



ACT Government
2004-2005 BUDGET

MEDIA RELEASE

SUPPORTING THE ROLE OF CARERS

The Stanhope Government has committed \$830,000 over four years — including \$200,000 in the first year — to support the implementation of the *Caring for Carers Policy*.

Disability, Housing and Community Services Minister Bill Wood said the funding recognises the invaluable contribution that Canberra's 43 000 unpaid carers make to the community.

"The *Caring for Carers Policy* released by the Government this year seeks to recognise, value and promote the role of carers in the community and provide timely, accessible and effective support to assist them in their caring role," Mr Wood said.

"The Budget funding will be distributed through: small project grants which aim to develop carers' coping skills; initiatives that may include educational workshops; and practical support services such as respite and counseling.

"It is envisaged that the funded projects will also enhance networking between carers, thereby reducing social isolation. The community will set the priorities for funding allocation through a process overseen by the recently appointed 'Carers Implementation Partnership'.

"The *Caring for Carers Policy* is underpinned by several core principles which emphasise that caring is a shared responsibility between families and the community, and that carers must be supported to make choices about the level and nature of care they provide.

"The support provided to carers by human service organisations must be flexible and responsive to individual needs and circumstances, delivering adequate and timely resources.

"I have no doubt that this Budget initiative will support these principles and boost community recognition of the crucial role that the ACT's estimated 43 000 carers play," Mr Wood said.

Statement Ends.

