



ACT Government

2002-2003 BUDGET

SUPPORTING PEOPLE WITH CANCER

People with cancer will benefit from faster access to treatment and enhanced counselling and support services, Chief Minister, Jon Stanhope, announced today.

In Budget 2002-03, the Government is providing \$330,000 in recurrent funding to employ additional radiotherapists and extra time for radiation specialists at The Canberra Hospital. Extra recurrent funding of \$250,000 will also be provided for additional specialist haematology services at The Canberra Hospital.

Chief Minister, Jon Stanhope, said the funding would help cut the unacceptably long delays experienced by some cancer patients seeking radiation therapy.

“During the election campaign, we promised to continue the fight against cancer by providing the resources to treat cancer patients with the most up-to-date and effective treatments and to fund additional specialist staff.

“In meeting that promise, we are acting to ensure that people suffering from cancer do not have to endure the added pain of long waits for essential radiation treatment.

“Hospitals around the country are experiencing shortages of radiation specialists but this extra funding will support an active recruitment campaign to boost staffing levels.

“We are also providing extra support to the haematology service to meet growing demand,” said Mr Stanhope.

The Budget also provides \$155,000 in additional recurrent funding, for psychosocial support for people living with cancer and their families. The funding will include the employment of two staff.

This service will be targeted to survivors of cancer to help them deal with the long-term consequences of the disease. Consumer groups and the Cancer Services Council have highlighted the need for enhanced psychosocial support.

“Being diagnosed with cancer is a traumatic experience and whilst treatment is often successful it can leave both emotional and physical scars.

“Many studies have shown that cancer patients do better with proper emotional and psychological support and funding these services is a vital part of this Government’s fight against cancer.

“People newly diagnosed with cancer, those waiting for a diagnosis and patients living with the threat of recurrence will all benefit from this funding.

“We will also use the money to help bereaved families cope with grief,” said Mr Stanhope.

Statement ends 25 June 2002

Media Release



Released: 25 June 2002

Inquiries: Greg Friedewald 6205 0434 or 0408 680 471