



ACT Government

2002-2003 BUDGET

EXPANDING COMMUNITY BASED ALCOHOL AND DRUG SERVICES

Young members of the Indigenous community with alcohol and drug problems and community pharmacists who provide pharmacotherapy services will receive additional support in the first Stanhope Government Budget, Chief Minister, Jon Stanhope, said today.

Budget 2002-03 provides \$170,000 in recurrent funding to develop Indigenous specific detoxification beds with mainstream service support and \$130,000 in recurrent funding to increase the payment provided to pharmacists who participate in the ACT pharmacotherapy scheme.

“During the election campaign we indicated that illicit drug use among Canberra’s Indigenous community has emerged as one of the major Indigenous health challenges in the ACT.

“Data available at the time painted a shocking picture, with Indigenous people massively over-represented in drug misuse statistics in the ACT.

“Any death from drug use is a tragedy but the impact on our Indigenous community has been substantial.

“We promised to facilitate community based development of culturally appropriate prevention, education, detoxification, rehabilitation and outreach programs to help solve this problem.

“We will meet this commitment through the funding of services specifically tailored to meet the needs of young Indigenous clients.

“This project will allow us to assess the most effective way of providing culturally appropriate services to young Indigenous people.

“It will also assist existing providers to improve service to the Indigenous community,” said Mr Stanhope.

The \$5 per week increase in payments to ACT community pharmacists who dose opiate dependent clients will bring the program into line with other jurisdictions and will recognise the contributions made by the pharmacists to helping people with substance abuse problems.

“Our community pharmacists who dispense methadone are quite literally at the front line of our endeavours to deal with drug abuse.

Media Release



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“The willing involvement of community pharmacists helps ensure the success of the public pharmacotherapy program and also helps the Government control costs, thereby benefiting all taxpayers.

“Community pharmacists in the ACT have not had an increase in payment for 8 years and it is time we recognised and rewarded their contribution,” said Mr Stanhope.

Statements ends 25 June 2002