



GOVERNMENT OF THE PITCAIRN ISLANDS

HEALTH FUNDING POLICY

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DOCUMENT CONTROL

DOCUMENT NAME	GPI POLICY – HEALTH FUNDING POLICY
DOCUMENT NUMBER	GPIP-016
PREPARED BY	ISLAND COUNCIL
LAST REVIEW	11 JANUARY 2024
NEXT REVIEW DUE	JANUARY 2025
STATUS	ACTIVE

INTRODUCTION

i. REFERENCES

The Constitution of Pitcairn

- Contains multiple references relating to Health including Section 61 Definition of “minor”.

Laws of Pitcairn, Henderson, Ducie and Oeno Islands

- 2017 Revised Edition
- Cap 7 Prisons Ordinance Section 8 & Prisons Regulations
- Cap 11 Local Government Ordinance, Section 7
- Local Government Regulations Part II, Part III,
- CAP 12 Immigration Ordinance Sections 6 (2)(c), 12 (3)(c) & 19
- CAP 24 Dental & Medical practitioners Ordinance
- CAP 22 Social Welfare Benefits Ordinance Part II & III
- CAP 43 Right of Abode Ordinance

GPI Policies

- GPI Employment Guidance
- GPI Health & Safety Policy
- GPI Subsidised Travel & Baggage Allowance Policy
- GPI Social Protection Policy
- GPI Personal Loans Policy
- GPI Pitcairn Island Health Centre Operational Policy & Annexes
- GPI Health Funding Referral Categories and Eligibility (Annex A)

ii. RATIONALE

The GPI is committed to providing a high standard of primary health care to the Pitcairn community, via its permanently staffed Health Centre. This includes health management, health promotion, preventative health care and secondary assessments, referrals and funding for off-island treatment and travel requirements. These activities reflect the United Kingdom’s obligations under the United Nations International Health Regulations.

Pitcairn Island is remote and accessible only by sea. Its normally resident population of fewer than 50 individuals is aging, with increasing numbers moving from employment to retirement. The GPI’s ability to effectively meet Pitcairn’s health needs remains a high priority.

All off-island treatment referrals received from the PI MO / Pitcairn Health Clinic, by the PIO, are managed by the PIO in partnership with Healix.

All off-island treatments referrals are authorized by the Administrator, as recorded within the PI MO Treatment Referral Form (Annex C).

All off-island treatment assessments and referrals are provided off-island in New Zealand and/or Tahiti and administered by the PIO.

Some primary health care may require the patient to have treatment off-island at the recommendation of the Pitcairn Island Medical Officer. Off-Island primary health care referrals are authorized by the Administrator and administered by PIO.

Administrator’s Authorisation: Refers to sign-off of all PI MO Off-island Treatment Referrals, via the PI MO Treatment Referral form (Annex C)

The Administrator's dated signature records agreement that a PI MO Treatment Referral is compliant with both the GPI Pitcairn Health Centre Operational Policy and the GPI Health Funding Policy.

The Administrator is also the Head of the Pitcairn Public Service.

iii. OBJECTIVES

To support the effective delivery of comprehensive, fair and affordable health care funding for the Pitcairn Island community.

To provide information about GPI Health Funding and the GPI Health funding allowances and entitlements.

iv. ABBREVIATIONS

HMG.	.	.	His Majesty's Government
GPI.	.	.	Government of Pitcairn Islands
PIO.	.	.	Pitcairn Island Office in NZ
PI MO.	.	.	Pitcairn Island Medical Officer
GPI Charter Vessel.	.	.	Currently MV Silver Supporter
Medivac.	.	.	Emergency Medical Evacuation
PSP.	.	.	Patient Support Person
FCA.	.	.	Family and Community Advisor
UKHSA.	.	.	UK Health Security Agency

v. DEFINITIONS

Primary Health Care

Refers to a broad range of out-of-hospital services. Its goal is to manage and improve community health through regular consultation and preventative services such as health education and counselling, disease prevention and screening. Primary health care includes services such as general practice, nursing, pharmacy, family planning, mental health and wellbeing, dentistry, optometry and audiology. Some primary health care may require the patient to have treatment off-island at the discretion of the Pitcairn Island Medical Officer.

Off-island medical treatment

Refers to treatment requiring hospitalisation or specialist care. Pitcairn Island does not have these facilities. Patients requiring off-island health care must travel to Tahiti and/or NZ at the discretion of the PI MO, once appointments have been made and the correct approvals have been received by the PIO.

Medivac

This refers to the emergency medical evacuation of sick or injured patients. It is distinct from medical referrals which relate to less urgent, off-island medical care or investigation.

Temporary Incapacity and the GPI Disability Allowance

Incapacity for people of working age means that a person is unable to work because of a physical or mental condition. The GPI has in place Temporary Disability Allowance to support those who are unable to work for a period, or who may be able to participate if there are reasonable adjustments in place e.g., reduced hours or light duties, whilst recovering without financial hardship. Evidence for the Temporary Disability Allowance entitlement is initiated and monitored by the PI MO, with the authorization of the Administrator. It is administered by the DM Community Services and paid via the Government Treasury Office.

GPI Cost-of- Living Allowance

The GPI provides a non-recoverable daily allowance for patients and approved qualifying carers to cover reasonable daily expenses whilst off-island for medical treatment or Patient Support Rate is currently set at NZD\$80 per day.

Normally Resident

Refers to those who usually lives on Pitcairn Island as a long-term, permanent resident.

Approved New Settler

Refers to those who have been approved, by the Governor, to settle on Pitcairn. An approved new settler is not eligible to access subsidised GPI Health Funding and Benefits until completion of their 2-year (non-consecutive) settlement period and they have been granted permanent residency, by the Governor. See Annex A GPI Health Funding Referral Categories and Eligibility.

Visitors with Right of Abode

As described in CAP 43 Right of Abode Ordinance of the Laws of Pitcairn, Henderson, Oeno and Ducie Islands refers to visiting Pitcairn Islanders with right of abode who are not normally resident on Pitcairn. Refer Annex A: GPI Health Funding Referral Categories and Eligibility.

Minor

Refers to a person who is under the age of 18, unless otherwise provided for within the Laws of Pitcairn Island. There is no charge for medical treatment for normally resident minors who attend school on Pitcairn Island or in New Zealand or who are home schooled on Pitcairn Island.

The PI MO Treatment Referral Categories

Refer to the 5 types of treatment options available within the GPI Health Funding scheme. They are Category A, B, C1, C2 & D. See Annex A: GPI Health Funding Referral Categories and Eligibility.

Healix

Refers to Healix Health Services, a New Zealand based company which provides 24/7 medical support to the PI MO, including logistical support for off island treatment.

Administrator's Authorisation

Refers to sign-off of all PI MO Off-island Treatment Referrals, via the Off-island Treatment Referral form.

The Administrator's dated signature records agreement that a PI MO Off-island Treatment Referrals referral is compliant with both the GPI Pitcairn Health Centre Operational Policy and the GPI Health Funding Policy.

PROVISIONS

1.0. COST OF LIVING ALLOWANCE: TERMS AND ADMINISTRATION

- 1.1.** The GPI provides a non-recoverable daily allowance for patients and authorised, qualifying carers to cover reasonable daily expenses whilst off-island for medical treatment or Patient Support.
- 1.2.** The GPI Health Fund and Cost-of-Living allowances shall not be granted to any person under the provisions of this policy unless they are; normally resident on Pitcairn Island, or a qualifying, authorised new migrant or a qualifying, authorised Pitcairn Islander with Right of Abode, as recorded in the PI MO Off-Island Treatment Form.
- 1.3.** The GPI Cost-of- Living Allowance does not replace a working wage if the recipient is required, due to the nature of their GPI Employment and able, due to the nature of their off-island treatment requirements, to undertake that work remotely.
- 1.4.** Should a patient be authorised to undertake their GPI job remotely, whilst off-island for medical treatment, that arrangement must be requested, agreed and co-signed, prior to the patient's departure, by the Head of the Pitcairn Public Service / the relevant Division Manager and/or the Mayor (if that work is Council related,) in writing.

- 1.5.** Should a patient be approved to undertake their GPI job remotely, whilst off-island for medical treatment, they are required to submit a Time/Task Sheet to the relevant Division Manager or Mayor (if a Councillor) for payment to be authorised.
- 1.6.** It is the responsibility of the relevant Division Manager or Mayor, as authorised by the Head of the Pitcairn Public Service to advise the Government Treasury Office of this arrangement prior to the Patient/GPI Employee or Patient / Councillor departing Pitcairn.
- 1.7.** It is the responsibility of the PI MO and the PI Nurse to provide the PIO and the Pitcairn Island Travel Coordinator with advance booking information (no less than 4 weeks – except in emergency) for patients travelling off-island for medical treatment, so as to ensure ample time for the coordination of flights, accommodation and appointment requirements.
- 1.8.** No patient or approved Patient Support Person may contact Healix independently. All communication with Healix must be managed via the PI MO.
- 1.9.** All subsequent treatments/referral appointments must be approved by the PI MO, booked via Healix, authorised by the Administrator.
- 1.10.** All costs associated with any unapproved appointments or consultations must be met in full by the patient or person who made the bookings.
- 1.11.** A Prepaid cell phone will be made available for any patient who requires it temporarily whilst off-island for medical treatment.
- 1.12.** All treatment referral travel bookings, confirmed by the PIO, are to remain in place, with no variation, unless specifically agreed by the PI MO and authorised by the Administrator. Any unauthorised treatment costs will be met by the patient.
- 1.13.** When a Patient signs the PI MO Off-Island Treatment Referral Form, they are agreeing to referral option recorded of that form.
- 1.14.** When a patient signs the PI MO Off-Island Treatment Referral Form they are agreeing that the PI MO has recorded an estimated time frame for their necessary off-Island treatment.
- 1.15.** Those in receipt of GPI Health Funding are required to return to Pitcairn Island at the first available opportunity once they have been medically cleared to do so, by the PI MO, in consultation with the patient's relevant specialist.
- 1.16.** When all parties have signed-off on the requirements within PI MO Off-Island Treatment Referral Form a copy of the form will be passed to the DM Community Services.
- 1.17.** It is responsibility of the DM Community Services to provide the PIO Office with a copy of the completed Off-Island Treatment Referral form before the Patient concerned departs Pitcairn Island.
- 1.18.** It is the responsibility of the Pitcairn Island Council to ensure that current copies of the GPI Pitcairn Health Centre Operational Policy and the GPI Health Funding Policy are posted on the government website and available to the Pitcairn Island Community.
- 1.19.** It is the responsibility of Pitcairn Health Centre to advise patients to read the GPI Pitcairn Health Centre Operational Policy and the GPI Health Funding Policy before signing the PI MO Treatment Referral Form so as to ensure patients are well informed of their rights and responsibilities.

- 1.20. Off-island medical travel is via the GPI Charter vessel unless the PI MO, as authorised by the Administrator, deems it necessary, to access alternative passage on another vessel for a medical evacuation.

2.0. PATIENT DEBT MANAGEMENT

- 2.1. In order for patients to calculate their ability to repay their health funding debt within a reasonable period of time, it is the responsibility of the DM Community Services to provide the patient with a GPI Health Fund Application form, within 1 month of their return to Pitcairn.
- 2.2. It is the responsibility of the DM Community Services to submit a completed GPI Health Fund Application form to the Administrator for authorisation before passing the document to the PIO and the Government Treasury Office to record and action payment as stated and agreed with the patient.
- 2.3. Repayments toward a patient's GPI Health Fund debt are not required until the patient has returned to Pitcairn Island and has been normally resident for 1 full month i.e., the first payment is due on 2nd month after a patient returns to Pitcairn, following off-Island treatment.
- 2.4. Those in receipt of a Pitcairn Pension, whether working or non-working, are required to continue making repayments toward their existing GPI Health Fund debt after turning 65 years of age and/or taking full retirement.
- 2.5. Should any person in receipt of a GPI Cost-of-Living Allowance, who have been medically cleared to travel back to Pitcairn opt, for personal reasons, to extend their time off-island, their GPI Cost-of-Living Allowance will be stopped at the time the ship or flight they were booked to travel on departs. Any accommodation arrangements paid for by the PIO will also be stopped. This action will also apply to the patient's support person if applicable.
- 2.6. Those booked and confirmed to travel from Pitcairn to either Tahiti or New Zealand for Off-island Treatment are required to adhere to all agreed bookings for flights, medical appointments and accommodation. Failure to travel as recommended by the PI MO and booked by the PIO will result in the full cost of those abandoned bookings being added to the patients GPI Health Funding debt.

3.0. PATIENT RIGHTS

There are several parties involved in accessing, authorizing and administering off-island treatment referrals. These are:

- *The PI MO*
- *The PI Nurse/Reception*
- *Healix*
- *The Administrator*
- *The PIO*
- *The Division Manager Community Services*

- 3.1. It is the responsibility of all GPI Governance Partners and the PI MO to ensure the rights of those who use the Pitcairn Island Health Centre are taken seriously and appropriately managed.
- 3.2. It is the responsibility of the PI MO & PI Nurse to ensure all patients at the Pitcairn Island Health Centre are advised of their right to patient confidentiality.
- 3.3. It is the responsibility of the PI MO & PI Nurse to ensure all patients at the Pitcairn Island Health Centre are advised of their right to patient confidentiality.

- 3.4. It is the responsibility of the PI MO to ensure that authorisation requests submitted to the Administrator for patients' treatment referrals do not include reference to personal confidential medical information.
- 3.5. Consent to release confidential patient information to the Administrator may only be initiated on a case-by-case basis as noted in a signed Patient Information Release Form.
- 3.6. Unless specified via a signed and filed Patient Information Consent Form the PI MO shall not provide the Administrator and/or the PIO with patient information pertaining to their medical condition/treatment(s) or personal medical records.
- 3.7. It is the responsibility of Pitcairn Health Centre staff & the PI MO to ensure information about Patients' rights are displayed at the Pitcairn Island Health Centre.

4.0. TEMPORARY DISABILITY ALLOWANCE

- 4.1. The GPI has in place a Temporary Disability Allowance to support those suffering incapacity for work, as assessed and monitored by the PI MO, authorised by the Administrator and administered by the DM Community Services.
- 4.2. Payment of a GPI Temporary Disability Allowance ceases when a patient departs Pitcairn Island, for any reason.
- 4.3. The Temporary Disability Allowance is capped at \$500 a week.
- 4.4. It is the responsibility of the PI MO to provide the patient with a Medical Certificate which indicates the anticipated duration of incapacity and whether the patient is able to work as usual or only able to work light work duties or reduced hours. If the patient is only able to work light duties or reduced hours their earnings are then topped up to \$500 by the DM Community Services.
- 4.5. It is the responsibility of the DM Community Services to regularly liaise with PI MO to ensure any work-related instructions within Medical Certificate are current.

5.0. COST OF LIVING ALLOWNACE CONDITIONS

- 5.1. The GPI provides a non-recoverable daily allowance for qualifying patients and approved PSPs to cover reasonable daily expenses currently set at NZD\$80 per day per approved person.
- 5.2. The Cost-of-Living Allowance is administered by the PIO and generally paid weekly. It is effective from the day of arrival at the patient's approved treatment destination.
- 5.3. If deemed necessary by the PIO an advance payment may be paid to the recipient.
- 5.4. The PIO may issue Patients, travelling off-island for medical treatment, with a bank debit card to cover unforeseen additional costs, when required. Debit Cards are administered and monitored by the PIO.
- 5.5. The Cost-of-Living Allowance remains available for the duration of time spent at the treatment destination, provided the patient and PSP return to Pitcairn Island at the first available opportunity, after clearance by the PI MO in consultation with Healix and/or the patient's relevant specialist.
- 5.6. Beneficiaries under parts II, III, and IV of the Social Welfare Ordinance are eligible to receive a Cost-of-Living Allowance, in addition to their existing pension or benefit. This refers only to the aged pension, the child benefit and the widow/widower's pension.

- 5.7. The Cost-of-Living Allowance will be withdrawn if a patient and/or a PSP is in receipt of a benefit from any overseas entity or other source, that is more than the Cost-of-Living Allowance.
- 5.8. The Cost-of-Living Allowance will be withdrawn if a recipient leaves an approved treatment destination without the agreement of the PI MO and authorisation of the Administrator. Any authorised change will be administered by the PIO.
- 5.9. If a Cost-of-Living Allowance recipient chooses to stay with family members/friends instead of GPI Approved accommodation half of the allowance will be directly credited, by the PIO, to the accommodating family.
- 5.10. Those normally resident on Pitcairn requiring off island medical treatment, may apply for further social support under the GPI Social Protection Policy or GPI Personal Loan Policy. Conditions apply (refer GPI Social Protection Policy & GPI Personal Loan Policy).
- 5.11. Falsification of information relating to medical referrals will be considered fraudulent and may be subject to enquiry and financial consequences.
- 5.12. Patients and PSPs are required when recommended by the PI MO. Failure to travel when advised may result in medical condition becoming worse. The PI MO is not obligated to arrange for alternative dates for medical appointment/s if their medical recommendations have not been adhered to.

6.0. DEPENDANT CHILDREN

The PI MO may, in consultation with the patient, recommend full travel cover for a patient's dependent child/children. This will entail the following for dependent children.

- 6.1. Free passage for return travel on the GPI Charter Vessel;
- 6.2. No charge for accommodation and meals at the patient's approved treatment destination;
- 6.3. No charge for travel between Pitcairn and the approved treatment destination;
- 6.4. The parent/patient may apply for financial and other social support via the GPI Social Protection Policy if needed;
- 6.5. Those travelling as approved dependent children are required to adhere to provisions of this policy as supervised by their parents.

ANNEX A GPI HEALTH FUNDING TREATMENT REFERRAL CATEGORIES AND ELIGIBILITY

Part 1: Treatment Referral Categories

There are 5 GPI Health Funding Referral Categories: A, B, C1, C2 & D.

All Pitcairn Health Centre Treatment Referrals must be allocated the correct and appropriate funding category when a Pitcairn Health Centre Treatment Referral form is initiated.

GPI Referral Category A: Refers to eligible patients, between the ages of 18 and 65, requiring medical treatment(s) off-island. Category A referrals are required to pay 1/3 of the total cost of their medical treatment(s)

- i. No charge for travel between Pitcairn and the designated treatment location.
- ii. No charge for accommodation at the designated treatment location.
- iii. Meals and reasonable cost-of-living expenses are covered by the GPI Cost-of- Living allowance which is administered and monitored by the PIO.
- iv. Those in receipt of a GPI Cost-of-living Allowance are generally required to pay for taxi fares to and from medical appointment from their daily allowance.
- v. Only in exceptional cases will the PIO accept Taxis fare receipts for reimbursement. This arrangement be approved by the PIO in advance of the patient travelling.

Referral Category B: Refers to qualifying patients, between the ages of 18 and 65 years of age, requiring non-urgent and/or preventative medical treatment(s) whilst they are off-island for personal or business reasons as listed

Category B Referrals are required to pay 1/3 of the total cost their authorised medical treatment(s) whilst off-island.

- i. If travelling for personal reason Category B referrals will pay NZ\$500 each way for travel on the GPI Charter Vessel and full costs for their own flights, accommodation, meals and expenses etc., (refer GPI Subsidised Travel and Baggage Allowance Policy).
- ii. If travelling for GPI related business all other travel and accommodation arrangements for Category B referrals are authorised by the relevant Manager/Administrator, and/or Mayor (if a Councillor is travelling) and administered by the PIO.
- iii. *Category B patients may either:* Pay for treatment themselves and submit receipts to the PIO for 2/3 reimbursement or have the PIO provide the health provider with a guarantee of payment letter, so that the PIO may pay the amount in full, on behalf of the patient then add the 1/3 treatment cost to the patient's GPI Health Funding debt.
- iv. Those in receipt of a GPI Cost-of-living Allowance are generally required to pay for taxi fares to and from medical appointment from their daily allowance.
- v. Only in exceptional cases will the PIO accept Taxis fare receipts for reimbursement.
- vi. If travelling for GPI business, all travel and accommodation arrangements for Category B referrals are authorised by the relevant Division Manager, the Administrator or Mayor (if a Councillor) and administered by the PIO.
- vii. If travelling for GPI business, Category B referrals are eligible to the GPI overseas work per diem, as stated in the GPI Travel and Baggage allowance Policy.
- viii. The GPI overseas work per diem, as stated in the GPI Travel and Baggage allowance Policy does not replace a GPI wage. Its purpose is to cover reasonable travel and daily costs.

- ix. If travelling for GPI business, Category B referrals are required to submit a monthly Time/Task Sheet to the relevant Division Manager or Mayor (if a Councillor) in order for payment to be authorised via the GT Office. If this provision relates to the Mayor a Travel Time/Task Sheet should be submitted to the Administrator for authorisation.
- x. It is the responsibility of the Head of the Pitcairn Public Service or Mayor (if referring to a Councillor) to advise the Government Treasury Office of this arrangement prior to the Patient/GPI Employee or Councillor departing Pitcairn.
- xi. If travelling for GPI related business, and in receipt of the GPI Work per diem, Category B referrals are not eligible to the GPI Daily Living Allowance.
- xii. All treatment plans for Category B patients must be made in agreement with the PI MO, via the Off-island Treatment referral form, authorised by the Administrator and administered via PIO.
- xiii. When possible, Category B referral appointments and arrangements should be made through Healix as with any other treatment.

Referral Categories C1 & C2: Refer to a designated Patient Support Person (PSP), approved by the PI MO, to travel with and care for a patient requiring off-island treatment(s).

Category C1: Is a PSP who does not require their own non-urgent and/or preventative medical treatment(s) whilst they are off-island supporting a patient. The following applies:

- i. No charge for travel on the GPI Charter vessel;
- ii. No charge for flights to and from the patient's designated treatment location;
- iii. No charge for accommodation;
- iv. Meals and reasonable cost of living expenses are covered by the GPI Cost-of-Living allowance as authorised by the Administrator and administered by PIO.

Category C2: Refers to a PSP who does require their own non-urgent and/or preventative medical treatment(s) whilst they are off-island caring for a patient. The following applies:

- i. No Charge for travel on the GPI Chartered Vessel;
- ii. This referral category is required to pay 1/3 of the total cost of their medical treatment(s);
- iii. There is no charge for accommodation at the designated treatment location;
- iv. Meals and reasonable cost-of-living expenses are covered.

Referral Category D: Refers to on-island Telehealth Specialist Consultation referrals arranged for the patient, by the PI MO, via Healix.

This referral category is required to pay 1/3 of the total cost of their telehealth consultations.

Part 2: GPI Health Funding Eligibility

Visiting Pitcairn Islanders with Right of Abode

Visiting Pitcairn Islanders with Right of Abode, as described in CAP 43 Right of Abode Ordinance of the Laws of Pitcairn, Henderson, Oeno and Ducie Islands, must pay full costs at the Pitcairn Island Health

Centre for the first consecutive 12 months of their stay, from the day of arrival. They must also provide proof of travel/medical insurance for a long term stay when booking travel on the GPI Charter Vessel.

Visiting Pitcairn Islanders with Right of Abode may access subsidised GPI health funding only after having been normally resident on Pitcairn Island for a period of 12 consecutive months.

As of 10 Jan 2024, visitors with Right of Abode, as described in CAP 43 Right of Abode Ordinance of the Laws of Pitcairn, Henderson, Oeno and Ducie Islands may on the recommendation of the PI MO, qualify as a Patient Support Person and access the Daily Living Allowance if required. Such an agreement must be documented via the PI MO Referral form. The recommendation must be authorised by the Administrator and administered by PIO.

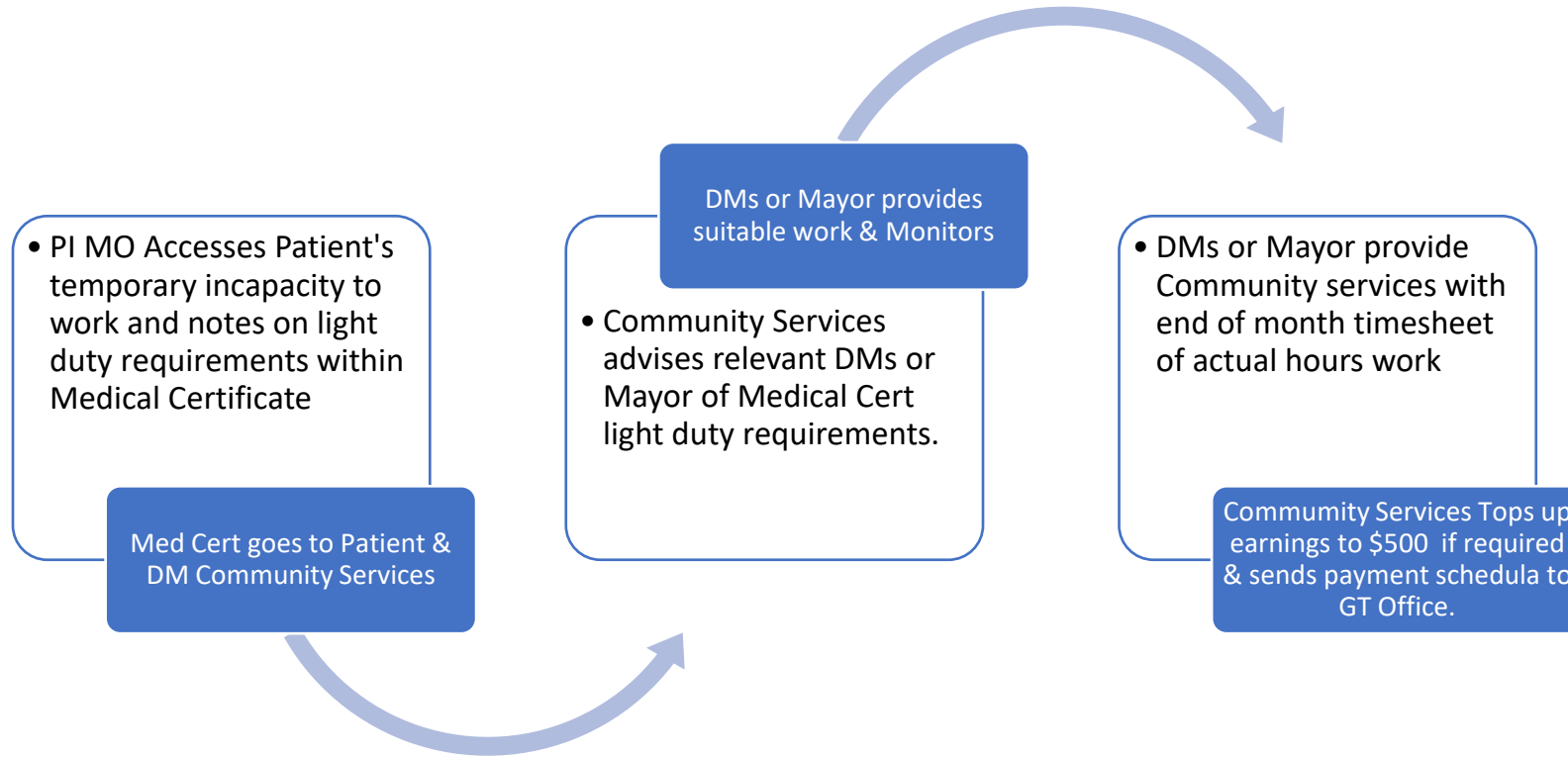
Approved New Settler:

Those who have been approved, by the Governor to settle on Pitcairn Island are required to maintain provide proof of travel/medical insurance when booking travel on the GPI Charter Vessel. They must also retain private travel/medical insurance to cover off-island treatment costs and/or medical evacuation costs, throughout their 2 year, non-consecutive, settlement period.

Approved new settlers must pay full costs at the Pitcairn Island Health Centre throughout their 2 year, non-consecutive, settlement period. Approved new settlers' entitlement to Pitcairn's subsidised health costs and benefits does not come into effect until after their 2 year, non-consecutive, settlement period when the Governor grants them permanent residency.

As of 10 Jan 2024, approved new settlers may on the recommendation of the PI MO, qualify as a Patient Support Person and access the Daily Living Allowance if required. Such an agreement must be documented via the PI MO Referral form. The recommendation must be authorised by the Administrator and administered by PIO.

ANNEX J MEDICAL CERTIFICATE AND GPI EMPLOYMENT TEMPORARY INCAPACITY TO WORK ALLOWANCE FLOW CHART



ANNEX K NON-GPI EMPLOYEE TEMPORARY INCAPACITY AND SOCIAL PROJECTION PROCEDURE

