



ACCESSING HEALTHCARE FOR MITOCHONDRIAL DISEASE (MITO) PATIENTS IN RURAL AND REGIONAL AUSTRALIA

This fact sheet provides information to help those living in rural and regional Australia access specialist care.

Government Support

You may be eligible for a patient assisted travel scheme if you live a certain distance from the closest essential specialist service and have a Medicare card. To access the scheme your GP needs to complete the relevant forms from the websites below.

Subsidies and conditions are specific to each state and territory. In general, they only cover a portion of the total cost. They provide subsidies for petrol for private vehicle transport (per kilometre), for public transport or commercial flights when necessary, and accommodation. The schemes also subsidise the transport and accommodation costs of a carer or escort when it is deemed medically necessary, or when the patient is under 18.

If the nearest medical specialist is unable to meet your needs, i.e. they lack expertise in mito, your GP will need to apply for an exemption so you may see another specialist. To be eligible, you must prove that your condition cannot be managed in country health facilities. Not all states have an exemption policy, and in some states the subsidy will be determined based on the costs of seeing the nearest specialist.

Find out more:

ACT: health.act.gov.au/public-information/consumers/interstate-patient-travel

NSW: enable.health.nsw.gov.au/home/iptaas

VIC: health.vic.gov.au/hospitals-and-health-services/rural-health/vptas-how-to-apply

QLD: qld.gov.au/health/services/travel/subsidies/

SA: sahealth.sa.gov.au/wps/wcm/connect/public+content/sa+health+internet/health+services/country+health+services/patient+assistance+transport+scheme

WA: wacountry.health.wa.gov.au/index.php?id=pats

NT: nt.gov.au/wellbeing/health-subsidies-support-and-home-visits/patient-assistance-travel-scheme

TAS: dhhs.tas.gov.au/hospital/ptas

Angel Flight

Angel Flight runs non-emergency flights for people in rural and remote areas to specialist medical care. This Australian charity enables patients to access treatment and care that would not otherwise be available due to vast distances and high travel costs.

Patients must be medically stable, ambulatory and physically able to enter and exit a small aircraft, as well as sit up in the aircraft for extended periods of time. A registered healthcare provider (such as your GP) can register with Angel Flight and submit flight requests online.

Find out more - angelflight.org.au

Accommodation

Many hospitals offer subsidised or low cost accommodation for outpatients and their families. Ask whether accommodation is available when you book your appointments or access the 'Visitor's Information' section on the hospital's website.

Ronald McDonald House Charities also offers accommodation close to some major women's and children's hospitals for seriously ill children and their families. Find out more - www.rmhc.org.au/our-programs/houses

Please contact the Mito Foundation if you have any questions or if there are additional initiatives that should be included on this list.



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