

August 2016

Being in a wheelchair and speaking little English, makes me realize how very grateful I am to have Momiji drivers keep me connected to the community. Like me, the Momiji accessible van is aging and I'm worried that it will no longer be in service."

Momiji Transportation Service User

Momiji Health Care Society has been transporting seniors, mainly of Japanese Canadian descent, since 1993. Momiji knows having the ability to go out is important to seniors – it's about maintaining their independence, respect and dignity.



Our wheelchair accessible van, minivan and small white car allow Japanese Canadian seniors to have service in their language of choice and interact with their peers, while being transported to and from social, recreational and cultural outings, as well as to attend to essential activities of daily living like grocery shopping and transporting frail seniors with mobility issues to medical appointments which helps them stay healthy.

Momiji's current wheelchair accessible vehicle is 15-years-old and desperately needs to be replaced. It was purchased by way of donations and has served us well but sadly is nearing the end of its life. Due to its age, repairs are costly and on two recent local trips, the vehicle experienced engine trouble. This caused undue stress on the riders and our staff, who had to figure out how to safely get our seniors home. Worn out mechanical parts were to blame but these two incidents are signs of costlier repairs to come. This has caused Momiji to limit the use of this vehicle, forcing some seniors to make other transportation arrangements.

Momiji's minivan and small car cannot accommodate wheelchair-bound seniors. This means that many of the hundreds of seniors with mobility issues at Momiji and in the community will no longer be able to participate in outside activities, which would have a negative impact on their social and physical health.

Our current wheelchair accessible vehicle also plays a key role in the lives of Japanese Canadian seniors who live at Yee Hong Centre for Geriatric Care and Castlerview-Wychwood Towers, which are long-term care residences partnered with Momiji. At least five times a year this vehicle transports a bus full of seniors to social and cultural events here at Momiji. Without a new vehicle, it would be impossible to bring these seniors to us, adding to their isolation.

With a new wheelchair accessible van, Momiji will be able to accommodate more than 5,000 rides this year! And more rides in each subsequent year, as more seniors' mobility issues also increases.

A new wheelchair accessible vehicle costs \$88,000. Momiji has already raised \$15,000 and is hopeful that some of the outstanding amount will be raised through Foundation grants.

But we still need your help.

We know you have already been extremely generous to Momiji and many wonderful programs and services and essential equipment exist due to your past and ongoing generosity. We sincerely hope you will consider supporting our seniors once again with your gift.

On behalf of our seniors, thank you!

Pam Waintraub
Chair, Momiji Board of Directors