 10 84 or visit: the Driver's Handbook [Fitness to Drive](#).

