

CHANGES TO THE AFTER HOURS TAXI TRANSPORT ASSISTANCE SCHEME EXPLAINED

From 1 July 2020, criteria for using the After Hours Taxi Transport Assistance Scheme (ATAS) have been updated so that **only taxi fares for travel for 100 kilometres or less (one way) to or from an after hours health service will be funded**, unless:

- The nearest after hours health service is located more than 100 kilometres away or
- It is medically justified (as directed by your GP) that you need to attend an after hours health service to access advanced medical care or
- You have arrived at the health service via ambulance and your place of residence is located more than 100 kilometres away from that health service.

What is after hours urgent care?

After hours care is regarded as any time outside of 8am to 6pm on weekdays, 8am and 12 noon on Saturdays and includes all day on Sundays and any public holiday.

Urgent care is for people whose health condition cannot wait for treatment until regular GP health services are next available. It should not be a substitute for GP health care that could otherwise occur during regular business hours

What is happening with the ATAS service?

ATAS and the associated patient streaming service (phone triage service) will discontinue after 30 June, 2021.

New measures for supporting urgent after hours GP services across western Victoria are currently being investigated. These include making better use of technologies such as phone and/or video telehealth services. These new measures will be progressively introduced from late 2021 onwards.

The updated eligibility criteria for ATAS means subsidised taxi travel is available to those people who most need it in the meantime.

Other options for after hours primary health care

If you require urgent after hours care, follow these steps:

- Step 1 – Call your local GP or clinic to see if they are open. If not, go to step 2.
- Step 2 – Call the GP helpline on 1800 022 222 for medical advice and support.
- Step 3 – If it is an emergency, call 000.

How can I learn more about the new after hours programs?

Updates on the process for supporting the development of and introducing the new programs for urgent after hours health care will be published on the Western Victoria Primary Health Network website: westvicphn.com.au

More information

If you have questions regarding changes to the ATAS and patient streaming service programs, please email afterhours@westvicphn.com.au