

Constituent Question in Parliament

House of Assembly

ASKED BY: Miriam Beswick MP

ANSWERED BY: Hon Guy Barnett MP

QUESTION:

Last week, I met with a resident from King Island who raised concerns about the Patient Travel Assistance Scheme. The scheme states on its website that it covers some costs for travel and accommodation. Despite this, patients have been denied support unless they travel both ways in one day. As I personally experienced a three-hour delay on my flights, I find it very unreasonable to expect patients to align a service within these tight timeframes when they are impacted by the weather.

ANSWER:

As per the Patient Travel Assistance Scheme (PTAS) Operational Framework, patients travelling for outpatient appointments can travel the day prior to the appointment and can return the day after the appointment. PTAS makes all bookings based around medical appointments.

PTAS often book travel the day prior to an appointment, recognising that there can be travel delays.

The PTAS Operational Framework also provides modified eligibility criteria for King Island and Furneaux Group Islands residents where if they have any allied health appointments these can be attended within 48 hours of a PTAS eligible appointment.

For patients travelling for surgery PTAS books a one-way flight initially and only books the return flight when the patient is cleared to fly home.

Some patients opt to travel to and from an appointment in one day as they:

- don't want to miss work; or

- they are non-concession card holders and not entitled to any accommodation assistance.

PTAS staff discuss all flights with patients prior to making any bookings.

APPROVED

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Guy Barnett', is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Hon Guy Barnett MP
Minister for Health, Mental Health and Wellbeing

28 August 2024