



Kennebec Valley Community College CarFit Event Helps Improve Comfort and Safety “Fit” for Senior Drivers

11/14/14, Fairfield, Maine To help the 10,000 Americans turning 65 every day and all senior drivers find a better “fit” with their cars for comfort and safety, mobility experts are hosting a safety program designed to help older drivers and their families.

CarFit is a national program developed by AAA, AARP and the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) that is designed to give a quick, yet comprehensive check on how well an older driver and their vehicle work together.

The Kennebec Valley Community College Occupational Therapy Assistant (OTA) Program will conduct *CarFit* check-ups on three pre-signed up cars at the Fairfield campus of KVCC at 92 Western Avenue on Friday, Nov. 14 in the lower parking lot behind Lunder Library.

“As we age, changes in our vision, flexibility, strength, range of motion and even size and height may make us less comfortable and reduce our control behind the wheel,” said **Polly Keniston, an Occupational Therapy Assistant student at KVCC.** “*CarFit* provides older adults with the tools to understand and apply the safety features of their car.”

At a *CarFit* event, trained volunteers complete a 12-point checklist with each driver. Among the items checked:

- Correct position of driver’s seat
- Driver’s ability to easily reach pedals
- Proper adjustment of mirrors

Occupational therapists are on hand also to provide a consultation, if needed, that will teach drivers how to maintain and improve aspects related to their driving health. The therapist can also provide information to participants addressing individual needs, including information about local community resources on exercise, nutrition and other programs to help keep them safe on the road.

“It is critically important that mature drivers make safety a personal priority,” said **Ms. Keniston** “Driving today is more difficult than ever because of increased traffic congestion, longer commute distances, new technology and faster speeds. Older drivers can take important measures to mitigate the stress associated with driving.”

Older drivers can also check with their local AAA club or AARP office to take a driver safety refresher course for older road users or look into occupational therapy driving evaluation programs for individualized assessments and recommendations. *CarFit* represents an extension of those classroom programs, and an opportunity for older drivers to make sure their personal vehicles are adjusted to their needs.



KVCC OTA students run through the checklist of measurements and adjustments that are part of Carfit checkups.