



ACT Government

2002-2003 BUDGET

MAJOR FUNDING BOOST FOR DISABILITY SECTOR

The Stanhope Government has delivered on its promise to provide a substantial and much needed funding boost to the disability sector to better support children, young people and adults with a disability, Chief Minister, Jon Stanhope, said today.

The ACT Budget 2002-03 will provide an additional \$10.3 million over four years to:

- support people with disabilities with complex and high needs who are in crisis; those with acquired brain injury and high medical needs and those inappropriately admitted to nursing homes;
- extend the Post School Options program to provide transitional support for young people leaving school who are unable to participate in employment;
- provide additional day placement services to build the capacity of the disability sector to help clients develop skills;
- enable the continued development of quality services and systems, including planning and quality frameworks;
- support the early diagnosis and assessment of autism;
- deliver additional early intervention education programs for children with disabilities aged from 18 months to primary school age, including playgroup programs and early intervention education programs for children with complex delays and disabilities; and
- provide multidisciplinary therapy services to children in autism specific learning support classes in ACT Government primary schools.

Funding of \$350,000 over 3 years will be used to establish the Disability ACT Innovation Fund. This fund will be used to trial new models of care and support for people with disabilities, their families and carers.

The budget funding will also support the development of reform in partnership with people with disabilities, their families, service providers and peak bodies and the development of new policies and directions arising out of the government response to the Gallop report.

“My Government promised to provide an additional \$1 million a year to enhance the quality of disability services.

“This Budget delivers more than double that amount.

“We promised to empower people with a disability and to develop and maintain options to ensure they are able to enjoy a valued and productive role in the community.

“This Budget keeps that promise and takes a significant step forward in addressing unmet need in the community.

Released: 25 June 2002

Inquiries: Greg Friedewald 6205 0434 or 0408 680 471

Media Release



“We are extending the range of care options available and providing extra support to people at critical points in their life, with a focus on early intervention and skill development.

“I am pleased that we are able to provide better care options for people with acquired brain injury. Many people, and particularly young people, with these injuries have been inappropriately placed in nursing homes.

“People with an acquired brain injury deserve care and support tailored to their need and they deserve to be accommodated in an environment more suited to their age and needs.

“We are also focusing on helping young people with a disability acquire employment and other skills through the expansion of the Post School Options Program and day placement services,” said Mr Stanhope.

The Chief Minister said the early intervention programs would enable additional services and support to be provided to children with a disability.

“The evidence is clear that early diagnosis and therapy can make a major difference to the future of young people with a disability.

“Children with autism in particular benefit from early assessment and therapy and the Government has provided much needed funding to expand services in this area,” said Mr Stanhope.

Mr Stanhope said this Budget was further evidence of his Government’s commitment to substantially reforming disability services.

“My Government inherited a disability sector in crisis but we acted promptly to radically reform the planning and delivery of disability services.

“The Gallop Report made it clear that substantial change was required and we have embarked upon a major change program in partnership with the disability sector.

“The Gallop and Reid Reports and the Disability Reform Group signalled the need to move disability policy, planning and service delivery from the health portfolio and we have acted on those recommendations.

“A number of studies have highlighted the issue of unmet need in disability and this Budget will make a real and positive impact in the areas of highest need.

“The election of the Stanhope Government signalled a period of renewal for the disability sector – a period in which people with disability and their families and carers can be confident they will be supported, valued, consulted and respected,” said Mr Stanhope.

Statement ends 25 June 2002