

**QUESTION ON NOTICE
ASKED
Wednesday, 14 October 2026
Answer Due: Friday, 13 November 2026**

1172

MR S KNUTH ASKED MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND AMBULANCE SERVICES (HON T NICHOLLS)

With reference to Far North Queensland patients requiring vitrectomy surgery for conditions such as macular holes, who are forced to travel to Brisbane for treatment and, due to post-operative restrictions on flying, face lengthy return journeys by rail, sometimes exceeding 22 hours while required to maintain restrictive postoperative positioning—

Will the Minister (a) advise how many patients from the Cairns and Hinterland and Townsville Hospital and Health Service regions have been referred to Brisbane for vitrectomy surgery over the past three years (reported separately by year and region), (b) advise what is the total cost to the Patient Travel Subsidy Scheme (PTSS) for transporting and accommodating these patients and (c) investigate establishing regular visiting vitreoretinal surgical services in Cairns or Townsville, including a cost-benefit assessment against the current expense of transporting patients to Brisbane, to reduce the financial, physical and emotional burden on regional patients?