

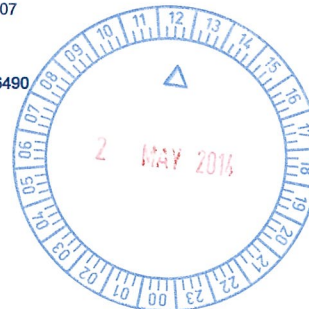
ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO
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71040
24th April 2014

Ms Lauren Mesiti
Committee Clerk, Standing Committee on Public Administration
Legislative Council
Parliament House
PERTH WA 6000

Dear Madam,

Re: Parliamentary Inquiry – Patient Assisted Travel Scheme (PATS)

Council thanks you for the opportunity for the public to comment on the PATS Scheme.

Please find below some comments raised by Council and also members of the public over a period of time as to the deficiency of the Scheme;

Submission in relation to the Terms of Reference –

- *The level of funding applied to the transport and accommodation subsidies provided.*

The general feeling obtained from public comment is that the level of funding to the transport and accommodation subsidies is inadequate and needs to be increased.

- *Eligibility for PATS funding.*

There appears to be a lot of frustration especially from older members of the public that it is not worth applying for the PATS funding because they are unsure of whether they are eligible or the eligibility criteria is too onerous and often leads to a situation where a very minor technicality in the criteria rules the applicant ineligible.

- *The administration process.*

The most common complaint in this area is that the application form and the amount of information that is required is too lengthy and time consuming where it comes to the point that eligible people do not even worry about applying for the PATS funding.

It is thought that with the high level of technology we have in the present day that this level of information could be reduced with the information being obtainable from simple doctor records.

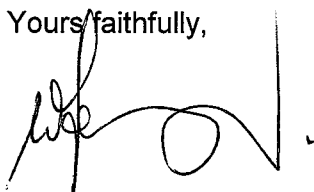
- *Whether there is consideration of exceptional circumstances.*

The existing PATS Scheme has been in place for a very extended period of time and is now obsolete for the present day health system where there is an increased tendency for general practitioners to refer their patients, because of litigation risks, to a specialist in the metropolitan area. This in turn necessitates the need for an efficient cost affected PATS Scheme to be in place to assist the many rural patients that require subsidies to offset the huge costs of travel and accommodation in an ever increasing era of rising health and associated costs.

The other implication that rural people are having to cope with is the withdrawal of transport services making it more difficult for people to find transport assistance to travel for health services.

Council and the general public of Nungarin requests the Standing Committee to recommend a complete review of the Scheme.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Bill Fensome', written over a vertical line.

Bill Fensome
Chief Executive Officer