

PATIENT ASSISTED TRAVEL SCHEME — SUBSIDIES

**200. Ms M.J. DAVIES to the Minister for Health:**

I refer to the patient assisted travel scheme's 16¢ subsidy for patients who drive more than 100 kilometres to specialist medical care, and the impact that rising fuel prices are having on Western Australian family budgets. Given that 16¢ buys just 73 millilitres of petrol today, will the minister consider increasing PATS subsidies to reflect the rising cost of living in the upcoming budget, and accommodate the temporary challenge we are facing with fuel prices as a result of what is happening on a global scale?

**Ms A. SANDERSON replied:**

I know that in eight and a half years of the member's government, it was not increased once, despite branding the form with royalties for regions, which was a shameless exercise. This government has made commitments to support regional people accessing supports, including by increasing the patient assisted travel scheme and also through important investments into telehealth and providing health care locally. It is a bit rich for the Nationals WA to seek an increase in PATS, which is meant to be one of their most important policies, but they did not increase it once when they were in government, despite billions of dollars of pork-barrelling directly into Nationals seats and branding the PATS form with royalties for regions.

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Order, please!