

Legislative Council



MEDIA RELEASE

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Standing Committee on Public Administration Inquiry into the Patient Assisted Travel Scheme

The Standing Committee on Public Administration tabled its report on the Patient Assisted Travel Scheme in the Legislative Council on Tuesday, 16 June 2015.

The recommendations in the report included increasing the subsidies for both travel and accommodation.

'The Patient Assisted Travel Scheme (PATS) provides travel and accommodation subsidies to rural and regional patients for whom specialist medical care is not locally available,' said Chairman Hon Liz Behjat, MLC.

'PATS was originally a Commonwealth scheme, which was transferred to the State in 1987,' she said. 'It is now fully funded by the State.'

'PATS is aimed at ensuring that the general standard of health services in the regions, and access to those services, is comparable to that which applies in the metropolitan area.'

More than 100 submissions were received from individuals, Government departments and agencies and Non-Government Organisations across the State on the scheme.

The Committee travelled to the Kimberley, Pilbara, Midwest, Goldfields, Wheatbelt, South West and Great Southern, taking evidence and visiting hospitals and PATS offices.

'While many witnesses expressed their appreciation and gratitude for the assistance they receive through PATS, it is clear the scheme can improve,' Hon Liz Behjat commented.

Of the number of recommendations made by the Committee in this report, the priorities for Government should be those recommendations that deal with subsidies for accommodation and fuel.

For inquiries contact the Chairman of the Committee, Hon Liz Behjat MLC, on 0419 510 166.