

## QUESTION\_ Patient Assistance Transport Scheme\_180613

**Mr BROCK (Frome) (14:54): My question is to the Minister for Health and Ageing. Minister, can you please update us on your recently announced review into the Patient Assistance Transport Scheme and advise whether the residents of Frome will be able to comment or participate in that?**

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING (Playford—Minister for Health and Ageing, Minister for Mental Health and Substance Abuse, Minister for Defence Industries, Minister for Veterans' Affairs) (14:55): I thank the member for Frome for the question and acknowledge that he, in fact, moved a motion in this place for my department to undertake a review and it was a suggestion I am more than happy to take up. I am happy to say that preparations for the review of the Patient Assistance Transport Scheme have now been completed.

The government has invested in regional hospitals and health services to bring treatment options directly to regional communities. We know that accessing treatment closer to home means that patients in country South Australia and their families have a better quality of life and can deal more effectively with the challenges of treatment, but it is inevitable that many patients have to make the trip to Adelaide or other regional centres for procedures and access to specialist care. The PAT Scheme is designed to assist those patients with the financial burden of their trip—a burden that can often be difficult to manage when coupled with the strain of illness.

As members would be aware, I recently announced that SA Health would conduct a review of the PAT Scheme to ensure that assistance is provided fairly and efficiently within the scheme's existing resources. Today I am pleased to announce that SA Health has appointed leading healthcare expert Dr David Filby to conduct the review, which will investigate all key elements of the scheme, including reimbursement rates and eligibility.

Dr Filby is a senior adviser to the Australian Health Minister's Advisory Council and a former executive of SA Health, who has worked extensively across the Australian healthcare sector. Dr Filby also chairs the National Health Information Standards and Statistics Committee, and his previous roles include SA Health executive director, policy and intergovernment relations, and, in Queensland Health, deputy director-general, policy and outcomes. He has the right blend of knowledge, skill and experience to carry out this important review.

In response to the member for Frome's question, I can assure him and his community that they will have an opportunity to contribute to the review and to inform Dr Filby of their lived experience. A draft consultation paper is expected to be released for public consultation in August. I encourage local members and their communities to contribute to that process.

Finally, I once again thank the member for Frome and the members for Giles and Mount Gambier for their leadership and advocacy on this important issue. Their hard work will ensure that their communities have access to fair and equitable assistance when they need it most.