



ACT Government

BUDGET 2007-2008

Taking the Territory forward

MEDIA RELEASE

No. 24

\$10.5 MILLION TO BOOST ELECTIVE SURGERY

The ACT Government will invest an additional \$10.5 million in this year's Budget to further improve access to elective surgery over the next four years.

Health Minister Katy Gallagher said the ACT Government is investing to keep up with increased demand for elective surgery.

"Over the past four years, the ACT Government had achieved record levels of elective surgery by investing an additional \$22 million for increased access to care," Ms Gallagher said. "However, demand for elective surgery continues to grow at a significant rate.

"The additional funding over the last four years has already resulted in record levels of access to elective surgery, delivering 7,661 removals from the list for surgery in 2003-04 to an estimated 9,320 in 2006-07. This is an outstanding achievement given that demand for emergency surgery has grown by 7 percent between March 2006 and March 2007.

"The additional funding in this Budget will result in an estimated 9,620 removals from the elective surgery waiting list during 2007-08. This increased access to elective surgery will enable ACT Health to focus on those waiting for care, while ensuring those most in need for surgery, receive their surgery on time.

"This funding will also provide a further 300 elective surgery procedures above the target for 2006-07, to be achieved by commissioning a tenth operating theatre at The Canberra Hospital for five days per week.

"This initiative will assist with managing the increasing demand for elective and emergency surgery, as well as minimising the number of people waiting for surgery beyond standard timeframes."

Ms Gallagher said by the end of 2007-08, the Government would have added almost \$34 million for additional access to elective surgery since 2002-03.

"This means that more than 6,000 people will have had surgery who would otherwise still be waiting for care," Ms Gallagher said.

5 June 2007

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