

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

WRITTEN QUESTION

Mr Edgington to the Minister for Health:

Patient Assistance Travel Scheme (PATS)

- 1. How many patients have accessed the Patient Assistance Travel Scheme (PATS) to travel from Tennant Creek to access medical services in the past 12 months?**

During the 2019-20 financial year, 1830 patients accessed the Patient Assistance Travel Scheme (PATS) to travel from Tennant Creek to access medical services.

- 2. What was the total cost of Tennant Creek patients who used the Patient Assistance Travel Scheme over the past 12 months for:**
 - a. Return fares to/from appointments**
 - b. Accommodation**
 - c. Ground transport**
 - d. Fuel**

During the 2019-20 financial year, the total cost for patients:

- Travel: \$431 188
- Accommodation: \$316 233

To break down the travel costs further would be too administratively onerous and would result in undue diversion of resources from service delivery.

- 3. How many nights' accommodation, on average, did patients travelling from Tennant Creek claim through the Patient Assistance Travel Scheme (PATS) in the past 12 months?**

Patients travelling from Tennant Creek claimed on average six nights of accommodation through PATS in the last 12 months.

4. Does the Government have any plan to review the Patient Assistance Travel Scheme (PATS) claimable amounts? Has any review of the Scheme been conducted in the past four years?

The PATS Guidelines are generally reviewed once each year, or by exception if specific policy initiative require amendments to the Guidelines.

A review of the PATS Guidelines was conducted at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. The guidelines were adjusted to make them fit for purpose for the Northern Territory's pandemic response.