

# Finding practical support during cancer treatment

## Do I have to pay for cancer treatment?

If you go to a public hospital, your treatment will be free. You can't choose your own doctor and you may be on a waiting list for treatment.

If you have private health insurance, the insurer will pay some of the costs, but you might have to pay part of the bill. You can choose where to get treatment and which doctor to see.

## Can I get help with money?

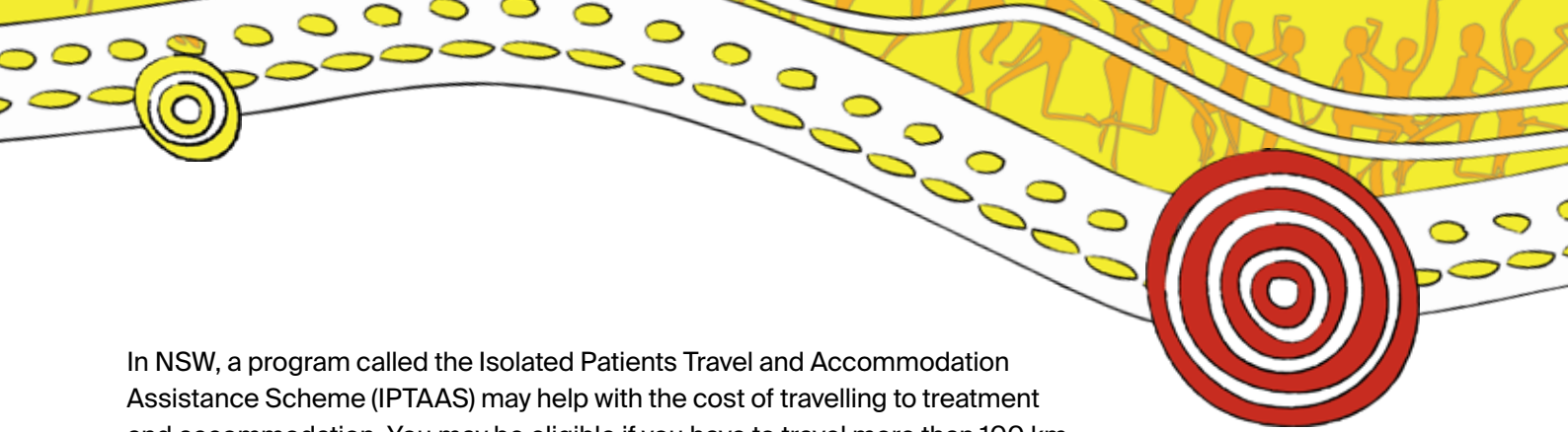
It's common to worry about money when you have been diagnosed with cancer. Ask your hospital social worker if Services Australia can provide help with money. Services Australia includes Centrelink and Medicare. Cancer Council might also be able to help you sort out money worries.

If you are paying for treatment, ask your doctor if you can pay a little bit at a time (instalments) or if you can have more time to pay your bill.

## How do I get to treatment?

Some people can get cancer treatment close to home, but other people have to travel to get treatment. This takes time and costs money. If you have to travel for treatment, you may be able to get some of your money refunded through state programs. The hospital social worker can help you apply. You may need to keep your original travel tickets, receipts and invoices.





In NSW, a program called the Isolated Patients Travel and Accommodation Assistance Scheme (IPTAAS) may help with the cost of travelling to treatment and accommodation. You may be eligible if you have to travel more than 100 km each way for treatment or have several trips that total 200 km or more in a week.

For treatment closer to home, you may be able to use community transport services or Cancer Council's free Transport to Treatment service.

## Where will I stay?

You might stay in hospital for treatment (inpatient) or come and go each day (outpatient). If you are an outpatient, you might want to stay near the hospital. Ask the social worker if there is accommodation close by and if someone from mob can stay too. You might be able to find a local hotel, motel or hostel, or Cancer Council might be able to help you find somewhere to stay.

## What if I have a complaint?

Talk to your doctor or nurse first. You can also talk to the social worker or Aboriginal hospital liaison officer. If your problem isn't solved, talk to the Health Care Complaints Commission.

Call 13 11 20  
if you need  
support.

## More information

- **Cancer Council**  
13 11 20  
[cancercouncil.com.au](http://cancercouncil.com.au)
- **Services Australia**  
1800 136 380 (*Centrelink Indigenous call centre*)  
1800 556 955 (*Medicare Indigenous access line*)  
[servicesaustralia.gov.au](http://servicesaustralia.gov.au)
- **Your local Aboriginal Health Service**
- **Health Care Complaints Commission**  
1800 043 159  
[hccc.nsw.gov.au](http://hccc.nsw.gov.au)
- **Isolated Patients Travel and Accommodation Assistance Scheme**  
1800 478 227  
[iptaas.health.nsw.gov.au](http://iptaas.health.nsw.gov.au)

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The design features elements from the artwork *Healing Journey* by Carissa Paglino. Carissa was born and raised in Newcastle (Awabakal country) and is a descendant of the Wanaruah people from the Upper Hunter Valley in NSW. Cancer Council NSW's respect symbol was designed by Marcus Lee, a descendant of the Karajarri people.



Cancer Council NSW acknowledges Traditional Custodians of Country and recognises the continuing connection to lands, waters and communities. We pay our respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and to Elders past, present and emerging.

