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Submission: I believe these changes could have a negative effect on the daily and weekly activities of seniors particularly self funded retirees who are not receiving the pension and usually are on fixed or unpredictably incomes. Many seniors have family and community responsibilities and need a low cost public transport system to assist with their travel. The cost increase proposed to the Gold Opal Card may put public transport out of reach of some seniors. The increase in price for pensioners in the Gold Opal proposal are substantial and is not reflected in the incremental increases in the aged pension and war widow/ers pension. Many self-funded retirees may not qualify for the pension despite living on modest incomes not too dissimilar to the amount to the pension, these people have worked hard to support themselves when they are aged, and would be substantially impacted. Their emotional and psychological health could be affected if they can't afford to travel as much due to the increased cost. They could suffer isolation. Also if seniors can't afford to travel as much, local economies would be affected - as the seniors won't go out and spend their money in shops and recreation. Social isolation for seniors due to high cost of public transport is counter productive. The government will be providing public transport in any case, and if fewer seniors travel, then the resulting change in their activity patterns could impact negatively on their overall health, emotional, psychological and physical. This situation would end up costing the government more in health care.

It is reasonable to offer seniors very affordable public transport options.