

## **EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION & CARE**

### **Motion 1. Marla Oodnadatta Branch**

*“That SA ICPA thank the Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS) Port Augusta for reducing the Child and Family Health Services (CaFHS) service gap that has been experienced in previous years”.*

**Explanation:** Over the past several years, many South Australian Rural and Remote families have not been receiving appropriate CaFHS services. We thank the RFDS for being proactive and providing families and their children in the RFDS service area with a reliable service giving resources, guidance and advice.

### **Motion 2. North West Branch**

*“That SA ICPA thank the Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS) for their continued work in providing a Child and Family Health Nurse based in Port Augusta.”*

**Explanation:** Last year at conference, Mandy Smallacombe announced the exciting news that the RFDS was employing their own Child Family Health Nurse, delivering vital care to mothers and babies in the bush. This will/has made a huge difference to those in need of a specific child and family nurse and we appreciate the work that has gone in to making this change.

### **Motion 3. Port Augusta Branch**

*“The SA ICPA advocates to the Minister for Health and Well-being and the Department of Human Services to help secure the secondment of a Child and Family Health Services (CaFHS) nurse back to Remote and Isolated Children’s Exercise (RICE), ensuring new and young mothers in South Australia’s outer regions receive the support they need and do not fall through the gaps, as is happening currently.”*

**Explanation:** This would ensure that young mothers in the outer regions of South Australia have access to essential health support and services. Currently, there is concern that these mothers are not receiving the necessary care, which could lead to significant gaps in health and wellbeing services. By securing this secondment, the goal is to enhance support for these mothers and ensure they are not overlooked. In the past 12 months, three new mothers have been referred to the Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS) and have been instructed to visit the CaFHS nurse in Port Augusta. They were also asked to purchase their own scales. Previously, CaFHS nurses would visit the station to measure and assess babies’ milestones, as well as evaluate the wellbeing of mothers. These in-home CaFHS services continue to be offered to mothers in urban areas, but since this service was lost to RICE, we believe mothers in our region are being overlooked, resulting in increased isolation and a lack of necessary support.

### **Motion 4. North East Branch**

*“That SA ICPA State Council support Federal Council with their lobby to extend the Assistance for Isolated Children (AIC) Distance Education Allowance to children who are participating in eligible pre-compulsory early childhood programs.”*

**Explanation:** The age of enrolling in pre-compulsory early childhood programs now extends to 3-year-olds. The cost of setting up a suitable learning area, supplying a laptop and suitable consumables, and the travel cost to attend face to face activities is yet another financial burden on remote families as they do their best to give their children the educational opportunities their urban peers have.

#### **Motion 5. Port Augusta Branch**

*"That SA ICPA continues to support Federal Council's advocacy for the inclusion of kindergarten children in the Assistance for Isolated Children (AIC) allowance to cover the costs of creating a fun, engaging, and meaningful learning environment."*

**Explanation:** We are requesting that kindergarten children be included in the AIC to help cover the costs associated with setting up an engaging and educational learning environment.

Currently, the AIC allowance supports children from primary school onwards, but it does not extend to kindergarten-aged children. For young learners, particularly in remote or geographically isolated areas, it is essential to create a stimulating and well-equipped workspace that fosters early learning and development. The costs of providing such an environment, such as purchasing computers, educational materials, creating a child-friendly space, internet and other necessary resources, can be a financial burden on families.

The expansion of the AIC allowance to include kindergarten children, will ensure that all students, regardless of age, have access to the resources needed to thrive in their learning journey. This adjustment would help ease the financial strain on families and promote a positive and effective learning experience for young children in home-based education settings.

#### **Motion 6. Marree Air Branch**

*"That SA ICPA advocates to the Minister for Education, Training and Skills for geographically isolated children enrolled in a registered South Australian preschool education program to receive financial assistance from the state government for travel and home classroom expenses incurred by the preschool program."*

**Explanation:** Currently, there is no government funding to help with the costs incurred by parents with setting up for, delivering and attending pre-school programs to remote and isolated children. Children enrolled in the kindergarten program through Remote and Isolated Children's Exercise (RICE) have to set up a classroom and travel for preschool experiences once a term to enhance the learning and social experience in preparation for primary school. There are significant costs associated with preparing a child for school and travelling the long distances to attend pre-school experiences four times per year. Some of our families enrolled in RICE have to pay for accommodation (4 nights \$586) plus travel 1280km (\$594), to attend RICE face to face programs, plus the craft and educational supplies that need to be purchased to complete lessons.

### **Motion 7. Marree Air Branch**

*“That SA ICPA advocates to the Minister for Education, Training and Skills and the relevant departments for Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) services, to consider the unique needs of rural and remote families when it comes to the eligibility criteria for funding and subsidies.”*

**Explanation:** In South Australia, the Remote and Isolated Children’s Exercise (RICE) provides an Outback Childcare program that enables families to receive short-term childcare in the family home when they are in need of childcare during busy times or if they need respite or emergency care. Currently, this program does not attract any government support or funding, resulting in RICE having to rely on community donations or asking families to pay an unsubsidised full-rate hourly fee for the service.

The Child Care Subsidy (CCS) can only be received when a child is enrolled through a centre-based childcare facility or through the In Home Care (IHC) scheme. However, these schemes do not meet the needs of all remote families, as many are unable to support full-time in-home care. The temporary nature of the RICE Outback Childcare program is appealing to many families, as it allows them to plan care during the times of the year they need it most, without the burden of housing a full-time carer.

The cost of accessing childcare without the CCS is an unaffordable option, leaving families to try to find other ways to manage childcare needs. Families living in rural and remote areas have no real option of childcare like community creches, nearby centres, or extended informal support networks. Living on a remote cattle station 1,000 km from Adelaide makes relying on informal support networks for childcare impractical and often impossible.

A recent report indicated that the Federal Electorate of Grey (which encompasses 90% of South Australia, including all of its rural and remote areas) has the worst access to childcare in the country. The Outback Childcare service needs to be made affordable for families, as well as viable for RICE to manage and administer.

### **Motion 8. Flinders Ranges Branch**

*“That SA ICPA reach out to relevant local councils and the Regional Childcare Desert Advocacy Project to offer support for their efforts in addressing the ‘childcare desert’ that is impacting local communities across regional and remote South Australia.”*

**Explanation:** Recently a group of 23 local councils across the north and west of the state came together to form the Regional Childcare Desert Advocacy Project (RCDAP) and represent families who reside and work in what has been named the ‘childcare desert’ within the Federal Electorate of Grey. A study in 2022 conducted by the Mitchell Group found that access to childcare in Grey was the worst in the country.

We feel that many of our members who live out of council areas are missing out on being represented by this project and we would like to encourage State Council to reach out to the RCDAP along with the Outback Communities Authority in an effort to bring our equally important voice to their advocacy.

There are wide ranging implications of little to no access to childcare that includes the ability to attract families into districts to take up employment in areas like teaching, nursing, law enforcement and emergency services. It also means that employers are unable to offer the incentive to those

considering employment in the area. Not to mention that the children themselves are missing out on the opportunity for social interaction and early childhood education opportunities.

## **BOARDING, HOSTELS AND SECOND HOME**

### **Motion 9. North West Branch**

*“That SA ICPA advocates to the Department for Education and the Minister for Education, Training and Skills to increase the State Education Allowance (SEA) in line with the Education Sub Index of the Consumer Price Index (CPI).”*

**Explanation:** Currently the SEA is in line with the general CPI (2.5% December 2024), this is significantly lower than the Education Sub Index CPI (6.5% December 2024). This reflects the rapid increase in education costs compared to general inflation, and as boarding fees are increasing families are struggling with the rising costs. Two boarding schools attended by our members' children have increased their fees by 5.4% and 6%. The SEA must be adjusted in line with the Education Sub Index of the CPI to ensure equitable access to compulsory secondary education.

### **Motion 10. Marla Oodnadatta Branch**

*“That SA ICPA requests the Minister for Education, Training and Skills to consider increasing the State Education Allowance (SEA) as a stepped allowance based on tuition fees that a family incurs.”*

**Explanation:** Currently the SA SEA allowance is \$5105.98/year to all families that qualify for the Assistance for Isolated Children’s Basic Boarding or second home Allowance, this is regardless of varying tuition costs paid to schools or the distances families must travel to access this education.

There are vast areas of South Australia where students have no access to secondary education due to geographical locations. For many South Australian families, boarding school is the only option for students to receive a cohesive education which includes important learning opportunities, face to face interactions with teachers and other students, sporting, musical, and a variety of other extra-curricular activities.

Families are facing cost of living pressures to afford boarding school fees without adequate assistance from the government. It is imperative that the government helps affected families so positive educational outcomes are achieved.

At present the equivalent allowance in QLD (LAFHAS) covers tuition up to \$3245/year. Where QLD schools tuition costs exceed \$3245, an additional allowance of 50c per \$1 over that amount can be claimed up to a maximum total allowance of \$10,625

**Motion 11. State Council**

*“That SA ICPA discuss with the denominational and independent boarding schools in Adelaide, the need for a designated ICPA bursary at each school/college.”*

**2024 Comparison of Tuition Allowances - South Australia and Queensland - Year 8 Boarding Student**

SA Boarding School	2024 Tuition Fees	2024 Boarding Fees	2024 Total Tuition + Boarding	2024 SA State Education Allowance	QLD Equivalent Allowance 2024	Difference 2024
Sacred Heart College	\$ 9,450.00	\$ 23,898.00	\$ 33,348.00	\$ 5,105.98	\$ 6,297.00	\$ 1,191.02
Immanuel College	\$ 22,276.00	\$ 22,256.00	\$ 44,532.00	\$ 5,105.98	\$ 10,276.00	\$ 5,170.02
Pembroke College	\$ 29,391.00	\$ 29,070.00	\$ 58,461.00	\$ 5,105.98	\$ 10,276.00	\$ 5,170.02

Queensland Equivalent Allowance is a stepped allowance based on tuition fees.

\* 2024 Allowance covers tuition fees up to \$3144 per year

\* Where tuition cost exceed \$3144, an additional allowance of 50c per \$1 over that amount can be claimed up to a maximum total allowance of \$10,276

**Explanation:** For ICPA children, especially those residing in remote areas where access to traditional schooling is limited to School of the Air during primary years, the pathways to secondary education present significant challenges. Options include enrolling in Open Access College and similar online learning providers, pursuing homeschooling, considering private boarding arrangements, or opting for boarding schools. In more drastic scenarios, families may contemplate uprooting from their homes and employment, relocating to urban areas where educational resources are more readily available.

If financial cost was not a constraint for families, boarding schools provide one of the most suitable options for many ICPA children. Boarding schools offer a comprehensive and high-quality educational experience that supports not only their intellectual growth but also their social and emotional development. Armed with a quality education, children have more agency to critically determine their career choice, and if they choose to return to their communities, they have a greater capacity as leaders and change-makers, driving positive transformation and economic development in Australia’s agricultural industry.

Whilst boarding scholarships offered by schools are appreciated, they remain limited and highly competitive, with criteria that may be unattainable for many rural and remote children as they have not attended a face-to-face school or played club or competitive sport due to where they live.

We thank those boarding schools in Adelaide who responded following a similar motion last year. We hope that other schools and colleges will follow suit and engage in a genuine and constructive dialogue extending their understanding of our ICPA members backgrounds, enhancing access and equity for ICPA children.

## **DISTANCE EDUCATION**

### **Motion 12. North East Branch**

*“That SA ICPA State Council request the Minister for Education, Training and Skills to provide financial assistance towards the cost of supervising students in a Distance Education classroom.”*

**Explanation:** The role of the Distance Education Supervisor is essential for the education of children studying via Distance Education. Families living remotely are dependent on Distance Education as the only means of accessing a government school, such as School of The Air.

Families must choose to either employ a supervisor, or have a parent take on the role. Either choice comes at a high financial cost to remote families, with either a wage having to be paid or a parent having to give up work, to supervise the student/s.

Assistance is urgently required to compensate families for the high cost of educating their children in a government school.

### **Motion 13. Port Augusta Branch**

*“That SA ICPA requests the Department for Education to establish a Distance Education Home Supervisor Allowance.”*

**Explanation:** This proposed allowance aims to recognise the significant contributions of geographically isolated home tutors, primarily mothers, who dedicate substantial time and resources to educate their children in remote areas.

South Australia encompasses vast remote regions where traditional schooling options are limited or non-existent. Families in these areas often rely on distance education to provide their children with quality education.

In these settings a full-time compulsory home tutor/ supervisor, usually mothers, assume the role of primary educators. They manage daily lessons, administrative tasks, and ensure their children's educational needs are met, all while balancing household and station responsibilities.

The commitment to home-based education often necessitates that parents reduce or forgo employment opportunities, leading to a loss of income and the choice between a station hand on the station or someone in the schoolroom.

### **Motion 14. North West Branch**

*“That SA ICPA request the Department for Education, and the Minister for Education, Training and Skills provides a supervisor remuneration to families when enrolling a child through Open Access College, School of the Air (Port Augusta) as per the Open Access College enrolment policy.”*

**Explanation:** The “Open Access College enrolment policy October 2023” states:

*All students (except adult students) must have a parent or supervisor (at home or at their enrolled school) available at all times. This will assist to ensure child safety measures are maintained during their course of study, for example supervision, as well as to provide support for the student as they complete the learning programs developed by Open Access College.*

Port Augusta School of the Air supervisors are not being remunerated for the compulsory work that they perform in supervising a child at school. This is not only a learning issue but also a safety issue, which is outlined in the policy.

This remuneration would show a government commitment to equity in education for remote and isolated children.

<https://www.openaccess.edu.au/assets/documents/enrolment-oac-policy.pdf>

#### **Motion 15. Marla Oodnadatta Branch**

*“That SA ICPA requests the Department for Education to increase the amount provided to School of the Air (SOTA) specifically to assist with travel for families to attend face to face events.”*

**Explanation:** Face to face events are imperative for children educated through distance education as they provide an opportunity for children to meet their teachers and interact with their peers as well as extend their experiences and knowledge past what is offered at home. Over half of SOTA families live in excess of 500 kilometres from Port Augusta where SOTA is based, many having to travel large distances on rough unsealed roads.

The cost of attending these events is constantly increasing given the increasing cost of fuel and parts. Families have large distances to travel and many have to take time off paid-work to attend. The current 32c/km is not reflective of the overall travel costs families are sustaining to attend school events.

Families must be supported to attend these events by at least doubling the current rate, before they start choosing not to attend which would be detrimental to their child’s learning.

The cost difference based on 20 families travelling an average 500km per trip to school events at 64c/km as opposed to 32c/km would be as follows: (based on 500km average/family)

Current: 20 families x 500 km @ .32 = \$3200     \$3200 x 5 events = \$16 000

Proposed: 20 families x 500 km @ .64 = \$6400     \$6400 x 5 events = \$32 000

Total increase = \$16 000

#### **Motion 16. Port Augusta Branch**

*“That SA ICPA requests the Department for Education to increase the School of The Air travel reimbursement from \$0.32/km to the current ATO rate of \$0.88/km.”*

**Explanation:** Currently, the reimbursement for travel to school events, such as school experience weeks, school camp and induction stands at \$0.32 per kilometre. This does not adequately reflect the rising costs associated with travel. SOTA families commit to regular long distance travel to ensure access to essential education, support, resources and social interactions for their children.

The Australian Taxation Office (ATO) currently sets the standard rate for car expenses at \$0.88 per kilometre, which better reflects the increased cost of fuel, maintenance, and other travel-related expenses.

**Motion 17. North East Branch**

*“That SA ICPA requests that the Department for Education increase the amount provided to the School of the Air (SOTA) specifically to assist with travel for families to attend face to face events”*

**Explanation:** Face to face events are a vital part of remote and isolated students’ education as these are the only times students can interact in person with their teacher, classmates and peers. The cost of attending face to face events is high and the current rate of 32 cents per km is insufficient to take into account the high amount of kms involved in attending these events.

**RURAL SCHOOLS AND SCHOOL TRAVEL**

**Motion 18. Flinders Ranges Branch**

*“That SA ICPA request that the Department for Education provides extra country incentives to enable schools in isolated regions to attract and entice appropriate teachers to work in these areas.”*

**Explanation:** Whilst we appreciate that there are already a number of measures in place that offer incentives to attract and retain staff to rural and remote areas, it would seem that these alone are now not having the effect that they are intended to. Rural and remote schools are finding that due to locality, perceived lack of professional development opportunities, limited school size and class numbers they are struggling to get responses to job advertisements, sometimes even getting no response at all. It is also very difficult to attract suitable teachers for specialist subjects like Maths, HPE and STEM due to the smaller number and diversity of student needs.

Schools who are trying to recruit staff would be well served by being able to inform potential staff that there is suitable funding in place that would allow them to attend Personal Learning opportunities in metro areas with the knowledge that their classes would be supported by appropriate Temporary Relief Teachers (TRTs). Feeling connected to peers who are working and residing in city areas is often important to those who are employed in country areas.

Access to leave opportunities is something that needs to be considered more closely for staff in rural and remote schools. The importance for teachers who are relocating to country areas where they have no immediate family or support systems, being able to access leave that is ‘structured’ to reflect distance and location is vital not only for staff retention but also the general wellbeing of the teacher. The opportunity to perhaps have an extra day’s leave (that they know will be covered easily) will allow for a less stressful situation when trying to manage even something as simple as a weekend away.

**Motion 19. Flinders Ranges Branch**

*“That SA ICPA request that the Department for Education provides extra country incentives to enable schools in isolated regions to entice Student Support Officers (SSOs) to work in these areas.”*

**Explanation:** Student Support Officers (SSOs) provide a significant support to country schools in delivering successful learning environments for students in rural and remote areas of SA. Where student numbers restrict the number of teachers that can be employed, SSOs enable a greater flexibility and diversity of learning activities that can be managed under teacher direction.

However, attempts to attract and then retain SSOs successfully into rural and remote schools are often being hampered by some of the following:

- Schools in isolated regions face a regular battle to fill SSO positions, they are the mechanism to assist schools in providing a more differentiated approach to teaching classes with up to and over four different year levels.
- SSOs are not eligible for Government Housing, which could be a significant factor in supporting successful applications in isolated locations.
- SSOs do not get all of the country incentives that teachers get for moving into country areas.

#### **Motion 20. North East Branch**

*“That SA ICPA request that the Department for Education provides extra funding to rural and remote schools to allow additional Student Support Officers (SSOs) to be employed.”*

**Explanation:** SSOs provide a significant and valuable service to rural and remote schools in helping to deliver successful learning outcomes to students in these locations. Where student numbers restrict the number of teachers that can be employed SSOs enable a greater diversity of learning activities, learning challenges and behaviours to be managed under teacher direction. However, funding allocations to rural and remote schools make it difficult to engage sufficient SSOs where they are needed.

#### **Motion 21. Eyre Branch**

*“That SA ICPA asks the Department for Education (DfE) to increase the Car Allowance component of the Student Travelling Allowance Scheme, which is paid to families who transport their children to school or bus stops, to better reflect the increase in cost of living and rising fuel/car maintenance prices.”*

**Explanation:** The DfE’s claim payment for student travelling allowance is currently one of the lowest rates in Australia. This means the rate parents are paid to get their children to bus stops, or school barely covers the cost of diesel, let alone the wear and tear on vehicles and time lost from working. The rising cost of living and inflation are challenges for families, and the travelling allowance should increase to reflect these factors. The current diesel price is one of the costs not reflective of the allowance and the price of four-wheel drive tyres. With dirt roads that are not always in fair condition, four-wheel drives are necessary to maintain safety for families, and the cost of running these cars is substantially higher than the same car in the city and significantly higher than the cost of running a smaller city car.

### **Motion 22. Flinders Ranges Branch**

*“That SA ICPA work with the Department for Education to address conditions that hinder isolated schools in getting Bus Drivers who provide a significant service to families of these areas.”*

**Explanation:** There are many potential bus drivers in isolated areas, but often they choose to be employed in more suitable work settings. There are several factors that seem to affect driver decisions here.

- To successfully apply potential drivers have to first pay for and pass a medical, which potentially also involves travel if a specialist is required, all at their own cost. In other country locations closer to Adelaide the cost ramifications of this are mitigated by distance, however in isolated locations this tends to build up.
- Driver accreditation also needs to be applied for and paid for. For someone who is semi-retired (a typical scenario in these areas) and looking at low hours and staggered times position such as an am and pm bus driver, this is not an appealing scenario, which can take a few months to unfold.
- Drivers work am and pm, not a great combination of work hours. Schools are then at times compelled to come up with a modified job situation which does not always suit a school’s needs.
- Professional support for bus drivers is also needed here to support them in their role. The work situation of a bus driver can be extremely pressured. They perform a role which involves managing a vehicle and a bus full of kids. It is especially a role which is a focus of parents and can erode away at driver confidence. This is a combination of roles which require support and training and would contribute to drivers stepping down at times.
- Professional development in the skills and method for managing school students on a bus would make drivers feel more competent and confident, contributing to a longer period of work in this job.

### **Motion 23. Eyre Branch**

*“That SA ICPA ask the Department for Education (DfE) to expand their bus calculation formula to include preschool students, as they catch buses to school-based preschools but aren’t currently entitled to a seat on those buses.”*

**Explanation:** Currently, preschoolers are not counted in DfE bus numbers but can access the bus if seats are available. This affects the running and routes of buses for our small rural school, as the number of students on a bus route affects the viability. Currently our buses have large areas to cover due to students' locations being few and far between. Preschoolers sometimes must be driven into school, due to lack of seats on a bus, which means parents with multiple students at school can put their school-age children on the bus but not preschool children. Almost all of the students at rural schools, such as Miltaburra Area School, arrive via bus, due to the school’s location, which is in the middle of a paddock. This means buses are critical in ensuring students attend school and parents can get their children, including preschoolers, to school. The DfE has announced it ‘will invest in 15 hours of preschool a week for all 3-year olds, which will be rolled out in stages from 2025 to 2032’. If the Government is committed and being realistic about ensuring ALL 3-year olds have access, including

our rural and remote 3-year olds, then it must also commit to having these children included in bus transport calculations.

**Motion 24. Port Augusta Branch**

*“That SA ICPA requests airlines servicing the northern areas of SA to provide a student fare.”*

**Explanation:** As per our request from last year we are keen to keep this issue on the agenda, so that Boarding students returning home are not faced with the dilemma of long bus journeys that greatly erode available down time or huge airfare costs. Families are faced with the situation that they need to cut a long weekend short to allow for the two days travel via the bus because the cost of air fares precludes families from being able to utilise them.

**Motion 25. SA Lone Members Branch**

*“That SA ICPA approaches Regional Express (REX) Airlines to request they provide children accessing REX flights, to and from rural South Australian areas for education purposes, with a fixed student fare.”*

**Explanation:** Rural and Remote students in South Australia deserve equal access and opportunities in education which includes travel to and from Boarding schools in regional areas. SA ICPA has 110 member families, with around half of those having children who must attend school away from home to access secondary schooling, which is most often at boarding schools in Adelaide.

We request that the possibility of a subsidised fare scheme for families who are using flights from regional centres (Coober Pedy, Mount Gambier, Port Lincoln, Ceduna and Broken Hill) to transport their children to and from boarding school be explored.

Currently there is a scheme in Queensland called ‘Bush to Boarding’ where REX Airlines offers flights to students from: Cairns to Burketown, Doomadgee, Mt Isa, Karumba, Normanton and Mornington Island and Brisbane to St George, Cunnamulla, Thargomindah, Charleville, Bedourie/Birdsville/Boulia and Mt Isa.

These fares are offered at concessional rates and are at a capped price dependant on distance travelled. They can be booked within a fairly flexible timeframe.

We duly note REX are currently in Voluntary Administration. We are also aware it is hopeful that the Administration period will end on 30 Jun 2025 which would mean that REX will be in a position to introduce this initiative for South Australian students.

**Motion 26. Marla Oodnadatta Branch**

*“That SA ICPA requests the Minister for Education, Training and Skills to provide a subsidy for students accessing flights in areas of South Australia where no student fare is available.”*

**Explanation:** Boarding school itself presents many challenges for families. Getting children home throughout the term for exeats and school holidays has become increasingly more difficult and expensive.

Many boarding students are faced with the situation where they are required to travel large distances on long bus journeys or travel in private vehicles, greatly eroding available time at home. There are locations throughout the state that have available flights that would reduce the distances for road travel, yet the cost of air fares more often than not precludes families from being able to utilise them.

Time at home is vital for boarding school children given there are limited days available in their home environment. Reduced travel time would reduce the stress placed on families and be beneficial to the well-being of the children.

## **SPECIFIC NEEDS**

### **Motion 27. North East Branch**

*“That SA ICPA State Council request the Minister for Education, Training and Skills and the Minister for Health and Wellbeing to make targeted funding available for the provision of speech pathologists in rural and remote schools and in particular for distance education students.”*

**Explanation:** There is a general lack of speech pathologists servicing rural and remote areas (in both the education and health sectors). There is also a long term understanding that early intervention and ongoing therapies give students the best possible chance of not ‘falling through the cracks’ and risking their education being compromised on an ongoing basis. As well, it is widely acknowledged that any issue affecting a student’s ability to learn is exacerbated by remoteness and distance. Providing funding specifically to address this issue would go a long way to closing this particular gap.

### **Motion 28. Marla Oodnadatta Branch**

*“That SA ICPA advocates to the Minister for Health and Wellbeing and the Rural Support Service in SA Health to add ‘Geographically remote families’ as an additional eligibility criterion to bypass a nearer specialist in the Patient Assistance Travel Scheme (PATS) Guidelines for Assessment.”*

**Explanation:** We thank the Minister for Health and Wellbeing for his response in 2024 regarding this matter in which he stated ‘*To maintain its sustainability, PATS needs to ensure that the scheme’s eligibility criteria are applied consistently and fairly for all clients.*’ We believe that the current eligibility is not applied fairly to our families living very remotely. Currently, PATS will only provide assistance to a patient that has been referred to their nearest specialist, unless a GP has provided a valid medical reason. A child living very remotely has a minimum of 3 days absence in one week from school, just to attend a 15-minute appointment. This is incredibly disruptive to their learning and in turn can create additional problems for the child. When able to book appointments in the city, multiple appointments can be booked in the same trip for multiple children, often during holidays or either side of the weekend, and the quantity of school day absences can be avoided. This also means only one claim for PATS is being claimed even with multiple children having appointments, rather than multiple claims. We ask that SA Health see student attendance as a priority and that ‘geographically remote family’ is added to the eligibility criteria.

**ADMINISTRATION**

**Motion 29. North East Branch**

*"That the North East Branch host the 2026 SA ICPA State Conference"*

**SA ICPA 2025 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AGENDA**

**AGM Motion 1**

*"That the minutes of the 2024 AGM and State Conference be accepted."*

**AGM Motion 2**

*"That the SA ICPA Audited Financial Statements tabled, be accepted."*

**AGM Motion 3**

*"That the SA ICPA State Affiliation fee remains at \$25".*

**AGM Motion 4**

*"That SA ICPA Lone Member Subs be \$50".*

**AGM Motion 5**

*"That the SA ICPA Financial records be audited by Mid North Accounting."*

**AGM Motion 6**

*"That the suggested changes to the SA ICPA Policies document be accepted."*

MOVED:

SECONDED: