

***"When you don't drive it is
difficult" –***

Older Drivers in the Port Stephens Area

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The Sample

- Phase 1: November 2005

15-question survey mailed to



| Age Cohort | Males | Females |
|------------|-------|---------|
|------------|-------|---------|

| | | |
|-------|----|----|
| 60-64 | 50 | 50 |
|-------|----|----|

| | | |
|-------|----|----|
| 80-84 | 50 | 50 |
|-------|----|----|

- Phase 2: January – August 2006



Interviews with 50 survey respondents

The Response

- Phase 1: Surveys received from



| Age Cohort | Males | Females | Total |
|------------|-------|---------|-------|
| 60-64 | 22 | 31 | 53 |
| 80-84 | 27 | 23 | 50 |
| Total | 49 | 54 | 103 |

- Phase 2: Agreed to interview

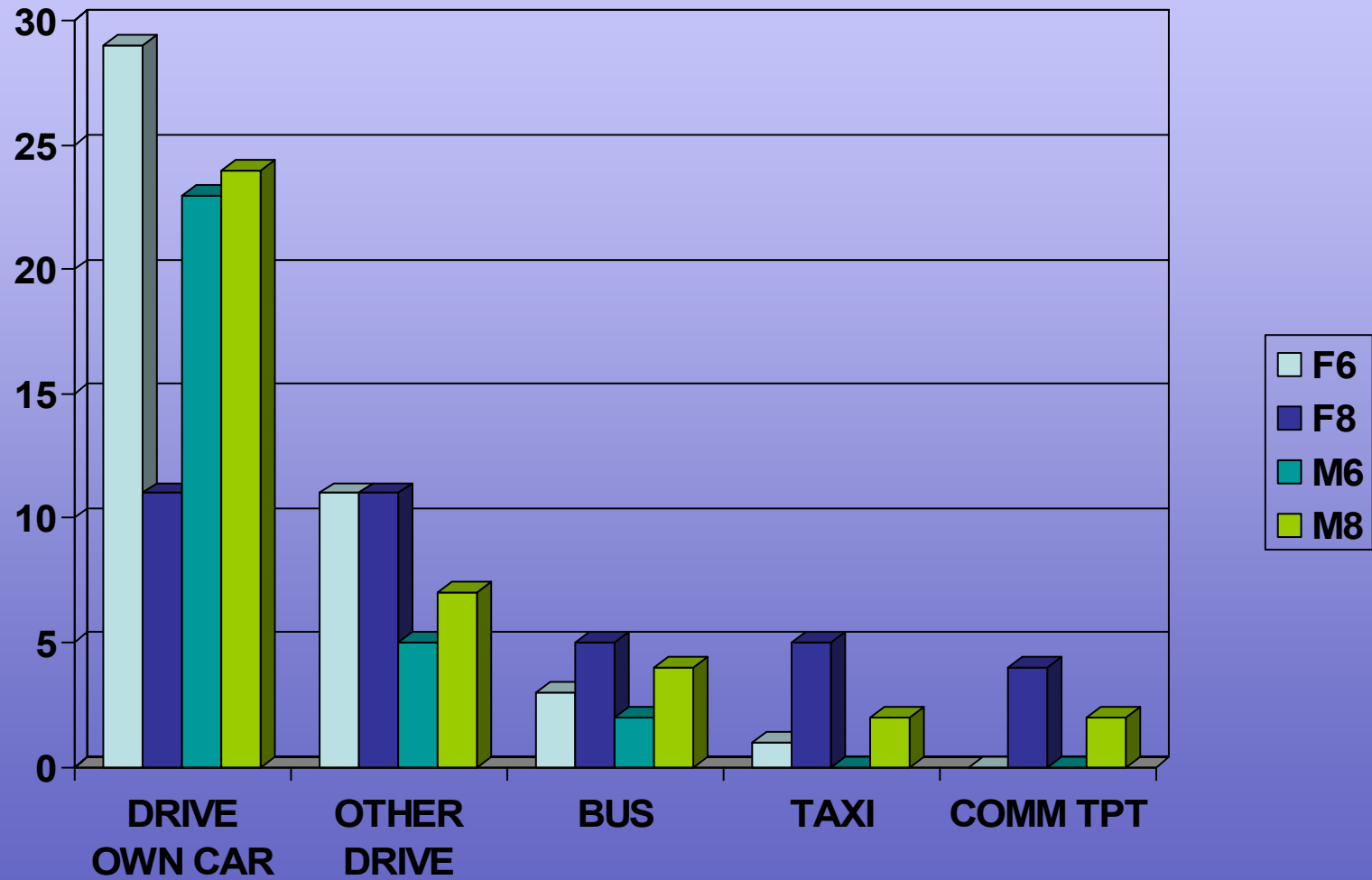


| Age Cohort | Males | Females | Total |
|------------|-------|---------|-------|
| 60-64 | 11 | 17 | 28 |
| 80-84 | 15 | 10 | 25 |
| Total | 26 | 27 | 53 |

The survey asked:

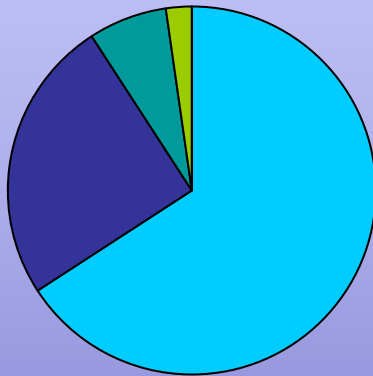
- **When you go out, do you**
 - drive your own car?
 - go in your car with someone else driving?
 - go by bus?
 - go by taxi?
 - use Port Stephens Community Transport?

They replied

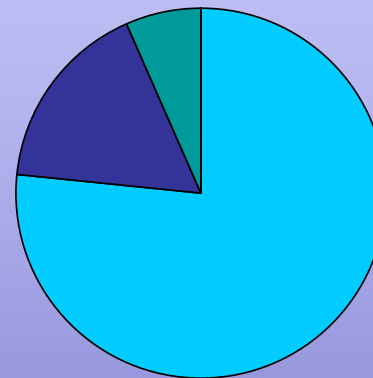


Transport choices by group

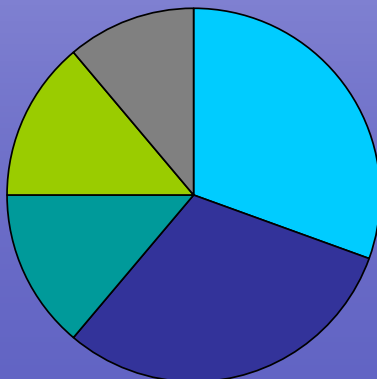
Females 60-64



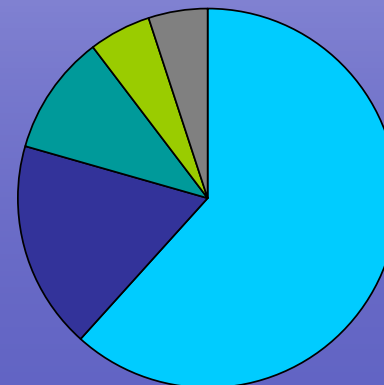
Males 60-64



Females 80-84

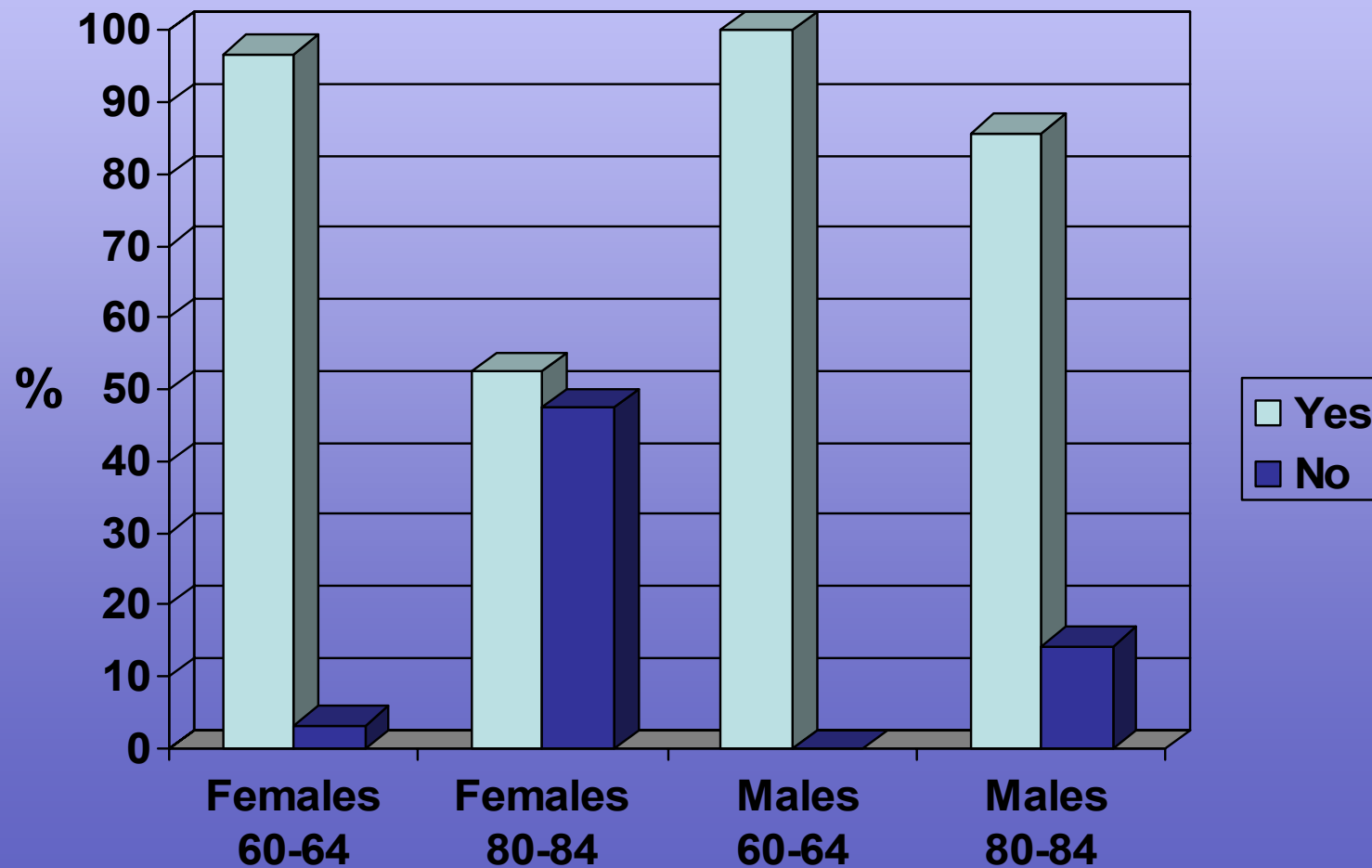


Males 80-84

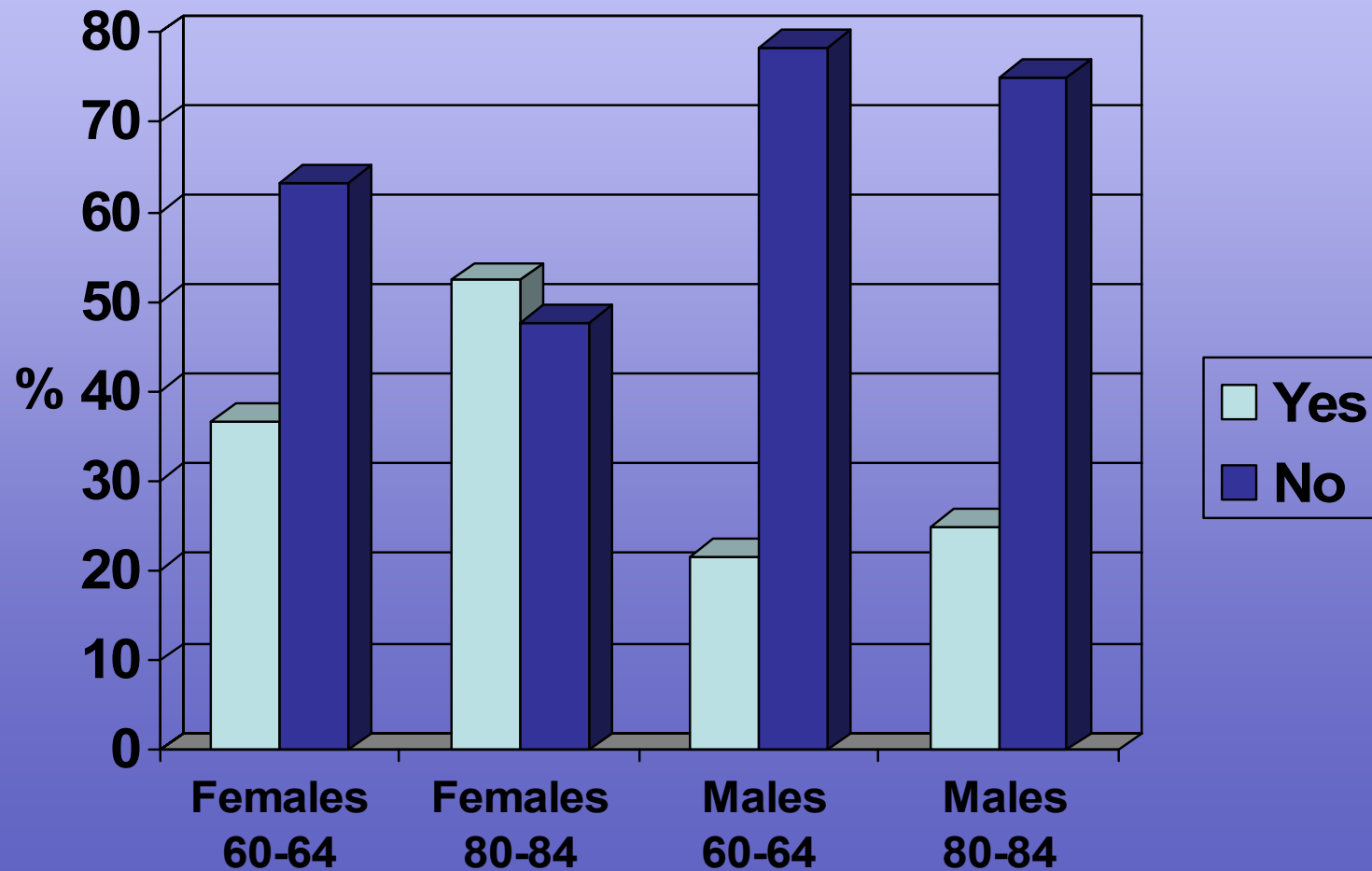


- Drive self
- Other drive
- Bus
- Taxi
- Comm Tpt

Do you drive your own car?



Do you go in your car with someone else driving?



Key points

- **Highly dependent on driving**
 - public transport used only when age, frailty or loss prevent driving
- **Non-drivers**
 - more likely to be female
 - more likely to be older
 - most likely to be older AND female
- **Self-limitations imposed**
 - no Sydney
 - no long trips
 - no night driving

Dave and Peggy

"With the Parkinson's, the onset of it, it has created a problem particularly backing, I couldn't turn round far enough to see properly and I had some near misses and it gave me quite a fright. Accidentally putting the car away one night I hit the glass sliding door at the back of the garage. I didn't do any damage to the vehicle and the insurance covered me and fixed it up better than it was before. I believe at that point of time God was saying, 'Enough is enough,' and I listened and took note of what was happening and I called it a day. " [Dave 83]

"Organising transport around here is a problem, organising the time factor. It is quite a job to organise the private bus service. It is usually a ten minute wait but then you have to wait an hour to make the next bus. I mean you can have a quarter-to-twelve appointment and you've got to get the eleven o'clock bus. Then coming back the same thing will happen. [Peggy, 80]

Joyce

"When you don't drive it is difficult. My sister she has always been used to her husband taking her everywhere because she doesn't drive and she had to get rid of the car when he passed away, that is a big thing. But we're lucky we have the buses just across the park. "

So do you plan your activities around the bus service?

"Yes if we've got to go shopping and things like that. I have to go to the podiatrist we'll we make our appointments so we can get the bus. The same with the hairdressers, things like that. We just make a lot of things around what times we can get there and that, doctors and everything."

[Joyce, 82]

Claire

"I am really only a local driver, I wouldn't be able to drive the distance [to Sydney]...Well the main reason is because my husband is a very nervous passenger so whenever I have gone to drive he can't stand it with me at the wheel. ...In the end I said, 'That's it. You just drive yourself, you just drive when we go out, and I'll just drive when I go out.' I mean he will let me take the wheel along the expressway sometimes when we get to Sydney but he is so nervous looking at what I'm going to do, 'Don't go too fast. Don't get too close to this bloke,' that he drives me crazy so it is not worth it, the tension, so he drives. That is the only thing, I couldn't drive myself to Sydney, I'd have to go by train." [Claire, 62]

Bert

"Well I used to rock fish years ago but unfortunately my eyes do not allow me to see how far my feet are off the rock, whether it is that far or that far, having one eye..... They are getting worse I'm afraid, I find it difficult now to read the newspaper although I get the newspaper delivered. I find that I'm reading one line and I miss the next one. Like this, before you came in I'm like this [demonstrating by holding the book close to his nose]....It is most difficult.

So does that interfere with your social life?

Definitely not.....I've got a car so off we go and we see various people.

You drive yourself?

Oh yes. Gracie tries to drive but no.

Even with your eyesight problem?

Unfortunately Gracie had to give up her licence and give her car away because of maculate degeneration [sic].

Gracie: I've got glasses for reading and I can see round me but other than that I can't read the signs on the road.

Bert (cont)

Is that making a difference having difficulty driving, is that making a difference to social life?

No not for me. Oh no we go down the drive and off we go.

Where do you go?

Well it is unfortunate that I cannot drive for any distance at the moment, I've got something wrong with my knee, I've had two operations and it's worse than ever. Anyhow I used to go to Sydney quite often and Port Macquarie, Gracie's daughter is there, I can't do it any more. Anyhow we just have to put up with more or less locally. May go to Newcastle, take Gracie in for her hearing. Salamander for shopping. [Bert, 84]



Thank you