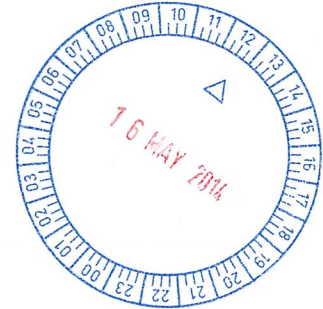


Our Ref: U5:0820
Enquiries: Russell Pritchard

14 May 2014

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



Dear Ms Mesiti

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY – PATIENT ASSISTED TRAVEL SCHEME

The Great Southern Development Commission (GSDC) provides the following points for consideration by the Standing Committee on Public Administration in relation to the parliamentary inquiry into the Patient Assisted Travel Scheme (PATS).

As a State Government agency, which has a leadership role in the economic and social development of the region, the Commission recognises the PATS as a valuable Department of Health delivered service. The comments contained in the submission are presented under the committee terms of reference and are not exhaustive. The focus is on issues that the GSDC has become aware of and that could be reviewed in order to improve the longer term effectiveness and efficiency of the program.

1. Transport and accommodation subsidies

- The equity issue of applying the subsidy to all air but not all road travel costs.
- Examine the scope for reviewing road travel and accommodation rates in line with budgeted funds available.

2. Eligibility for funding

- Consider the inclusion of some specialised allied health services, particularly where this relates to child health needs.
- Review, specify and communicate the services that will be eligible in future.

3. The administration process

- Examine the scope for addressing standard and more intricate applications under two separate claim processes. This could be a way of addressing the

criticism that the Scheme is difficult for applicants/families who are already under pressure.

4. Consideration of exceptional circumstances

- The development of exceptional circumstance guidelines and processes for complex cases, including a review of the policy where:
 - Assistance for patient is required for an extended period of time (beyond 6 months).
 - Children need to accompany a parent or guardian who is receiving treatment.
 - Patients who are undergoing lengthy treatment wish to travel home periodically.
 - Scope for the case management of applications that are complex.

If you have any questions or require any further information, please contact Russell Pritchard Regional Manager Industry and Infrastructure at the GSDC Albany office on 9842 4888.

Yours faithfully



BRUCE MANNING
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

17/12/14.