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Administrator of Christmas Island  
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## Community Bulletin

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### Reducing travel costs for Indian Ocean Territories patients

I am pleased to announce amendments to the Patient Assisted Travel Scheme (PATS), giving Indian Ocean Territories (IOT) residents enhanced support to seek essential health care services, regardless of income.

The travel subsidy for eligible IOT patients accessing health care in Western Australia will help ease some financial pressures on Christmas Island and Cocos (Keeling) Island residents amidst rising costs of living.

The scheme assists with travel and accommodation expenses for patients seeking medical care in WA, when not available through on-island health services. It was reviewed last year to make sure it was meeting current needs of local residents, with amendments reflecting the extensive community consultation.

Under the updated scheme, the accommodation subsidy will increase from \$60 per person, per night to \$106.10 per person, per night – bringing it in line with similar Western Australian support.

The claim period is also being increased from 8 to 12 weeks. A clear process to appeal decisions, along with greater flexibility and choice in travel dates, is reflected in the updated policy.

The amendments to PATS are a win for the IOT community, who have played a significant role in advocating for these important changes to the scheme.

I would like to thank everyone who has contributed throughout the numerous consultations I have held with the community and stakeholders, including the Indian Ocean Territories Health Service Community Advisory Committee, who have had a strong voice in shaping these updates.

I am committed to working with the community in partnership and I am grateful to everyone who helped us deliver this successful outcome for all IOT residents

More information can be found on the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts website, at: [Territories publications | Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts](#)

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