

Question on Notice
No. 940
Asked on 31 August 2004

MRS PRATT asked the Minister for Health (MR NUTTALL) —

QUESTION:

With reference to the Patients Travel Subsidy Scheme (PTSS) —

- (1) Per hospital, how many applications for this subsidy were (a) received and (b) granted and at what cost?
- (2) Per hospital, how many applications for escorts were (a) received and (b) approved and at what cost?
- (3) How many requests were made by the patients' specialist and were refused per hospital?
- (4) Is it acceptable that those staff administering the PTSS should override the recommendation of a specialist?

ANSWER:

- (1)-(3) The information sought by the Member is not routinely collected centrally, so collation and provision of the figures would place unreasonable research requirements on departmental staff.

Queensland's Patient Travel Subsidy Scheme provides a subsidy to patients (and in some cases their carers) to enable them to access specialist medical services that are not available within 50kms of their nearest public hospital. The Scheme assists patients by providing a subsidy towards transport and accommodation to the nearest specialist medical treatment service.

The Scheme compares favourably with similar schemes in other states. For instance, while most interstate schemes include a private patient contribution, in Queensland patients are not required to pay such a contribution, and the 50 kilometre distance criterion is the lowest in Australia.

Scheme expenditure during the 2003/2004 financial year totalled approximately \$20.6M.

- (4) Scheme policy states that the Medical Superintendent (or their delegate) of the approving hospital will make a determination regarding the patient's application on the basis of information included in their application form. In instances where additional information is required to assist in decision making, the Medical Superintendent will contact the patient's referring medical practitioner. A Medical Superintendent would not override the recommendation of a specialist, but rather may not approve an application if the patient does not meet all of the Scheme eligibility criteria.