



# ACT Government

## 2005-2006 BUDGET

### MEDIA RELEASE

#### **ACT GOVERNMENT COMMITTED TO IMPROVING ACCESS TO ELECTIVE SURGERY AND TACKLING WAITING TIMES HEAD ON**

ACT Health Minister Simon Corbell today announced a further \$2 million per annum in the 2005-06 Budget to increase elective surgery capacity.

Mr Corbell said this funding would also overhaul the management of surgery at The Canberra Hospital to make sure those who need it most are seen first.

"The funding will provide an additional 300 elective surgery episodes in 2005-06, rising to 400 in 2006-07," he said.

"The focus will be on patients waiting excessively long times, and ensuring that those with the greatest clinical need receive treatment first."

Mr Corbell said this 2005-06 Budget initiative further adds to the \$20.4 million in additional funding for elective surgery already allocated in previous budgets by the ACT Labor Government through to 2008.

"The Government is committed to ensuring improved access to elective surgery and improved waiting times through the extra \$2 million funding each year," he said.

"On top of this the ACT Government will invest in additional beds and the overhaul of work and business practices at our public hospitals.

"Extra bed capacity means a better flow of patients from the time they enter our hospitals to the time they return home.

"The overhaul will focus on emergency departments, critical care and hospital wards and the way they work together so that we can reduce the time that people have to wait before getting a hospital bed.

Mr Corbell said the overhaul would also look at the management, booking scheduling and allocation of operating theatres

"Too many people have their operations postponed," he said.

"We need to develop better ways to balance the demand of emergency patients, pressures on our beds and those waiting for elective surgery."

