



ACT Government
2004-2005 BUDGET

MEDIA RELEASE

EXPANSION OF MENTAL HEALTH FORENSIC SERVICES IN ACT

The ACT Budget has provided recurrent funding of \$300,000 per annum to expand Mental Health forensic services in the ACT as part of the Stanhope Government's support for forensic mental health services.

The Minister for Health, Simon Corbell, said this initiative would provide a direct and definitive response to one of the major recommendations of the IDC in establishing a forensic community case management team for the first time in the ACT.

"It will provide a specialist clinical management team to provide specific mental health services for clients who have been released by the courts back into the community," Mr Corbell said.

"This will give magistrates options outside the Belconnen Remand Centre and the Psychiatric Services Unit for some clients who have offended and are diagnosed with a mental illness."

Mr Corbell said the initiative was based on the Victorian model of forensic mental health services.

"The ACT forensic clinical case management team will fill the same role as mental health forensic workers in Victoria. They will receive referrals from the courts and the remand centres for persons with a mental illness who could be supported in the community and will provide specialist case management to persons with forensic mental health issues."

The funding will provide for three specialist forensic clinical staff members to carry out the role of forensic community mental health clinicians.

The team will help clients to manage their mental illness, providing multidisciplinary continuous care with referrals to other community services relating to homelessness, alcohol, substance use and aggression as appropriate.

The new staff will also be able to assist the existing forensic mental health services team in providing information during the court process, liaising with magistrates, Tribunals and the DPP on clients with a mental illness who have previously offended and are within the court system.

Statement Ends.