



Australian Capital Territory

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\$19.8 million for additional mental health services

The 2011-12 Budget will deliver an additional \$19.8 million for community and hospital based mental health services and provides additional recurrent funding for the new Adult Mental Health Inpatient unit in order to meet community and acute demand for mental health services, Minister for Health and Treasurer, Katy Gallagher MLA announced today.

The ACT Government continues to invest in supporting the growing number of people in our community who live with mental illness. Increased funding of \$19.8 million over four years for mental health includes an additional \$13.8 million for additional doctors, nurses and allied health practitioners for the new Adult Mental Health Inpatient Facility.

“The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare notes that mental illness is one of the leading causes of non-fatal burden of disease and injury in Australia.

Mental health services in the ACT will receive a funding boost of \$4.2 million over four years through the 2011-12 ACT Budget to help meet the demand for mental health services. This incorporates a \$1 million per annum indexed injection to meet the growth in demand for mental health services in both acute settings, and in the community.

“The \$1 million of additional funding will be equally divided between Mental Health ACT and community-sector psychosocial support services,” Ms Gallagher said.

The additional funding allocated to the community sector will increase the Government’s focus on:

- high quality community based psychosocial support services through enhanced capacity of culturally competent services;
- strengthening of vocational and employment opportunities for mental health consumers;
- supporting the provision of accredited training for ACT Health funded community sector mental health services to ensure all staff attains minimum standards: and
- providing for the development and implementation of consumer and carer participation in service quality review.

The additional funding allocated to the ACT Mental Health services will be directed towards:

- the recruitment of a Carer Consultant position which will provide expert input into service delivery from a Carer perspective;
- an increase in dual disability workforce, to enhance the effectiveness of the Dual Disability Service (DDS) to provide services to people with an intellectual disability and mental health issues in the ACT;
- enhancement of the Perinatal Mental Health Service (PMHS) to meet increasing service demand; and
- implementing the joint Crisis Assessment and Treatment Team and Police Intervention Team (caPIT) which is an initiative to support police when dealing with a person experiencing a mental health crisis.

“As part of our 2008 election commitments, the ACT Government promised to provide an additional \$14.5 million over the next four years across community and hospital based mental health services. This Budget continues to deliver on that commitment, and continues investment in the health and wellbeing of all Canberrans.

“Construction of the new Adult Acute Mental Health Inpatient Unit is well underway, with the anticipated completion of this project scheduled for late 2011 and commissioning in early 2012,” Ms Gallagher said.

“Today’s budget provides additional recurrent funding of \$13.8 million over four years for additional doctors, nurses and allied health practitioners as part of the cost of operating the additional beds within this new unit.”

The Minister also emphasised the importance of ensuring our mental health services in the ACT operate in an integrated way, and continue to set the standard for mental health facilities across Australia.

“It is important that we continue to deliver mental health services in an integrated and contemporary way, and the model of care, delivered within the new facility will continue to ensure the connections between inpatient and community teams, including working closely with community sector agencies are maintained and strengthened.”

Further funding is provided to ensure the continuation of funding for mental health training for teachers, police and emergency services workers and an additional forensic mental health worker within the ACT Magistrate’s Court. These initiatives were initially provided in the 2009-10 Budget as a targeted initiative for two years, but the Government has celebrated their success with further funding of \$1.9 million over four years.

“With the very substantial funding provided to the mental health sector, there can be no doubt about the commitment of this Government to mental health services and to the health and wellbeing of Canberrans who struggle on a daily basis with mental illness,” Ms Gallagher concluded.

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