

INCREASED SUPPORT FOR CANBERRA'S MOST VULNERABLE



Increased support for vulnerable members of our community is the centrepiece of the 2016-17 ACT Budget for Canberra.

The ACT Budget invests more than **\$510 million** to support Canberrans who need a helping hand.

This includes **\$120 million** for disability services, such as our ongoing support for the National Disability Insurance Scheme. The ACT Government will also spend more than **\$94 million** for Child and Youth Protection Services and **\$184 million** for housing and homelessness support.

The ACT Government has listened to the community and is dedicating an unprecedented **\$27 million** in new funding to building a safer community and giving a voice to all those in need.

This includes a **\$21.4 million** response to family violence – the single largest new funding initiative in the ACT's history on addressing family violence in our community.

Safer families for Canberra

The ACT Government is investing \$21.4 million over four years to tackle the issue of family violence in our community. This is the single largest spend on the issue of family violence in the ACT's history.

This new funding includes:

- **\$3 million** for a full-time Coordinator-General for Family Safety and a dedicated safer families team to lead the whole of government effort to improve outcomes for victims of family violence. This work will be done through collaboration, information sharing, awareness raising and working in partnership with the community;
- **\$2.6 million** to deliver coordinated case management and services for families who have experienced family violence, helping ensure they get the support they need;
- **\$2.5 million** to establish a team to analyse and provide advice to child protection services as they undertake their complex work to support vulnerable children and young people;
- **\$2.5 million** to enhance the Director of Public Prosecutions' capacity to institute and conduct prosecutions of alleged family violence perpetrators and to increase the Legal Aid Commission's ability to provide legal assistance to victims of family violence who cannot afford the cost of private legal representation;
- **\$2 million** to fund services that provide support and referrals to specialist drug and alcohol treatment services to prevent these issues resulting in violence in the home;
- **\$1.5 million** to implement important law reform that will include broadening the definition of family violence to include economic and emotional abuse;
- **\$1.2 million** in additional funding for the Domestic Violence Crisis Service and the Canberra Rape Crisis Centre to continue providing vital crisis, outreach, education and support services to the community;

- **\$1.2 million** for translating and interpreter services at the ACT Law Courts which is proven to be a key factor in improving access to justice for people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds;
- **\$1.2 million** to boost ACT Policing's capability to help victims apply for Domestic Violence Orders;
- **\$964,000** for an innovative residential behaviour change program for men who use or are at risk of using violence;
- **\$770,000** for training frontline staff so they can better identify family violence and provide assistance to people at the first point of contact;
- **\$315,000** to fast-track financial assistance for people who need to leave a violent relationship;
- **\$120,000** for the Trauma Understanding and Sensitive Teaching in Schools program which supports the continuation of a system-wide public school program to effectively and sensitively assist students dealing with the impacts of trauma;
- **\$50,000** to develop a tool for information sharing across government and non-government services to better protect the wellbeing and safety of children and families; and
- **\$20,000** donation for the Tara Costigan Foundation to establish a support service for families experiencing violence.

Supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

The Government will invest **\$2.3 million over four years to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Canberra.**

The Budget outlines:

- **\$1.3 million** to expand existing outreach health services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the ACT and surrounding areas;
- **\$694,000** over four years for legal reforms to address the over representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the justice system;
- **\$149,000** to forge stronger connections with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community in Canberra, so they are able to share their views and concerns on matters of significance with the Government;
- **\$107,000** to offer additional mentoring and training to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff in the ACT public service; and
- **\$100,000** for grants and programs that celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture.

Preparing for national disability reform in Canberra

This Budget will provide \$1.2 million to prepare for the implementation of the National Disability Insurance Scheme. This is in addition to the \$22.3 million ACT Government contribution to the Scheme.

Initiatives include:

- **\$718,000** for the final stages of the implementation of the National Disability Insurance Scheme in the ACT; and
- **\$446,000** to support existing disability organisations in the community sector to prepare for the Scheme.

Support for low-income households

As part of the 2016-17 Budget, the ACT Government is making an unprecedented investment to make sure the most vulnerable members of our community receive the help they need. This includes investing an extra \$35 million over four years into the concessions program.

Concessions play an important role in supporting around 30,000 Canberra households and the need for support is increasing.

Protecting our children and young people

The Budget sees a new investment of \$2.2 million to strengthen the child protection response to family violence.

This includes:

- **\$1.3 million** over four years to ensure the safety of children through a reportable conduct scheme for employees, ensuring investigations into allegations of child abuse are undertaken appropriately and are independently reviewed;
- **\$800,000** to provide better support for children and young people in care; and
- **\$100,000** to ensure the efficient and effective management of Bimberi Youth Justice Centre.

Renewal of Canberra's public housing

The ACT Government is continuing with the biggest renewal of our city's public housing stock in Canberra's history.

Development of new public housing properties is one of the biggest initiatives in the 2016-17 Budget, with funding allocations of **\$169 million** in 2016-17 and **\$391 million** over the four years to 2019-20.

The public housing renewal program will replace 1,288 public housing dwellings over the next four years, with modern, comfortable, more energy efficient accommodation.