



Minister for Health and Ambulance Services

1 William Street Brisbane Qld 4000
GPO Box 48 Brisbane
Queensland 4001 Australia
Telephone +61 7 3035 6100

C-ECTF-24/21062

Mr Neil Laurie
Clerk of the Parliament
Queensland Parliament
George Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Email: ClerksOffice@Parliament.qld.gov.au

Dear Mr ~~Laurie~~ *Neil*,

I write in response to your letter regarding petition number 4173-24, tabled in Parliament on 10 December 2024, in relation to delays in payment of Patient Travel Subsidy Scheme (PTSS) claims. The petition pertains to the request that the PTSS Health Service Directive wording is changed to state that PTSS subsidies **must** be paid within 30 working days.

The PTSS is an important element in Queensland's public health system, as it provides financial assistance to patients needing to travel for specialist healthcare that are not available locally (within 50 kilometers of their nearest hospital and health facility).

I can inform you that, the PTSS operates under a Health Service Directive (HSD) (as per section 47 of the *Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011*), with established Guidelines (including Schedule 1 - specialist medical services eligible for PTSS subsidies) and Protocols. The PTSS HSD Guideline currently specifies that "the subsidy is to be paid within 30 working days from receipt of all necessary documents by the approving public hospital or public health facility".

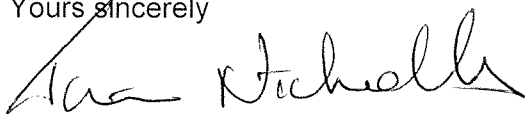
It is important to note, that Hospital and Health Services (HHSs) cannot process subsidy claims until all necessary and correct details are provided. Therefore, as the requirement to support the prompt payment of PTSS subsidy claims already exists and is detailed in the HSD, the changes proposed in the petition are not supported.

For further context, the PTSS is administered by 16 HHSs through funding from Queensland Health, and in accordance with the PTSS Guidelines. During the 2023-24 financial year, almost 300,000 PTSS claims were processed for over 98,000 patient incidences. The HHSs are doing their very best to reimburse all patients within 30 working days, once they receive all necessary documentation.

Importantly, another key feature of the HHS administration arrangements is that all HHSs have the ability to book and pay for approved commercial travel and accommodation subsidies directly with providers, on behalf of PTSS patients, alleviating the need for patients to outlay travel and accommodation costs or rely on waiting for a subsidy.

Thank you for raising this important matter with me and I trust this information is of assistance to the petitioners.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tim Nicholls', written over the closing 'Yours sincerely'.

Tim Nicholls MP
Minister for Health and Ambulance Services
Member for Clayfield