

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

STATUTORY RULES 1985 NO. 136

NATIONAL HEALTH ACT 1953

NATIONAL HEALTH REGULATIONS (AMENDMENT)

Issued by Authority of the Minister for Health

Section 140 of the National Health Act 1953 ("the Act") provides that the Governor-General may make regulations, not inconsistent with the Act, prescribing all matters which by the Act are required or permitted to be prescribed, or which are necessary or convenient to be prescribed for carrying out or giving effect to the Act. Subsection 17(1) of the Act defines "prescribed amount" in relation to a prescribed journey to mean \$20 or such other amount as is prescribed by regulations in force at the commencement of the journey.

The Isolated Patients' Travel and Accommodation Assistance Scheme (IPTAAS) provides partial reimbursement of travel and accommodation costs for people living in isolated areas who need to travel more than 200 kilometres to consult the nearest suitable medical specialist. Such people are paid their travel costs less the prescribed amount.

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The Treasurer (the Hon. P.J Keating) announced in Parliament on 14 May 1985 that the prescribed amount is to increase from \$20 to \$30. This increase will result in estimated annual saving of \$1.1m. This is the first increase in the prescribed amount since IPTAAS was introduced in 1978.

The National Health Regulations (Amendment) inserts a new regulation 5B into the National Health Regulations to provide, with effect from 1 July 1985, that for the purposes of the definition of "prescribed amount" in sub-section 17(1) of the Act, the amount of \$30 is prescribed.

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