

A handbook for patients

travelling to Townsville



for people with cancer and their families

Community Services

The generosity of Queenslanders makes this service possible.
Visit www.cancerqld.org.au

We are an independent, community-based charity and are not government funded

For information and support contact our Helpline on 13 11 20,
Monday to Friday 8am to 8pm



The Cancer Council Queensland is a not-for-profit, non-government organisation that provides information and support free of charge for people with cancer, their families and friends throughout Queensland. These services are made possible through the generous donations of Queenslanders and we thank them for their continued support. If you would like to know more about the information and support services provided by The Cancer Council Queensland, call **The Cancer Council Helpline** on **13 11 20** (toll free) Monday to Friday, 8am-8pm.

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Introduction

Although Townsville will be familiar to many northerners, when it comes to staying for cancer treatment you may feel bewildered and lost; it may mean leaving home for the first time, leaving children, pets and friends behind and travelling for long hours.

In this booklet you will find a list of services available to help make your stay more comfortable. These services may be provided at the hospital where you are receiving treatment, or by other agencies such as The Cancer Council Queensland.



Welcome

Welcome to Townsville, Australia's largest tropical city...

In Townsville you will find beaches in the heart of the city, bush walks, the magic of Magnetic Island, a casino, theatres, nightclubs, cinemas, an aquarium, museums, a wildlife sanctuary and a town common.

The city's port is the gateway to the Great Barrier Reef with large, safe dive and reef cruise vessels operating daily.

There are lots of shopping options, including a variety of weekend markets.

For further information about what to see and do, please contact:

Townsville Enterprise Ltd
Enterprise House
6 The Strand
Townsville Qld 4810

General enquiries..... Ph: (07) 4726 2728

Townsville Convention Bureau..... Ph: (07) 4726 2732

Visitor Information Ph: (07) 4721 1116



Climate

The Townsville region is blessed with beautiful weather, basking in sunshine for more than 300 days each year.

Spring: September, October and November. The average temperatures are between 17 - 30 degrees Celsius.

Summer: The wet season, December, January and February. Average temperatures are between 23 - 31 degrees Celsius.

Autumn: March, April and May. Average temperatures are between 20 - 28 degrees Celsius.

Winter: June, July and August. Average temperatures are 13 - 26 degrees Celsius.

Clothing

Casual, lightweight clothing is suitable for the North Queensland climate, with warmer clothing required for the evenings during the winter months. Sunscreen, hats, sunglasses and long sleeved shirts are a must all year round.



Accommodation

Accommodation can be organised with the assistance of the social worker or travel clerk at your local hospital. The Townsville Hospital has welfare officers, social workers and travel clerks who can help you with accommodation and travel arrangements.

The Cancer Council Queensland accommodation facility in Townsville is the Gluyas Rotary Lodge. The Lodge consists of 20 self contained, air conditioned units which are comfortable and secure. A courtesy bus runs between the Lodge and the Townsville Hospital several times each day. Please call your nearest office of The Cancer Council Queensland for a Lodge brochure. The phone numbers are listed at the back of this booklet.



Support from staff at Gluyas Rotary Lodge

The Cancer Council Queensland Cancer Support Co-ordinator and lodge supervisor are available during office hours to assist you.

Lodge bookings should be placed during office hours (Monday – Friday, 8.30am to 5pm) on telephone (07) 4721 1644.

Other accommodation options in Townsville

For more information on alternative accommodation facilities in Townsville, please contact:

- The welfare officer, social worker or travel clerk at your regional hospital;
- The nearest office of The Cancer Council Queensland, listed at the back of this booklet; or
- The Cancer Council Helpline on 13 11 20 (toll free) Monday to Friday, 8am to 8pm.



Being met in Townsville

The Cancer Council Queensland offers a transport service for patients arriving in Townsville by plane, bus or train.

A volunteer will welcome you to Townsville and drive you to your accommodation or treating hospital. At least 48 hours notice (prior to your arrival) is required so a volunteer can be organised. The volunteer will be wearing a badge identifying them as a volunteer of The Cancer Council Queensland.

For further information contact the nearest office of The Cancer Council Queensland or our Helpline on 13 11 20 (toll free) Monday to Friday, 8am to 8pm at least 48 hours prior to arriving in Townsville.



Patient Travel Subsidy Scheme (Queensland Health)

Accommodation and travel – financial assistance

The Patient Travel Subsidy Scheme (PTSS) provides financial assistance to patients who need to access specialist medical or dental services which are not available within their local area (i.e. within 50 kilometres of a patient's nearest hospital). The scheme can provide a subsidy towards the cost of travel and accommodation for patients, and in some cases their carers who are required to accompany them.

Eligibility

- You need a current Medicare card (or be eligible to hold a Medicare card). Please note: PTSS is not means tested.
- The services you are seeking must be classified as 'essential'.
- The service you require is not available locally.
- The service you are seeking is not within 50 kilometres of your nearest public hospital.
- You are not receiving financial assistance with travel and accommodation in other ways (for example, Workers Compensation or Department of Veterans' Affairs).
- Your local medical practitioner must refer you to the service.
- The medical officer at your local hospital will be responsible for deciding whether or not financial assistance will be offered for a carer when you are required to travel and stay outside your home town.

Financial assistance for transport

- The least expensive form of transport is provided to the patient and approved carer from the transport terminal in the town where your hospital is located, to the transport terminal in the town to which you are travelling.
- Private car travel is subsidised at 15 cents per kilometre.
- Air travel may only be approved if necessary for medical reasons.

Financial assistance for accommodation

- Assistance for patient and approved carer of up to \$30 per person per night.
- If you are not a concession card holder, you must pay the cost of the first four nights of accommodation in a financial year.
- If you are accommodated by friends or relatives, assistance for patient and approved carer is available at \$10 per person per night.

How to apply

- Forms are available from the Patient Travel Office at your local hospital or your treating doctor.
- Your local doctor will complete the necessary forms, which you must take or post to your local hospital.
- The medical superintendent of your local hospital will determine what assistance you are eligible for.
- Assistance must be approved before you travel, except under special circumstances.

Concerns or complaints

If you are not satisfied with the way your claim for assistance has been managed, the following steps may be helpful:

- Step one** Discuss your concerns with the medical superintendent of your local hospital, who originally processed your application form.
- Step two** You can try the Health Service District Manager. Your local hospital can provide you with the name and address of this person.
- Step three** Contact the Health Rights Commission on (07) 3120 5999 or freecall 1800 077 308.

Complaints in writing can be very effective. Such complaints should outline the circumstances of the situation, times, dates, locations and the names of persons involved.

If you believe the guidelines or criteria for PTSS needs to be improved you can write to:

Office of Rural Health
Queensland Health
PO Box 1006
ROMA Qld 4455

Need more information?

If you would like more information about the Patient Travel Subsidy Scheme, Queensland Health has a booklet outlining the scheme in further detail. The booklet, **Guidelines for Patients and their Carers**, is available from your GP or local public hospital.

Information and support

Isolated Patients' Travel and Accommodation Scheme (IPTAAS)

This is very similar to the Queensland scheme, and is applicable to those patients in New South Wales who are required to travel more than 100km to the nearest suitable specialist for medical treatment. The rates for travel and accommodation expenses are similar to the Queensland scheme. For more details about IPTAAS contact your nearest public hospital in New South Wales.

Veterans' Affairs

Patients who are seeking financial assistance toward travel and accommodation expense through the Department of Veterans Affairs must seek approval prior to finalising arrangements. For further details contact:

Department of Veterans' Affairs
150 Walker Street
Townsville Qld 4810
Phone: (07) 4722 3333

The Cancer Council Queensland co-ordinates several programs that can provide you with information and support. These include:

- **Living with Cancer/Healthy Living Seminar**
Education, information and support for those with cancer, their families and friends.
- **Breast Cancer Matters**
Education, information and support specifically for women diagnosed with breast cancer.
- **Look Good...Feel Better**
A program to help women affected by chemotherapy and radiation therapy to look and feel their best.
- **Brain Tumour Support Service**

For further information please contact The Cancer Council Helpline on 13 11 20 (toll free) Monday to Friday, 8am to 8pm.

Helpful address and phone numbers

Centerlink

Phone: 13 10 21

Greyhound Australia

Sunferries Terminal

The Breakwater

Sir Leslie Thiess Drive

Townsville Qld 4810

Phone: (07) 4772 5100

Medicare

Northtown Arcade

Flinders Mall

Townsville QLD 4810

Phone: 13 20 11

Qantas

Phone: 13 13 13

Queensland Ambulance

Emergency Ph: 000

Non emergency transports Ph: 13 12 33

Queensland Rail

502 Flinders Street

Townsville Qld 4810

Phone: (07) 4772 8288

Townsville Transit Centre

21 Plume Street

South Townsville Qld 4810

Phone: (07) 4721 3083

Townsville Taxis

Phone: 13 10 08

Townsville Enterprise

Enterprise House

6 The Strand

Townsville Qld 4810

General Enquiries Ph: (07) 4726 2728

Townsville Convention Bureau Ph: (07) 4726 2732

Visitor Information Ph: (07) 4721 1116

Shopping centres

Flinders Mall

Townsville Qld

(Woolworths, speciality stores)

North Ward Shopping Centre

Eyre Street

North Ward Qld

(Bi Lo, Brumby's, newsagent, chemist)

Castletown Shopping Centre

Cnr Kings Road and Woollock Street

Hyde Park Qld

(Target, Woolworths, IGA, speciality stores)

Stockland

Ross River Road

Aikenvale Qld

(Woolworths, IGA, Big W, speciality stores)

Centro Plaza

Nathan Street

Aitkenvale Qld

(K-Mart, Coles, speciality stores)

Hospitals

The Townsville Hospital

100 Angus Smith Drive

Douglas Qld 4814

Phone: (07) 4796 1111

Oncology services

Radiation Unit

Phone: (07) 4796 1662

Chemotherapy day unit

Phone: (07) 4796 1620

Oncology ward

Phone: (07) 4796 2052

Mater Misericordiae Private Hospital - Pimlico

21-37 Fulham Road

Pimlico Qld

Phone: (07) 4727 4444

Mater Misericordiae Private Hospital - Hyde Park

9-13 Bayswater Road

Hyde Park Qld

Phone: (07) 4722 8822

More information

For more information about your cancer and its treatment, contact your treating health professional, The Cancer Council Helpline or your nearest office of The Cancer Council Queensland.

The Cancer Council Helpline is available toll free on **13 11 20**, Monday to Friday from 8am to 8pm. The Cancer Council Helpline provides information and support to people diagnosed with cancer, their family and friends.



The Cancer Council Queensland offices

Brisbane

553 Gregory Terrace
Fortitude Valley Qld 4006
Ph: (07) 3258 2200

Cairns

169 Aumuller Street
Bungalow Qld 4870
Ph: (07) 4031 1555

Townsville

24 Warburton Street
North Ward Qld 4870
Ph: (07) 4721 1644

Rockhampton

43 Upper Dawson Road
Rockhampton Qld 4700
Ph: (07) 4927 7088

Sunshine Coast

Shop 4, Credit Union Australia Plaza
Corner Maroochydore Road
and Baden Powell Street
Maroochydore Qld 4558
Ph: (07) 5443 6300

Gold Coast

Corner Short Street and Marine Parade
Southport Qld 4215
Ph: (07) 5591 1500

Toowoomba

137 Herries Street
Toowoomba Qld 4870
Ph: (07) 4638 4799

More information

For more information about your cancer and its treatment contact your treating health professional or your nearest office of The Cancer Council Queensland.

You can also contact the **The Cancer Council Helpline** toll free on **13 11 20**, Monday to Friday from 8am to 8pm.



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