

Asylum Seekers Assistance Scheme - Provision of Hospital Services

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Functional Sub group Corporate Administration - Fees

Summary Charges and arrangements that apply when asylum seekers are treated in public health organisations.

Author Branch Finance and Business Management

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Applies to Area Health Services/Chief Executive Governed Statutory Health Corporation, Board Governed Statutory Health Corporations, Affiliated Health Organisations - Non Declared, NSW Dept of Health, Public Hospitals

Distributed to Public Health System, NSW Department of Health, Public Hospitals

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Director-General

This Policy Directive may be varied, withdrawn or replaced at any time. Compliance with this directive is **mandatory** for NSW Health and is a condition of subsidy for public health organisations.

CIRCULAR

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Contact	David Seale (02) 9391 9162

**ASYLUM SEEKERS ASSISTANCE SCHEME
- PROVISION OF HOSPITAL SERVICES**

The Australian Red Cross administers a Commonwealth funded scheme on behalf of the Department of Immigration in respect of individuals seeking asylum.

The scheme, known as the Asylum Seekers Assistance Scheme (ASAS), provides in the main for the living and accommodation costs of eligible persons.

In certain circumstances, the scheme will also fund the health care needs of individuals. In these instances the individual is issued with a letter (copy attached) guaranteeing payment to the hospital by the Australian Red Cross in respect of the cost of hospitalisation.

Where a person, in receipt of the letter from the Australian Red Cross, is hospitalised in a New South Wales public hospital, they are to be classified as ineligible.

It should be noted that the letter will be:-

- addressed to a specific hospital
- identify the patient
- identify the patient's condition to be treated.

Services outside the scope of the letter should not be provided without the written authority of the Australian Red Cross.

Upon discharge, an invoice is to be raised at the appropriate ineligible rate and forwarded directly to the Australian Red Cross, 159 Clarence Street, Sydney 2000.

Distributed in accordance with circular list(s):

A 22 B C 24 D E
F G H I J 22
K L M N P Q

73 Miller Street North Sydney NSW 2060
Locked Mail Bag 961 North Sydney NSW 2059
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Initially, payment will be forthcoming from Australian Red Cross at a rate not less than the current private shared daily accommodation charge of \$191 per day. This situation has resulted from uncertainty by Australian Red Cross as to whether the funding received from the Commonwealth Department of Immigration is sufficient to meet hospital accommodation at the ineligible rate.

Australian Red Cross will monitor the accounts that it receives from NSW public hospitals over a four month period. Should it be determined, based on this data, that funding from the Commonwealth is inadequate, this Department will prepare a submission to the Commonwealth seeking additional ASAS funding for Australian Red Cross.

Following the review and submission to the Commonwealth, if necessary, it is anticipated that payment of the residual of hospital accounts will be forthcoming. Should there be cause for this arrangement to alter, you will be advised appropriately.

The following accounts are also to be rendered by hospitals on Australian Red Cross:

- Diagnostic accounts or accounts for services provided by staff specialists exercising their right of practice.
- Surgically implanted prostheses.
- Non-inpatient occasions of service.
- Non-inpatient pharmaceuticals.

Emergency circumstances may arise which require hospitalisation of an individual who indicates eligibility to ASAS, but is not in receipt of the required documentation from Australian Red Cross. In these instances, the necessary treatment is to be provided. Australian Red Cross is to be contacted at the first available opportunity to determine eligibility. The Australian Red Cross contact is Mr Ken Hastie, Manager, Refugee Department, telephone (02) 229 4246 Monday to Friday, between the hours of 9.00 am and 5.00 pm. The outcome of the enquiry will determine the course of action to be taken by the hospital ie. bill the Australian Red Cross where accepted under ASAS or bill the patient where entitlement to ASAS is denied in which case billing procedures in accordance with Circular 94/23 dated 18 February 1994 are to be immediately actioned.

Please ensure that the contents of this circular are brought to the attention of appropriate admission and other relevant staff within your administration.

Ross Wraight
Acting Director-General