

Patient Assistance Travel Scheme Frequently Asked Questions

What is PATS?

PATS provides assistance with travel, and if applicable, accommodation costs to residents of the Northern Territory who are required to travel more than 200kms to the **nearest** specialist medical treatment, which is not available locally or from a visiting service. PATS is a contribution scheme and does not cover all travel and accommodation costs.

Who is Eligible for Assistance?

You must be a permanent resident of the Northern Territory;
 You must travel more than 200km one-way to obtain specialist medical treatment;
 You must be registered or eligible for registration by Medicare;
 The service must be eligible for assistance; and
 The service must be the nearest available service.

What is an Escort?

An Escort is a person who is regarded by the requesting practitioner and/or the treating specialist, as being appropriate and responsible for the Patient's needs during the period of transport and/or accommodation and during treatment. An Escort must be over the age of 18. In special circumstances Escorts under the age of 18 may be approved. If you are travelling interstate for surgery or intensive treatment e.g. radiation therapies, non surgical cancer treatments, cardiology and neurosurgery, an escort can be automatically approved.

What Assistance is Available?

Patients and approved Escorts are eligible for travel and accommodation assistance, which are paid at the following rates:

<u>Accommodation</u>		<u>Travel</u>	
Commercial	\$35 per night	Air and Bus Travel	Paid at the lowest available discount fare
Private	\$10 per night	Private Vehicle (paid for up to 3 patients travelling together)	\$0.15 per km
<u>Ground Transport</u>	Reimbursement of \$40 per interstate trip		

Wherever possible, the PATS, Patient Travel Clerk's, make all travel and accommodation bookings for Patients and approved Escorts.

Can I choose which Hospital I want to Attend?

Under the **public** health care system, PATS provides assistance to Patients and approved Escorts travelling to the nearest specialist medical treatment. If a Patient chooses the destination for their specialist medical treatment this choice is a **private** option and assistance cannot be provided under PATS that is a **public** health care scheme.

Can I choose to travel interstate when the service is provided in the Northern Territory?

The Northern Territory Government is committed to improving service options for Territorians by investing in specialist services to set up in the NT or through visiting arrangements where there is a need. Whenever a Patient accesses a service interstate the Northern Territory Government incurs a cost that is paid through cross border arrangements with the State or Territory that provides the service.

Supporting Territory based services is essential to ensure they are viable and continue to build the Territory's capacity. **Public** Patients will be supported to attend Territory services instead of accessing the same service interstate at additional cost.

PATS Office Contacts

Darwin District	Katherine District	Gove District	Barkly District	Alice Springs District
Royal Darwin Hospital	Katherine Hospital	Gove Hospital	Tennant Creek Hospital	Alice Springs Hospital
08 8922 8135	08 8973 9206			08 8951 7979
08 8922 8134	08 8973 9213	08 8987 0540	08 8962 4262	08 8951 7846

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