

# Patient Assisted Travel Scheme (PATS) for eligible country patients

The Patient Assisted Travel Scheme (PATS) provides subsidies towards travel and accommodation costs for eligible country patients, and their escorts, who need to travel long distances to access specialist medical services including Telehealth.

## Eligible specialist medical services

Most specialist medical services covered by Medicare are eligible under PATS, as outlined on the [PATS Eligible Medical Specialist List](#).

Referrals to the following specialist medical services are generally not covered by PATS:

- Dental or orthodontic
- Nursing professionals
- Allied health professionals, such as:
  - Speech pathologists
  - Physiotherapists
  - Podiatrists
  - Clinical psychologists
  - Occupational therapists
  - Audiologists
  - Pathologists
  - Dentists

## Types of assistance provided under PATS

### Road travel

- People travelling by private vehicle may claim a fuel subsidy of 16 cents per kilometre.
- When two or more people are travelling in a minibus, or group transport vehicle, the fuel subsidy is 25 cents per kilometre, per vehicle payable to the relevant organisation.
- People travelling by coach or rail are eligible for the relevant economy or discounted fare.
- People accessing cancer or dialysis treatment who are required to travel between 70 and 100 kilometres are eligible for a \$20 subsidy.

### Air travel

- People living in the Pilbara, Kimberley and some remote areas may be eligible for air travel assistance if travelling to the nearest specialist involves surface travel of more than 16 hours (one way) or is subject to excessive connection delays and prolonged stops.

- People travelling for cancer treatment may be eligible for air travel assistance if they have to travel by road for more than 350km from their place of residence (if outside a town's boundaries) or from their home town to the treatment centre.

### Accommodation

People who live more than 100km away (one way) and need to stay overnight for medical reasons or transport schedules may be eligible for subsidies:

- Private home accommodation - \$20 per night for a patient or \$40 per night for a patient and escort.
- Commercial accommodation - up to \$60 per night for a patient or up to \$75 per night for a patient and escort.

### Additional assistance

In limited and exceptional circumstances, taxi or airport shuttle vouchers may also be provided if recommended by the referring medical practitioner.

## Who is eligible for PATS?

To be eligible for PATS, patients must be:

- permanent residents in a WA Country Health Service (WACHS) region
- travelling more than 100km one way to access the nearest eligible specialist medical service including a Telehealth service
- travelling more than 70km each way to access the nearest specialist medical treatment specifically for cancer or dialysis.

Escorts may be eligible to assist patients who are:

- undergoing cancer treatment
- frail or disabled
- under 18 years of age.

## Completing PATS application forms

PATS application forms must be completed and signed by the referring medical practitioner and approved by the [nearest PATS office](#) prior to travel.

## More information about PATS

To find out more about PATS and the application process, contact the [nearest PATS office](#) or visit the [WA Country Health Service \(WACHS\) website](#).

*Whilst all care has been taken in preparing this document, this information is a guide only and subject to change without notice.*