



BUDGET 2008 - 2009 READY FOR THE FUTURE MEDIA RELEASE

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\$46 MILLION FOR NEW MENTAL HEALTH PRECINCT

A new mental health precinct will be built on the Canberra Hospital (TCH) campus that will include an Adult Mental Health Acute Inpatient Unit and a Secure Adult Mental Health Inpatient Unit, ACT Minister for Health, Katy Gallagher, said today.

In addition, a Mental Health Assessment Unit will be built adjacent to TCH Emergency Department and funding will be provided for the forward design of a new Mental Health Young Persons' Unit on the Calvary campus.

"The ACT Government has provided \$37.6 million in this year's Budget for this suite of mental health facilities as well as \$8.5 million over four years of recurrent funding to provide greater support for people with mental illness," Ms Gallagher said.

"This initiative will enable the construction of a 40-bed adult acute inpatient mental health unit as part of a comprehensive infrastructure program to support the provision of integrated mental health services to meet projected demand."

"The construction of the new unit, together with the 15-bed secure mental health unit, will replace the existing Psychiatric Services Unit (PSU) which has been identified as having inadequate infrastructure for planned service delivery into the future."

Ms Gallagher said forensic mental health was a specialised area within the field of mental health and referred to services provided to people who have a mental illness and who are in contact with the criminal justice system.

"There is currently no secure mental health unit in the ACT able to accommodate individuals requiring medium-to high-level secure care," she said.

"The new Secure Adult Mental Health Inpatient Unit, to be built on TCH campus, will provide a new service accommodating ACT residents whose mental health conditions require short-to medium-term treatment and placement in a secure facility."

Ms Gallagher said the Mental Health Assessment Unit to be built adjacent to the Emergency Department at Canberra Hospital would be a short-stay observation unit aimed at providing a more appropriate mental health assessment and treatment environment at the point of presentation and as an alternative environment to stabilise and discharge clients without the need for admission to an inpatient unit where appropriate.

"In addition to these new facilities on TCH campus, a new inpatient mental health facility for young people aged 13 to 25 years is moving to the detailed design phase," she said.

Ms Gallagher said the funding for this initiative included \$23.63 million for the Adult Mental Health Acute Inpatient Unit; \$11.16 million for the Secure Adult Mental Health Inpatient Unit; \$2.01 million for the Mental Health Assessment Unit; and \$775,000 for detailed design of the Mental Health Young Persons' Unit.

Statement ends

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