



COMMON SENSE DOES NOT PREVAIL FOR PATS FUNDING

28 JUNE 2004

Mrs Penfold is concerned at the reduction of funding allocated to the Patient Assisted Travel Scheme (PATS) when the State Labor Government are expecting an increase in claims this year.

According to recent Budget Papers there were 27,000 claims made through PATS at a cost of \$6.27 million last year. However despite expecting an increase of claims to 38,000 this year the State Labor Government have not increased funding in fact they have done the complete opposite by only allocating \$6 million to meet the demands of PATS clients across South Australia.

“Common sense has not prevailed in this case. You would think a 40% increase in claims would indicate a 40% increase in funding will be needed, that is another \$2.4million just to meet the demand indicated by the Government. I also question the expected increase in demand. Could this be caused by services being reduced outside Adelaide necessitating families to endure the cost, inconvenience and trauma of a city visit when it could be avoided?” she said.

Mrs Penfold also said that funding for the (PATS) was included in the funding for health care.

“Metropolitan patients do not have to fork out hundreds of dollars for travel to see a specialist, and I do not believe that this travel funding should be included as ‘health care’.

“PATS is, of course, a welcome assistance however our hospitals and health services also have to cover medical retrievals by air and now that the ambulance service has been shifted from the Emergency Services portfolio to the Health portfolio, there is an unknown responsibility for our road ambulances as well” she said

“This is another example of the State Government short changing the people of Eyre Peninsula and South Australia”. Mrs Penfold said.