



BUDGET 2008 - 2009 READY FOR THE FUTURE MEDIA RELEASE

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\$300 MILLION TO KICK OFF COMPLETE REDEVELOPMENT OF THE ACT HEALTH SYSTEM

The Stanhope Government will fund the Territory's single biggest infrastructure project to provide the ACT community with the health facilities needed to meet the challenges of health care into the future.

Announcing funding of \$300 million for the first stage of the project, ACT Health Minister, Katy Gallagher said this was the beginning of what is expected to be a \$1 billion redevelopment of the ACT's entire health system.

"The \$300 million allocated by the Stanhope Government in this year's Budget provides the basis for building a more sustainable and modern health system to ensure the safety, availability and viability of quality health care in the ACT to 2022."

Ms Gallagher said this year's Budget allowed for the following initiatives:

- \$90 million for a Women's and Children's Hospital at The Canberra Hospital (TCH);
- \$37.6 million for a suite of mental health facilities to include an Adult Mental Health Acute Inpatient Unit, a Secure Adult Mental Health Inpatient Unit and a Mental Health Assessment Unit on the TCH campus, design of a Mental Health Young Persons' Unit and an additional \$8.5 million over four years of recurrent funding for greater support for people with mental illness;
- \$18 million for a new Health Centre at Gungahlin;
- \$9.4 million for a new 16-bed Intensive Care Unit/High Dependency Unit and Coronary Care Unit facility at Calvary Hospital;
- \$5.7 million for Digital mammography;
- \$5.5 million for a Neurosurgery Suite at TCH;
- \$5 million for the redevelopment of Community Health Centres to provide expanded health services to the community;
- \$4.1 million for a new 16-bed Surgical Assessment and Planning Unit (SAPU) to streamline the admission process for non-critically ill surgical patients;
- \$2.4 million for 24 additional beds at TCH; and
- \$1.3 million for the design of a new Skills Development Centre.

"We need to plan, adopt new approaches, change or modify our models of care and the way we work, utilise emerging technologies and address our infrastructure needs," Ms Gallagher said.

"We need to look at new ways of managing chronic disease, of keeping people out of hospital through health promotion and prevention, at-home monitoring, electronic consultation or emergency outreach and different ways of providing post-hospital care such as community-based supports or step up/step down facilities."

Ms Gallagher said the infrastructure project, called *Your health—our priority*, was preceded by two years of service planning in conjunction with consumers, clinicians and staff to develop the way forward for our health services and to design the facilities needed.

This planning had identified benefits in relocating the Paediatric Unit at TCH and co-locating it with maternity services, the neonatal intensive care unit, gynaecology and fetal medicine and specialised outpatient services on the TCH Campus, thus creating a Women and Children's Hospital.

\$90 million had been allocated for this initiative which would free up space in the existing acute ward areas of the main tower block.

"The Stanhope Government has provided \$37.6 million in this year's Budget for a suite of mental health facilities, as well as \$8.5 million over four years of recurrent funding, to provide greater support for people with mental illness," Ms Gallagher said.

"A new mental health precinct will be built on TCH campus that will include an Adult Mental Health Acute Inpatient Unit and a Secure Adult Mental Health Inpatient Unit.

"In addition, a Mental Health Assessment Unit will be built adjacent to the TCH Emergency Department and a Mental Health Young Persons' Unit will be built on the Calvary campus.

"Funding of \$18 million has been allocated for a new Community Health Centre at Gungahlin.

"Located in our town centres, the ACT's network of community health centres provides a comprehensive range of community based child and family services, mental health, continuing/post acute care services, general preventative and direct care services.

"Growth in Canberra's north requires a new community health centre at Gungahlin as part of this community network."

Ms Gallagher said the funding included \$9.4 million for a new 16-bed Intensive Care Unit/High Dependency Unit and Coronary Care Unit facilities at Calvary Hospital to address service needs as part of a Territory-wide network of critical-care services.

All equipment used for the Breast Screen Program will transfer from the current analogue modality to a digital modality – a project allocated \$5.7 million in this year's Budget.

Digital imaging provides many advantages in breast screening including increased clarity of image, operational efficiencies and direct and improved client benefits and clinical outcomes.

Ms Gallagher said the ACT would have a Neurosurgery Suite that was among the most advanced neurosurgical operating environments in Australia enabling significant improvements in the effectiveness of neurosurgery at TCH. The Budget had allocated \$5.5 million towards this project.

The new environment would enable Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) to be undertaken during surgery improving the effectiveness and efficiency of surgery as well as safety to patients and improved patient outcomes.

"Establishing a theatre for neurosurgery will also free-up one of the existing theatres at TCH for other emergency and elective surgery work," Ms Gallagher said.

“This is an exciting, ambitious project that will ultimately deliver the health system this community will need for the future.

“We are prepared, we have done the planning, and now we have made the financial commitment to get started on building a health system that is even more *Ready for the Future*,” Ms. Gallagher concluded.

Statement ends

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