

PATIENT ASSISTED TRAVEL SCHEME, SOUTH WEST

1890. Mr Masters to the Minister for Health

I refer to your reply to Question on Notice 1583 and ask -

- (a) if residents of the Peel region who, being 'most in need', are able to receive funding support from PATS for travel between 70 and 100 kms to and from Perth, why is it that similar 'most in need' residents of the Dunsborough and Yallingup areas are not given the same PATS assistance for travel over the same distances to the South West Health Campus in Bunbury;
- (b) was the fact that residents of Dunsborough and Yallingup live in a safe non-ALP seat, rather than in a marginal seat, a factor that was taken into consideration when it was decided not to extend this variation of PATS funding to them; and
- (c) does the Minister agree with the Minister for the South West who last September referred to this part of my electorate as being part of the 'chardonnay coast' and that it did not need a great deal of support from Government?

Mr KUCERA replied:

- (a) Bunbury Regional Hospital and Peel Health Campus provide a similar broad range of secondary level specialist services. Neither Peel nor Dunsborough/Yallingup residents are eligible for general PATS assistance to access services provided at their local regional centres.  
  
Dunsborough/Yallingup residents are eligible for PATS assistance to access tertiary level specialist services in Perth. Limited PATS eligibility has been extended to Peel residents to assist them to access the same services that Dunsborough/Yallingup residents receive PATS assistance to access.  
  
From 1 July 2002, all country residents having to make frequent trips of more than 70kms, but less than 100kms, to access dialysis and oncology treatment will be eligible for limited PATS assistance, in recognition of the special needs of these patients.
- (b) No.
- (c) This Government is fully committed to providing excellent health services to all residents in Western Australia. There is strong commitment already demonstrated by this Government in the provision of health care across Country WA.