



ACT Government

# Post-hospital care a boost to health system

Embargoed until 1 May 2001

"People leaving hospital will benefit from additional and improved services and support in this Budget," the Minister for Health, Housing and Community Services, Michael Moore, said today.

**The ACT Government has provided \$3.29 million over four years to fund a range of transitional services designed to help people, particularly older people, regain confidence when they are discharged from hospital.**

"This money will enable us to fill a gap in our current services. Some older people need a type of transitional care to help them regain their independence and confidence after leaving hospital," Mr Moore said.

"Many of the hospital stays experienced by older people can be shortened and made more pleasant by offering alternative convalescing places.

"After treatment, many patients are not sick enough to stay in hospital and yet feel they have not recovered sufficiently to look after themselves at home.

"The stress of a hospital stay, operations and then the move back home to independent living can be too daunting for some people.

"We will boost current post hospitalisation care options with new facilities offering overnight or short-stay accommodation or day centre based care, as well as enhancing services in the home.

"We will also be providing additional assistance through improved discharge planning and in-home support.

"We know that most patients are anxious to return home as soon as possible, so we will focus our efforts on supporting people in their home where we can.

"Alternative locations outside the range of institutions, such as staying with extended family or friends, will also be investigated," he said.

"In this way we will be able to provide a good range of transitional care, ideally spread across the ACT for the convenience of the people involved and their families.

"Our key aim is to provide the appropriate level of support in an at-home, non-threatening type environment," he said.

Mr Moore said that the ACT Government will continue to consult with the community to further develop additional flexible and responsive care models for the longer term, particularly targeting vulnerable groups.

The Government will also work with general practitioners and various health care providers when developing these improved services.

"We will continue talking with, and listening to, the community and with community based organisations, to make sure we fully understand and respond to the needs of people leaving hospital," he said.

**ACT Budget 2001-02**

The ACT Government currently provides and funds a range of post-hospitalisation services for people leaving hospital. These include the ACT Community Care Link Program, which provides a wide range of services for people discharged from both public hospitals.

“Our population is ageing and the demand for these services will increase over time,” Mr Moore said.

“Many older people can find the transfer from hospital back home extremely difficult and quite frightening. Convalescent facilities will provide 24-hour care and support, giving people peace of mind during the last stages of recovery,” Mr Moore said.

Key groups such as the Council on the Ageing ACT, the Older Women’s Network (Action) Inc and the Veterans Association have previously in discussions identified a need for additional services.

The Government has responded to this with the announcement of additional services.

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Statement ends

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