



## Survey on Car Parking at new Perth Children's Hospital

The Health Consumers Council is an independent, not for profit organisation whose vision is for equitable, person-centred healthcare for all Western Australians. ABC's Alisha O'Flaherty investigated the arrangements for parking subsidies for parents of sick children at the new Perth Children's Hospital (PCH) and filed a report on this, and asked HCC for comment. As reported by Alisha the new arrangements for PCH will be as follows:

There will no longer be free parking for families. Those families that are eligible for a rebate will pay \$5 per day. Eligibility is noted as per below:

"The endorsed criteria for eligible patients at PCH are:

- Inpatients (admitted patients)
- Day 1 onwards
- Patient Assisted Travel Scheme eligible patients
- ACROD permit holders

Day 3 onwards

- Concession and Health Care card holders

Day 5 onwards

- All inpatients from Day 5 of the single admission

Outpatients (non-admitted patients)

- Frequent outpatient appointments – 4 or more outpatient visits in 28 days (including siblings)
- ACROD permit holders

The car parks at the QEII Medical Centre are operated by Capella Parking, a private company which the State entered into a Public Private Partnership for the construction of the multi-deck car park. Wilson Parking manage the carparks on behalf of Capella"

### What do you think?

- Rebate should apply from day 2 of admission.
- It's not good enough. The minimal fees charged at PMH are perfect. This cost is not affordable to most families.
- I don't think immediate family should have to pay for parking if their child is an inpatient. Whether it be for 1 day or 1 year and regardless of whether they are on a disability concession or just a concession or not at all. Even with the reduced rate its \$35 for a week for concession holders who's to say that those that aren't on a concession may also struggle financially as they take unplanned leave off work, find and pay for carers for their other children etc.



- "appropriate but still not going to cover the fact that there is a large amount of people who don't qualify for health care or concession cards but don't have the extra money.
- It's not always the direct parent or guardian that can attend (work etc.)
- there should be a single card or ticket provided on admission so family/friends can share the one ticket/card but only ONE car is allowed at any time"
- I live in Ellenbrook so unfortunately public transport is not an option to get to pmh. We also are low income earners but are just above the threshold for a health care card. So while \$5 a day is affordable the \$23 is not. We had 5 visits to both midland health campus and pmh in one week due to a injury. We payed parking at all visits we also used a significant of petrol and since it was just before Christmas and already financially difficult time. We ended up borrowing money to buy groceries from family. We don't have any credit cards and unexpected medical emergencies are already stressful enough without adding the price of parking to it.
- Acrod holders should receive free parking all the time as it has been at pmh. If not free then discounted heavily at any time for acrod holders. Anybody admitted should also get a discount for each day.
- No fees for any immediate family with a sick child in hospital or as an outpatient
- Disgusting and appalling. Going to cost me a fortune every time my son is unwell and gets admitted.
- I have a 4 year old grandson who was diagnosed with Leukemia one year ago. My grandson has spent a huge amount of the last 12 months either admitted into hospital for treatment or as a result of side effects, or as a result of frequent infections. This family has suffered hugely since their little boy was diagnosed - the trauma of his diagnosis, the trauma associated with his treatment, the days and weeks that they have been in hospital and their fear that he may not get better. They also have a two year old, that is being taking on this emotional roller-coaster. The emotional, physical and financial burden has been massive. As a result of Hunter's diagnosis and the intensive treatment that has followed, they have lost all their savings and just surviving financially has been extremely hard. They have come very close to losing their house and are just hanging on with a interest free loan from the bank. Hunter still have two and a half years of high risk treatment ahead of him, so nothing is going to get easier for a long while. The one thing that has made things a little easier is a free parking permit for their family car. I think any changes that would require them to pay anything for parking would be incredibly unfair and should be resisted strongly. These families have everything on the line, they have no choice about the amount of time they are admitted into hospital and they last thing they need is to have the added worry about the cost of parking on top of everything else.
- Not happy. Private companies are there to make money. Making money out of sick people is appalling
- That is disgusting, families are already stressed out by having kids at the hospital. Some families are one income and now have to make that stretch further to be there for their kids.
- Ridiculous
- "Parking should be affordable for parents of ALL patients at the hospital, there should not be a hierarchy which will always leave people behind.



- Public health care should be free, especially for children, and that includes the obvious need to park once you arrive at hospital. Any expenses just discourages some from attending hospital when needed or even makes it completely inaccessible for some.
- Maybe an ambulance will be preferred method of getting there without costing money on transport "
- This is ridiculous! As a rural parent who has had to use PMH not only do we have to pay for parking, but travel and accommodation. It adds up
- Honestly? It's ridiculous. I won't say more as it won't be pretty.
- I understand we need to pay for the car park. Once Capella pays off costs does the money paid revert to the government.
- I think no family whose child needs to visit a public hospital should have the financial concern of parking at the high rates being charged. The \$5 rebate is a disgrace.
- Parents have more to think about than parking fees
- I think this arrangement is too hard financially on parents. If a child is in hospital you are usually there all day, which is very expensive. If as a pensioner you need to pay for 3 day's before getting a cheaper rate, you probably can't afford to eat. If the parents are working & one has to give up work because of a long term illness with one of their children, they are already under financial pressure due to loss of income. These arrangements are just putting people under more stress in an already stressful situation
- This is ridiculous. Us parents do not choose for our kids to be sick requiring specialised care only available at PCH and to make it harder I live 250km away, so on top of petrol, lunch (sometimes dinner because of late appointments) I will have to fork out more money just for parking.
- Ridiculous. These families are already going through enough without the burden of parking fees. Especially if you are from the country and already have extra expenses in getting to the hospital like accommodation, fuel and food/drinks (PATS does not nearly cover it)
- Disgusting! Parking should be free! We aren't shopping we are having sick kids treated for illness!
- Ridiculous. Having a chronically ill child causes a great deal of financial stress on our family without being slugged for parking as well! My daughter is not permitted to use public transport, so we have no other option but to drive!
- Terrible solution, not enough concessions given
- Disgraceful..... the people that came up with this pricing or the idea to outsource to Wilsons have obviously never had the stress of sick children in hospital.
- In think it is disgusting to make money off parents/visitors of sick children at the hospital.
- It sounds ok but there needs to be a cut off for when the \$5 is no longer payable e.g.. A continuous inpatient admission longer than a certain number of days.
- WILSON should not be let anywhere near Public parking stations. All they are interested in is PROFIT.
- Parking will become very unaffordable for some families, particularly as there is no free CAT bus service to PMH as there is now, and there are very limited places for time-limited Street parking in the area. Vulnerable and low income families already struggle to visit their children in hospital and expensive parking will limit this further.



- Extremely unfair if you have a child under oncology. These children have multiple visits/stays per month and don't always have a concession card. These parents are already struggling without having to pay exuberant car parking fees
- Still much too much for long term inpatients e.g. parents of cancer kiddies.
- I feel very sad for the parents of sick children that unfortunately get to spend time at pmh. On top of all the other expenses that they face, they then have to worry about parking and paying for tickets.
- If my daughter wasn't an Acrod Permit holder, the parking costs for us would be very expensive! It's a big bill for families with chronically ill children.
- As a parent of a child fighting cancer my family can't afford this as well as having to pay for fuel to get to and from appointments although my 9yo is now in maintenance for Leukemia and we only have to visit once a month unless blood counts are low our money is getting stretched far enough as it is with only one income. Being kiwis we are unable to attain any help from Centrelink or the family tax benefit which is a mere \$220 a fortnight.
- It's just too expensive and the worry when you are in this hospital should not be about parking.
- I think that it sucks! What a way to penalise the families of sick children!
- Ultimately, I believe parking should be free at children's hospitals. Or like at the Coles car park in Subiaco perhaps have a 3-hour free allowance.
- I am personally very upset the current criteria is so stringent and non-encompassing of those families who are frequently visiting pmh.... further more disadvantaged families who may be beginning their journey of long term short visits will not be supported.... medication costs, and paperwork through Centrelink with their ever-changing policies and regulations on top of a child with medical needs is stressful enough without including paperwork for parking, for which they may not be deemed eligible for rebate ... for example 4 nights of 1 week, followed by 3 nights of the next... forgive me if I am not reading the simplistic standards.... I would appreciate more information... these criteria listed cannot begin to fill the necessary rebates for struggling families of children who need frequent hospital stays....
- There are 2 private companies managing this parking facility. That is 2 companies making profit for nothing more than issuing tickets to park at a government owned facility, perhaps they should be forced to accept lower margins. Alternatively the parking can be un-privatised.
- "I think it is an unfair financial burden to add strain on many families at difficult times in their lives. Parking costs are also the last thing you need to be worrying about when going to emergency. \$20+ per day for most people is unaffordable.
- I think it's appalling of the state government to even consider charging sick people for parking. Such a thing doesn't consider the parents who have suddenly had to leave work to care for their children through say some sudden and long term diagnosis like cancer. It doesn't consider the pressures of single parent families. It's opportunistic and disgusting that the government would seek to profit or would allow a private business to profit from vulnerable people in vulnerable situations
- "This is a terrible & heartless decision.



- Our son was admitted for 180 days over 9 months with countless outpatients appointments for a further 2 years. The \$900 we would have been charged for parking under this policy would have sent us into real financial difficulty. Many oncology families are already losing their homes because of the hidden costs of treatment and loss of income.
- I think it's absolutely disgusting!! As if most of us aren't going through enough. Having to deal with parking as it is and having one or more children, and especially if your child is already going through cancer etc..
- This should state that anyone not eligible for \$5 a day parking will need to pay \$23. I think this is absolutely ludicrous. How is anyone even meant to afford that. I have no idea what my family is going to do. My son has regular appointments at the hospital which he will continue to do so till he is at least 17, he is currently 4. We don't always have 4 visits within 28 days but at the very least have 2 a month. It is going to cost us \$50 just to get to the appointments he needs to have! My son is 16 months stable from stage 4 high risk cancer and has many issues from his treatment. He will continue to need regular appointments across 5 departments of the hospital. Many onc haem patients are similar. There needs to be more considerations to families needing to access parking LONG term (many years) that are attending the hospital with regular frequent visits but not as often as once a week. I think it's so ridiculous and just ignorant to drop the price down to \$5 after 3 days inpatient. When we were in that long my husband or family members or friends would collect the car and take it home. It's the families that have regular day stays that really need the concession. \$23 a day is a disgusting cruel joke. It is going to hurt so many families.
- What about those with frequent admissions? Under these conditions we would not qualify for most of the 135 nights my son stayed for chemo
- Disgraceful.
- Unfair. If you are caring for a patient you have enough stress in your visit.
- a lot of bullshit who can effort 21.30 per day
- Disgusting...just adds to all their worries.
- It's appalling. Parents of sick children do not need added financial stress imposed through daily parking costs. Most want to spend as much time as they can with their child and will just park close by. It is gouging vulnerable people.
- It's hard enough for parents let alone worrying about moving their car and parking.
- Outrageous. I am there weekly for an overnight admission every single week. You will bankrupt me.
- It's appalling that the government did not build their own parking. It shows a complete lack of understanding of one families have to deal with. For us this will mean less food on the table to pay for parking instead. It breaks my heart.
- I think it is not good to have to pay so much for parking when public transport is limited
- Wilson Parking need to be boycotted
- Charging this much for parking, even after the rebate, for families of sick children is disgusting and whoever has chosen to do this should be ashamed of their greed.
- Too expensive. I'm on low income... and I don't get low income health care card or concession. Even I have got disabilities, this will make it harder for me to bring my kids to hospital for treatments to pay for parking. (I'm NZ citizen on unprotected SCV444 with no



pathway to current permanent resident visas and Australia Citizenship to be able to get concession to help with paying low cost carparks.

- It's a rip off.
- Shit for kids and parents , take money off the disabilities
- Absolutely horrendous, as Wilson is the dearest car Park operator in Perth
- Parking at PMH is so limited I can never get a cheap bay onsite and need to park a long way away and walk. That being said I usually pay \$7-\$10 for parking in a multi-story car park. I would struggle to pay anything above this amount as I am a single parent on a part time income.
- The subsidy is nice, but your average family will be paying over \$40 in parking for an over night/2 day stay, and over \$80 before they get to the day 5 \$5/ day. This will be a huge stress on some families, and very unreasonable, potentially leading to either families not taking their children to hospital when needed, or leaving them there without a parent because they can't afford the parking costs.
- Absolutely disgusting, all inpatients should be eligible from day 1. A rebate system is ridiculous and will put low income families into financial hardship. Some may not even be able to pay initially. I am a nurse and work with families who cannot even afford the \$6.80 prescription fee for their kids. There is no mention of when or how the funds get rebated back which is worrying. Wilson Parking is notoriously expensive and I refuse to ever use it in Perth. CPP is much more reasonable. I have ACROD for my son who attends PMH so would be eligible straight away but I'm on a reasonable income and would feel awful that those who cannot afford it are paying more. All inpatients from day 1 should be eligible.
- Parents of sick children have enough to worry about and shouldn't have to pay
- Not good
- Having to pay to park is disgusting. It is stressful enough to have a sick child without the added stress of having to pay.
- "Families on concession cards are unlikely to be able to afford the first few days of parking at full price. Please consider that some families MUST travel by car to reduce the chance of infection and spreading infection that can occur on public transport. This is specifically an issue for oncology and transplant patients. Also, what about outpatient and who are holding concession cards.
- We recently had an outpatient appointment that took 6 hours and we had to pay for fuel for 120 km (return trip) plus parking."
- It's a heartless evil money hungry outcome. A disgusting 'partnership ' which had little consideration on how this will impact suffering families
- That it will be unaffordable to us and many families that have to use the hospital
- The Liberal Govt. should hang its head in shame for privatising in the first place. Hospital property should remain in State Government hands.
- I think people who are in hospital or visiting should not need to pay for parking (or just a small payment). Most families can't afford to pay this if they are regulars at the hospital or need to be there for an extended time??
- Parking for families with sick children should be free. People are not there for entertainment or shopping they are there because they need medical assistance



- I think it's ridiculous that a private company can make a profit from people visiting a public hospital. I think it is despicable that they are preying on the families of ill children in particular. This eligibility criteria is an absolute minimum for them to provide a token effort to prove that they care about the community. The people that meet the eligibility criteria should have free parking, as should inpatient families who visit the hospital more than twice a year.
- I believe the \$5 a day should be the cost of all patients at all times, not after 5 days as an inpatient!!
- "I understand that the government doesn't have capacity to run it's own car parks, but when tenders are put out, cost to users should be considered. I don't understand why parking at hospital, a place where sick people who are usually already financially struggling due to medical costs, needs to cost more than/ equivalent to CBD parking. Hospital parking should really be non-profit in my opinion. Or when selecting criteria for a rebate, make it more flexible and discretionary too (e.g. through the social workers.
- Sick kids have a right to have their parents with them when they are unwell and probably scared. It's not fair to make them potentially miss this with a factor being the parent can't afford the parking."
- I think it's terrible. Parents who are at a children's hospital are there because of something serious, not by choice.
- Terrible, targeting already struggling families who most of the time do not have the extra money to afford this service, especially not at the drop of the hat in emergencies for their children.
- If you have a child admitted into hospital it should be \$5 a day regardless of socioeconomic status, location, length of stay or any other reason. We have had 3 admissions this year and the amount they are planning to charge before rebate is ridiculous. I can't work when my child is in hospital so we are already financially strained. I feel they are taking advantage of sick children. Who does that? Shame.
- All hospital parking should be free
- I think public hospital parking should be FREE
- It's terrible and is going to cripple many families at the worst time when u have a sick kid.
- It is stupid and unfair for parents who have children who are either long term patients \*cancer patients) or require frequent visits to hospital. It's a huge further financial burden on them and is almost a penalty for having a sick child
- I think parking costs should be minimal because let's face it no one really chooses to go to a hospital
- I think it's outrageous to make the most vulnerable in or community pay to receive hospital treatment.
- I have a lot of hospital appointments in a year as my son was prem as I only have the one child I wouldn't reach the four a month. I think this is ridiculous.
- I think it is a joke the fact that they have build this hospital miles away from a train or bus station only makes it even more of a nonsense
- Very disappointing as we are frequent visitors and rely on quick easy access to the hospital. Its not a choice to attend



- I will have to pay for 3 days parking yet I'm on a pension with a disabled child.. Because he walks I cant have a acrod but his medical costs could be same or more..
- I think charging ill people or their families for parking is abhorrent.
- Absolutely disgusting. Beyond that, what I think of this blatant money-grabbing exercise is unprintable. Parking costs should NEVER have to be a consideration for patients or carers (especially, for example, parents of kids with complex cases who spend a LOT of time in hospital). Privatised parking is nothing more than a money grab and doesn't give any consideration to the people it will affect. KEMH and other hospitals don't have privatised parking, why should PCH?
- I think the parking fee should be low flat rate of about \$5 per day for everyone. People are not parking there because they choose to. They are parking there because they HAVE to.
- People only go to hospital for when they or someone they know is really sick. To make a huge profit on that is morally wrong! Having a rebate is not good either. These people probably won't have time, in the right head space or not important enough than seeing their sick family member.
- I think this is far more complex than it needs to be, especially for families going through traumatic events that need their full focus
- Taking advantage of those in an already stressed and probably upsetting situation should not be done. I know from experience when my daughter was rushed to hospital I didn't care where my car was at first - but an expensive parking bill on her release was not what we needed.
- Children who spend a lot of time in hospital should not be disadvantaged because their parents cannot afford exorbitant parking costs.
- Not free health care for all if extortionate rates charged for those that need to park. Why put the car parks in the hands of private companies in the first place?
- As a mum of a disabled child with many extra issues, this will prevent me from attending all appointments as my ability to work is limiting, due to my role as a carer and finances are already stretched beyond measure
- Disgusting that families of sick children are paying this! Who the hell did the procurement for this hospital?
- This is terrible. Are those that are there to support someone who's loved one is very ill or dying going to have to pay \$20.00 a day? How can Concession and Health Care card holders come up with the money before their concession kicks in? \$40-60 is a huge amount of money for those on limited incomes. On Day 5 if admission, families and loved ones would have forked out \$100 or more.
- The cost of parking at hospitals should be minimal and not be run at a profit or by for profit companies it is disgusting that the govt have entered into for profit arrangements - families have enough to worry about
- "I don't mind everyone having to pay. That's fine but to be fair it should be all inpatients get 1 parent car to park for \$5 per day from day 1 of an admission including same day procedure. All other parking for visitors and out patients should be first 2 hours \$2/hr then back to normal rates. Kids who have multiple outpatient appts in a day should be considered the same as SDP kids. No extra concession for disabled or PATS patients as having a sick or





injured kid is stressful regardless of ability. Extended admits over 6 days should be \$15 per week or part thereof for two cars.

- Staff should be \$5/shift too
- parking should be nominal for all. \$5 max. when you have a sick child having to pay for parking is an expense you don't need.
- It's disgusting that our public hospital carparks have been outsourced. Staff who do not have parking rights are paying \$25.30 a day too.
- This will be a big problem for us as frequent visitors to the children's hospital with a low income. Our longest stay so far was 6 months which would have cost a small fortune in parking at the new hospital
- I think it is ludicrous that parents with sick or disabled children are charged for parking at hospitals
- Public hospital car parks should never be privatised, or used as a revenue source. Only a minimal, nominal rate should be charged, i.e. the \$5 a day, or 60c an hour that the health department run car parks at PMH and KEMH charge. For those on low incomes, or with complex kids who are regular hospital attendees, the cost will be significant and parking costs should never ever be a consideration when a child needs medical attention under our public system.
- As the mother of an inpatient that fits within eligibility for day 1 onwards and outpatients rebate, I'm relieved. However, there are many parents of patients (like us) that are frequent visitors to PMH, that will not fit the eligibility, and will be significantly disadvantaged with the costs of parking.
- I think that this is outrageous price for parents to pay who have children that have medical needs; especially people like my daughter when we spend a lot of time in and out of hospital.
- "Disgusting that those with healthcare cards, and even medically complex kids with their own healthcare cards will have to accrue ~\$45 in parking costs before getting the reduced rate. All parking costs for health care holders should be \$5 a day, inpatients or outpatients.
- Taking a child to ED should never ever have a financial component attached to it. But when you're looking at \$>20 a day for parking and have a complex child with multiple admissions a year plus regular outpatients appointments it's totally unacceptable to be being charged private carpark rates to get a child necessary medical treatment at a public hospital. "
- so this is about making money. I don't understand why any person going to visit or be treated at a hospital should have to pay. There is no compassion for those doing it tough. Many parents of sick kids do it tough and this makes it even tougher.
- "Question regarding concession and health care card holders - must the parent / carer have one or will the family be eligible for the rebate if the child has the card? I imagine that may be the case for many special needs families when the parent receives Carers Allowance.
- 5 days paying full price for parking when your child is in hospital seems an excessive additional burden. In my personal experience, parents /carers often need to spend all day and night at the hospital to assist with their child's care, as hospital staff don't have the time to provide the supervision that special needs children often need on the ward."



- What about those family members and friends who currently pop in to hospital to give a parent a break from the bedside for a couple of hours or to stay overnight so parents can go home to get some sleep and check in with their other children?? We also will be slugged \$9-\$23 instead of 60c an hour, making it impossible for some of us to keep giving that essential support.
- "I think this is disgusting! You are asking people who can least afford it to pay over the top and inflated prices to be with their sick children. As if they aren't stressed enough! Public transport simply is not an option for many, especially those with small children, or those with disabilities.
- Ridiculous
- Lots of people don't have health care cards and have admissions over 5 days - and finding that 120 bucks before you get a concession is a lot of money for a very many families!
- The patient parking should be more affordable. This is an added expense to families that may already be facing distress and financial hardship.
- "Absolutely ridiculous! The public transport option is not an option for many parents - like me as it takes so long via a bus to arrive at QEII medical Center and there's no option to walk 12 minutes from a train station to arrive at the hospital.
- My son can frequent up to 3 appts a week, that's still \$15 in one week! Not to mention all the other costs involved with his therapy's.
- Sick kids shouldn't have to pay parking if their health will physically decline without the care of medical professionals- these kids don't have the option to be treated at a local hospital or by a GP. The kids that frequent PMH/PCH are kids who need a tertiary Center for treatment, it is not the parents fault they have a medically complex child we have enough expenses as it is!
- I am also a staff member who will work at PCH so have the added costs of parking in Wilson's car park already! This will affect my family financially!"