

NEWS SOURCE

Driver rehabilitation specialist available to offer insight into issues facing senior drivers

CONTACTS:

Meg Derrer, Marketing Director, (616) 242-0474, meg.derrer@maryfreebed.com.

Christine Hoek, Public Relations, (616) 662-9241 (p), (616) 856-9242 (c)

GRAND RAPIDS, MICH. — As our senior population grows, so does the debate about driving age. The central question: How old is too old? A close second: Who's to say when it's time to stop?

Giving up a driver's license – or asking a loved one to do so – is a heart-rending decision because of the loss of independence it implies.

Jerry Bouman is well-familiar with the dynamics surrounding the decision. Bouman oversees the driver assessment program at Mary Free Bed Rehabilitation Hospital in Grand Rapids. The program offers an objective evaluation of driving skills to help determine whether someone is still capable of driving safely.

Bouman is available to share his insight into issues facing senior drivers. His observations may be especially timely given AAA's recent release of a self-evaluation CD-ROM called "Roadwise Review: A Tool to Help Seniors Drive Safely." The nationwide insurer produced the program and is making it available free to seniors.

Whether you need background information, a quick quote, or expert analysis, Bouman can add credibility and depth to any stories you might be planning about the issues facing senior drivers or the impact of the AAA campaign. He has worked as a certified driver rehabilitation specialist at Mary Free Bed for more than 25 years. Aside from senior citizens, Bouman also works with disabled drivers who may require specially modified vehicles.

Mary Free Bed's driver assessment program is among fewer than 10 of its kind in the nation. The program includes a clinical assessment, a behind-the-wheel evaluation, and recommendations concerning any adaptive equipment or additional training that may be necessary

Contact: To arrange an interview with Jerry Bouman, please contact Christine Hoek at (616) 662-9241. To learn more about Mary Free Bed's driver assessment program, please call (800) 528-8989 or visit www.maryfreebed.com.

Mary Free Bed Rehabilitation Hospital is an 80-bed, not-for-profit, acute rehabilitation center. Its mission is to restore independence, hope, and freedom through rehabilitation to people with disabilities. As West Michigan's largest provider of rehabilitation services, its services include: quality patient care for both inpatient and outpatient settings; rehabilitation research; education and training; assistive technology; and advocacy. Programs include: brain injury; spinal cord injury; stroke and orthopedic; pediatric/adolescent, amputee, Lymphedema, Vestibular, motion analysis center, rehab technology center, orthotics and prosthetics services, and driver rehab.