



Australian Capital Territory

Budget

2015-16

**Social Inclusion
and Equality**

For Canberra

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Our social inclusion and equality program means implementing policies and practices that respond to poverty, deprivation, and disadvantage, as well as cultural and systemic problems

A Message from the Chief Minister



The ACT Government's central goal is to help every person reach their full potential as a member of our diverse, inclusive and creative community.

Our social inclusion and equality program means implementing policies and practices that respond to poverty, deprivation, and disadvantage, as well as cultural and systemic problems such as homophobia, sexism, racism and violence against women and children. This work is already underway.

This Budget Statement not only sets out what the Government will do in coming years to advance social inclusion and equality in our city, but provides an account of what we have already achieved in partnership with the community. We are addressing social exclusion and inequality across all areas, including immediate consideration of ways to counter domestic violence, addressing the needs of people experiencing mental health issues, and eliminating the gap in equality experienced by Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex people.

In recognition of the importance of this work I have appointed Yvette Berry as the Minister assisting the Chief Minister on Social Inclusion and Equality. I have also formed a special committee of Cabinet, to work to:

- build an inclusive community that enables all ACT residents to live a fulfilling life in our city;
- improve outcomes for vulnerable ACT residents;
- support collaboration to remove barriers to inclusion;
- reform the service system to provide the right services at the right time for the right duration; and
- deliver the Government's commitment to Social Inclusion and Equality through to 2020 and beyond.

We live in a prosperous and welcoming city. My government will work with Canberrans to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to make it even better.

Andrew Barr MLA
Chief Minister and Treasurer
June 2015



- Countering Violence Against Women and their Children
- Living with Disability
- Children and Families
- Housing, Homelessness and Transport
- Law and Justice



New Initiatives

New Initiatives

The 2015-16 Budget reaffirms the ACT Government's commitment to supporting the engagement of all Canberrans in their community. We will work to progress the implementation of existing initiatives, and we will make significant new investments in priority areas, including domestic violence and social housing renewal.

The key priorities outlined below give a snapshot of the social inclusion and equality measures in the 2015-16 Budget.

Countering Violence Against Women and their Children

Recent tragic deaths in our community serve as a stark reminder of the seriousness and impact of domestic violence. The ACT Government is determined to support our hard-working service providers, police and emergency services, community organisations and schools to help end this scourge of violence, and aid those experiencing such violence.

In 2015-16, the Government will:

- Expand the capacity of three key domestic and sexual violence crisis services. The Domestic Violence Crisis Service, Canberra Rape Crisis Centre and the Canberra Men's Centre will share in \$250,000 in additional funding to assist with the current spike in demand for crisis assistance.
- Support ACT public schools to provide social and emotional learning programs to help kids learn early on in their lives about the importance of respectful relationships, and give them easy and accessible ways to get support, by dedicating \$615,000 in funding.
- Establish an ACT domestic violence data framework, fund women's safety grants and support the Domestic Violence Prevention Council with \$300,000 from the Confiscated Assets Trust Fund announced in March.
- Contribute to the national campaign to raise awareness about violence against women and their children.

Additional funding is one part of wider reforms

The ACT is the leading jurisdiction in Australia in its proactive and coordinated approach to violence against women and children. During 2015 the Government will bring forward reforms beyond Budget initiatives, including:

- Allowing prosecutors to use family violence victims' first statements to police as evidence at trial.
- Making certain that interim domestic violence orders can remain in place until criminal changes are finalised.
- Better recognising the harm that results when a person strangles their partner.
- Reforming the victims of crime assistance scheme to make it easier and faster to get financial help and counselling services.

The Government will establish a Coordinator-General for Domestic and Family Violence in the ACT which will oversee strategic efforts in this area and drive the Second Implementation Plan for the *ACT Prevention of Violence against Women and Children Strategy 2011-2017*.

We will also work with stakeholders to implement recommendations from the Australian and New South Wales Law Reform Commissions Report: *Family Violence – A National Legal Response*.

Living with Disability

The ACT Government is leading the way in ensuring people living with disability are able to play a full part in their local community. As the only National Disability Insurance Scheme pilot site that covers a whole jurisdiction, we are rolling out the scheme with a focus on what will work best for the consumer, their families and carers. We are all the stronger for living in a city that values and respects those living with disability.

Support for Students with Disability – Extra resources

The Government is providing additional resources to support increased numbers of students with disability to access and participate in education with \$3 million in funding over two years.

Disability Services – Indexation

The Government will continue to fund disability support packages and provide funding to disability service providers to ensure people with disability receive appropriate care in the transition to the National Disability Insurance Scheme, which is expected to be completed by 30 June 2016. The Government will contribute an additional \$1.685 million in 2015-16.

Support for People with Disability – New respite property

The Government will construct a purpose built respite property for young people aged between 13-18 years old to replace an existing respite property currently operated by Disability ACT. It is expected that the construction will be undertaken in partnership with the private sector.



Children and Families

A positive and supportive family life is the best way for children to grow up to reach their full potential. Our family support services must grow as the Canberra community grows, to ensure new suburbs receive the same assistance as those raising a family in more established areas.

Growing Healthy Families

We will expand the Growing Healthy Families Program at the Gungahlin, West Belconnen and Tuggeranong Child and Family Centres over the next two years, through funding of \$1.264 million. This will provide resources that support engagement, inclusion and access to culturally informed services by the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.

A Step Up for Our Kids

A Step Up for Our Kids will transform the way we support children and young people in care to put their needs at the centre of a more tailored, responsive system. It is a major investment to support vulnerable children and young people to reach their potential, providing the right service at the right time.

Officially launched in January 2015, the five-year Strategy A Step Up for Our Kids – One Step Can Make a Lifetime of Difference commits to:

- An investment of more than \$39 million over four years in the future of our most vulnerable children and young people. It is about breaking the intergenerational cycle of disadvantage and keeping children safe at home.
- Reunifying children and young people with parents as quickly as possible, or for those who cannot safely go home to their parents, growing up secure and loved within another family because they only get one chance at childhood.
- Creating a therapeutic, trauma-informed care system which responds more effectively to the needs of children and young people in care.
- Placing foster and kinship carers at the centre of the care system and providing them with the support needed to provide quality care. They are the child's primary support and healer.

New Services under the Strategy will be rolled out in stages from early 2016.

Better Services Program

The Government will extend the One Human Services Gateway to improve community access to a range of human services in the ACT. The Strengthening Families Program is also being extended to provide early intervention and targeted support for up to 50 families with the greatest need in the community. A total of \$1.156 million will be provided over two years while future years will be funded from the savings generated.

Continuation of the Community Sector Reform Program

The Government will also continue to work with the community sector through a range of activities to support strategic reform, with a focus on the transition from outputs to outcomes, and continued initiatives to reduce red tape.

Housing, Homelessness and Transport

Canberra has a long and proud tradition of providing dignified and inclusive public housing throughout every suburb. Much of this housing is now ageing, which is why we are committed to renewing public housing by replacing 1,288 of our oldest houses with modern, efficient and well-located homes. We also recognise the need for appropriate transport options to make sure students living with a disability can always make it to school, and adults can participate fully in the ACT's economic and social life.

Urban Renewal Program – Public Housing Renewal

The Government will redevelop the Allawah Court, Karuah, Owen Flats and Red Hill Precinct public housing properties, involving the demolition of 352 units and the sale of land. The Government will also invest in the construction of 352 replacement properties.

Continued Support for Homelessness Services

The Government is maintaining its contribution to homelessness services consistent with the Commonwealth commitment to extend the

National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness, providing funding of \$3.04 million over two years.

Support for Students with Disability – Special needs transport

The Government is supporting the transport of students with disability to ACT public schools. This funding of \$925,000 is for one year as it is anticipated that this service will transition to the National Disability Insurance Scheme by June 2016.

Transport for Canberra – Community transport coordination

The Government will continue the operation of the Community Transport Coordination Centre including the single booking system for community transport services. This funding of \$496,000 in 2015-16 will maintain community transport in Woden, Weston, Belconnen and Tuggeranong to respond to the needs of seniors, people with disability and transport other community members who need assistance with transport.

Law and Justice

We want Canberra to be a place where all people feel safe, supported and able to participate fully in the life of our city. This includes working to ensure that those who enter our justice system are given the opportunity to become productive members of our community.

A Fair, Just and Equitable Society – High density housing program

The Government will continue the high density housing program which facilitates programs and participation opportunities designed to prevent or reduce crime and facilitate access to justice, health, education and employment for residents living in high density housing. Funding of \$366,000 will be provided over two years.

Justice Reform Strategy – Enhancing Community Corrections

The Government will strengthen the capability of ACT Community Corrections to enable successful uptake and supervision of offenders subject to community-based sentencing options as an alternative option to full time custodial sentencing. A fundamental objective is to put offenders on better pathways and reduce recidivism.

Bendora Through Care Unit

The Government is continuing to support young people in detention at the Bimberi Youth Justice Centre by providing intensive and targeted programs to assist them with moving from custody to the community. The Government is providing a total of \$2.455 million over four years for this initiative. Ongoing funding will be provided through savings at Bimberi due to reduced numbers of young people entering the youth justice system.

Improving Access to Justice – Legal Aid

The Government will provide additional legal assistance to the ACT community of \$867,000 over two years. This initiative will enhance the Legal Aid Commission’s ability to grant legal assistance to vulnerable people who cannot afford the cost of private legal representation.

Improving Access to Justice – Street Law

The Government will continue operating the Street Law early intervention legal outreach service for an additional two years by providing funding of \$358,000. Street Law provides legal services to people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. This group often faces significant barriers in accessing mainstream legal services or in resolving legal matters without assistance.

Restorative Justice Scheme – Phase 2

The Government will invest in the second phase of the Restorative Justice Scheme investing \$2.058 million over four years to allow adult offenders to participate in restorative justice processes as an alternative to, and, in some cases, in conjunction with criminal proceedings. It will also include referrals for more serious crime for both juveniles and adults.

Client Management System for Child and Youth Protection Services

The Government is investing in a new integrated client management system for Child and Youth Protection Services to improve information security and to simplify access and reporting for caseworkers, out of home care agencies and foster and kinship carers.



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Ongoing Initiatives and Outcomes

Ongoing Initiatives and Outcomes

Social inclusion and equality have defined the ACT Labor Government since its election in 2001. We have done this through embedding the principles of social inclusion and equality in legislation, policies, services, practices and through significant, targeted funding.

This section of the Budget Statement outlines the important initiatives undertaken, and indicators of progress (where available), over the current term of the Assembly.

Countering Violence Against Women and their Children

New action to counter domestic violence in this year's Budget builds on longstanding and ongoing support for the sector. The Domestic Violence Crisis Service and the Canberra Rape Crisis Centre currently receive \$3.3 million to deliver specialist domestic violence and sexual assault services. The Government also supports specialised accommodation, outreach and specialist domestic and sexual violence services, and for women and children at risk of homelessness:

- Providing crisis and transitional accommodation and outreach support to women with or without accompanying children who are leaving or have become homeless (reaching \$1.7 million in 2014-15).
- Services specifically for women, totalling over \$2.5 million annually, including for:
 - Toora Women Incorporated to provide accommodation and outreach support services for single women (\$1 million a year);
 - Inanna Incorporated to provide supported accommodation and outreach services (over \$500,000), and
 - Support for women with disabilities who have experienced domestic violence or sexual assault.
- The ACT also supports the safety of women and their children through the Confiscated Assets Trust Fund (totalling \$555,000). This funding also supports the ACT Government's contribution to the Australian National Research Organisation for Women's Safety which was launched in May 2014.
- In 2014-15 the ACT Government provided \$5.486 million of base funding to Legal Aid ACT (excluding funding for major cases). This funding allows legal aid services to be provided to those who could otherwise not afford legal representation or advice, including victims of domestic violence.

The ACT Education and Training Directorate and schools have embedded, as a core principle, respectful relationship building in their teaching practices and recognise the importance of early intervention and targeted support for children exposed to domestic violence. Announced Budget initiatives will build on this.

The latest available data shows the range and extent of activities by justice and crisis agencies in the family and domestic violence area. This includes:

- ACT Policing attended 2,848 incidents with 1,984 criminal offences identified in 2014.
- The ACT Director of Public Prosecutions commenced criminal proceedings against 425 defendants in 2013-14.
- The Domestic Violence Crisis Service supported people living with or escaping violence through 33,426 contacts in 2013-14. This included 1,408 crisis interventions that often involved attending with or immediately after police attended a victim's home.
- Victim Support ACT supported 136 new clients in 2013-14.
- Legal Aid ACT assisted in the delivery of 1,116 legal support services in 2013-14.
- 15 per cent of families in the expanded Strengthening Families model have identified domestic violence as a current issue. For those participating families that are single parent families (50 per cent), the experience of domestic violence is as high as 23 per cent.
- In 2013-14, 529 people whose primary need was related to domestic or family violence received support from the ACT Specialist Homelessness Services.

National context

In April 2015, the ACT Domestic Violence Prevention Council convened a forum with a wide spectrum of community and government representatives to identify priority reforms and also informed the ACT's position for the April meeting of the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) meeting.

At COAG, all Governments committed to urgent collective action to reduce the unacceptable levels of violence against women and children, support those experiencing violence, and bring perpetrators to justice. These actions included a jointly-funded national information campaign, a national domestic violence order scheme, national standards for holding perpetrators of violence to account; and the development of strategies to tackle the increased use of technology to facilitate abuse.

Living with Disability

NDIS implementation

On 1 July 2014, the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) was launched in the ACT, giving people with a disability more choice and control and a lifetime approach to meeting their support needs. Around 5,000 people will be eligible to enter the scheme over two years.

The ACT will be the first jurisdiction to have all eligible people in the NDIS. Already, all children from birth to four years, post school leavers and high school students have a funded support plan. Primary school children will enter the scheme between April and September this year. Adults are phasing from oldest to youngest, with those aged 59 to 64 years already in the scheme.

- At December 2014, from a target of 472 participants, 434 people had approved National Disability Insurance Agency plans (92%).

In preparation for the transition to the NDIS, the Commonwealth and ACT Governments are investing \$12.5 million allocated from the National Sector Development Fund to support community sector development focusing on the capability needs of community organisations.



Inclusion for people with disability

People with disability make a valuable contribution to Canberra. To reach their full potential, people with disability need welcoming and supportive communities, an accessible environment and opportunities to participate socially and economically.

The ACT Government is currently consulting on a proposed ACT Disability Inclusion Statement. The Statement will guide government, together with business and community, to consider the needs and rights of people with disability. The Statement will reflect the Government's commitment to implement the National Disability Strategy 2010-2020, which is underpinned by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

- 45.3% the potential population of people with disability have access to the community support services - the highest in the nation and compared with an overall average of 25.3%.
- 59.4% of people with disability were in employment compared to 47.7% nationally.
- In 2012 the proportion of people with disability aged 15-64 years who participated in the labour force was 83.5% in the ACT, compared to the national average of 78.2%.
- In 2012 the proportion of primary carers aged 15-64 years who participated in the labour force was 67.8% in the ACT, compared to the national average of 52.8%. This is an improvement from the 2009 result of 63.7% for the ACT.

Children and Families

Child and Family Centres – a central access point for families

Over the past decade, the Child and Family Centres in Gungahlin, Tuggeranong and West Belconnen have continued to provide a one-stop shop for Canberra families. The Child and Family Centres are trusted centres of support for families, strengthening linkages and connections of families to services and supportive communities. This has included supporting women experiencing violence to know what services are available to seek help.

The number of families accessing the Child and Family Centres has continued to increase since their opening, with 1,863 families accessing services in 2013-14. The services offered are now having a diversionary impact on other services such as child protection.

Better Services – reforming the delivery of human services in partnership – person centred and integrated responses

Better Services is improving the experience of Canberrans across the human services system to improve their participation in social and economic life whilst ensuring the sustainable use of resources from across the system. Informed by the Human Services Blueprint, *Better Services* is equipping education, health, community and justice service providers to work together in a person-centred way; so that clients receive the right service, at the right time, and for the right duration.

Three key *Better Services* Initiatives are co-designing integrated service responses with their partners to achieve better client and community outcomes.



The Human Services Gateway partnership model continues to grow the mix and type of services available for people to access in a single service hub. Clients can easily find the information they need and be referred to the right service.

Strengthening Families is a Better Services Initiative funded through the 2014-15 Budget that provides a tailored service offer for families with multiple and complex needs that face persistent barriers in their lives. The model has proven effective in breaking through service system barriers and building capacity for families to help them move forward towards their desired future. Strengthening Families is seeing positive changes for families with complex needs and who are involved with multiple services.

Strengthening Families has supported 132 family members. Of all participating families:

- 23% are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander
- 69% experience mental illness
- 46% have disability
- 38% are involved with Care and Protection Services
- 50% are single parent households
- 42% are experiencing debt and financial difficulties
- 50% require education supports
- 54% have transport disadvantage

The Local Services Network in West Belconnen is working with the community to develop their own local solutions to meet their identified priorities. Already the Network is fostering genuine commitment by local services, businesses and residents to work together to improve outcomes for the West Belconnen community.

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex and Queer (LGBTIQ)

The ACT Labor Government has long led the way in progressing equality for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex and Queer people. We were the first to:

- Recognise same-sex relationships through the Domestic Partnerships Act in 1994, which granted unmarried heterosexual couples and same sex couples similar property rights to those enjoyed by married couples.
- Commence a law reform process to clear our statute book of discrimination against LGBTIQ people in areas ranging from property rights to adoption laws, in 2001.
- Pass civil partnership legislation so that all loving, caring relationships are recognised the same way under law, regardless of sexuality.

We have also commenced:

- The Safe Schools Coalition so that all students feel safe and supported in their school, and are not bullied or harassed on the basis of their sexuality.
- *Play by the Rules* and *Fair Go, Sport* programs to encourage everyone to participate in sport in a safe welcoming environment, increase awareness of sexual and gender diversity, and reduce discrimination or harassment.
- The LGBTIQ Advisory Council, to provide Government with practical and strategic advice to support the LGBTIQ community, improve the lives of people who identify as LGBTIQ and promote an inclusive Canberra.



In May 2015, the ACT Government joined the Pride in Diversity program to strengthen diversity training for Government officials, particularly frontline staff. The Chief Minister also called on the Canberra Business Chamber and the Community Sector to nominate “Diversity Champions” to work with ACT Government champions to promote social inclusion and equality.

Legislative Reforms for Intersex and Transgender people

The ACT Government leads the way nationally on improving recognition of sex and gender diverse people. In April 2014, the ACT Government passed new laws that updated the definition of ‘intersex’ in ACT law, including the removal of reassignment surgery as a prerequisite for a person to change their legal status. New arrangements include a clear and simple process for intersex people to change the sex on their birth certificates, making a significant difference to the lives of sex and gender diverse people born in the Territory.

Support for SpringOUT Festival

The Government will support Canberra’s SpringOUT Festival by providing \$10,000 in sponsorship from the Chief Minister’s Community Support Fund. The Government will also facilitate local partnerships with local precincts such as Westside@Acton Park, as well as providing rainbow CBR material at the festival.

Marriage Equality Act

The *Marriage Equality (Same-Sex) Act 2013* commenced on 4 November 2013. The Act represented landmark law reform in Australia. Thirty one marriages were registered under the Act between its commencement on 7 November and 12 December 2015 when the Act was found invalid by the High Court. Couples who married under the Act were able to keep their certificate but are unable to use it as legal proof of their marriage. While the issue of marriage equality is now a decision for the Commonwealth Parliament, the ACT Government will continue to strongly support true legal equality for all couples.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People

Whole of Government Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Agreement

The *ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander 2015 – 2018 Agreement* was officially endorsed on 23 April 2015. The Agreement will help to build strong foundations, resilient families, and support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to achieve their personal life goals.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnership

The *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnership (2015-18)*, seeks to continue the work of the ACT’s first Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Justice Agreement (201013) in addressing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander over-representation in the ACT justice system, as both victims and offenders, and to reduce the incarceration rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the ACT.



Housing, Homelessness and Transport

Public housing renewal

In July 2014, the ACT Government committed to the public housing renewal program. The public housing renewal program will involve the development of 1,288 new public housing dwellings to replace 13 multi-unit sites.

Through the public housing renewal program, the ACT Government will build or acquire modern, energy efficient accommodation to improve the overall quality of the public housing portfolio. This will also reduce utility costs and improve amenity for tenants. Tenants will be provided with support during their relocation through this program.

- As at 30 April 2015, 366 dwelling sites had been identified and 176 projects had commenced.
- The proportion of low income households in both public and community housing at 30 June 2014 at 98.9%, the highest in Australia.
- During 2013-14, 97% of new allocations in both public and community housing were made to households in greatest needs exceeding the national averages.
- The ACT had the highest proportion of young people experiencing a form of homelessness who were in education or training after receiving support at 82.4%, compared to the national average of 68.4%.
- Among clients being provided accommodation by homelessness services, 43.8% went on to secure a tenancy of their own after this support. This is the highest in the nation.

Common Ground

Common Ground is an assertive intervention model which addresses homelessness by providing safe, secure, supported accommodation for people who have experienced homelessness. It does so in specifically built or modified accommodation, provided in a form which mixes people who have experienced homelessness with low income working tenants who pay affordable rental.

A key theme of the Common Ground model is its linkages to the local and extended community and a focus on social interaction for its residents. The construction of Common Ground is well underway. With the assistance of community donations, the ACT and the Commonwealth Governments, a 40 unit dwelling is being built which will become home to 20 former chronic homeless individuals and 20 individuals on low income. The building is located on a site near the Gungahlin Town Centre.



Transport

The ACT Government's flexible transport bus service, launched in September 2014, has seen approximately 6,000 boardings to date, providing much needed free travel to a number of areas within the ACT for seniors and people with a disability. Each bus is wheelchair accessible and is operated by a member of the Special Needs Transport team.

The flexible transport bus service plays a significant role in transporting seniors and people with a disability to medical appointments, shopping centres and social events such as Seniors Week.

Designed specifically for residents such as the aged and people with disabilities, this free bus service operates off a basic timetable, picking up residents from home and taking them to local community facilities such as shopping centres and hospitals.

Health – including Mental Health

Canberra is a healthy and well educated community, with the highest life expectancy across Australia. This reflects the longstanding priority the ACT Government has granted to Health service delivery, a record that continues in this Budget.

Mental Health (Treatment and Care) Act 2015

The Mental Health (Treatment and Care) Amendment Act 2014, which will commence in November 2015, will:

- require mental health services to support a person with mental illness or disorder to make their own decisions about the mental health treatment, care and support that they receive, when the person has the capacity to make those decisions;
- enable a person with mental illness or disorder to make advance agreements, advance consent directions, and nominations of persons to assist a person to make known their will and preferences, during their journey through mental health services; and
- require that people receive treatment, care and support that is the least restrictive of their liberty and is sensitive to their gender, disability, language, close personal relationships, and other personal attributes.

Funding for secure mental health unit

In the 2014-15 Budget, the ACT Government provided capital funding of \$43.5 million for the construction of the Secure Mental Health Unit. The unit will include 25 beds, which will be opened in a staged process once the facility becomes operational. This will include 15 rehabilitation and 10 acute beds, which allows for growth in the need for secure care in the ACT. The facility is programmed to be complete and operational in late 2016.

For 2011-12, the proportion of people aged 16-64 years with mental or behavioural problems who were employed was 72.5% in the ACT, compared to the national average of 61.7%.

Mental Health Non-Government Organisations (NGOs)

The ACT invests in community-based mental health services (both government and NGO provided) beyond any other Australian jurisdiction on a per capita basis. Mental Health NGO funding has grown from \$11.7 million in 2011-12 to over \$15.9 million in 2014-15. The ACT invests 73.3% of total mental health funding into community-based services compared to an Australian average of 53.4%. These NGOs provide a diverse range of services including referral, treatment, residential units, counselling and information for people with mental illness and their families.

Mobile Dental Clinic

The Mobile Dental Clinic provides preventative and restorative dental services from a purpose-built mobile dental facility. The Clinic provides services to some of Canberra's most vulnerable people and those who have restricted mobility such as the elderly. The Mobile Dental Clinic aims to reduce barriers to access, such as cost and transport, and increase the levels of preventative and early intervention treatments provided to vulnerable groups.

Community Health Services – walk-in services at Belconnen and Tuggeranong

The establishment of Belconnen Walk-in-Centre and relocation of the Canberra Walk-in-Centre to Tuggeranong, meets the Government's commitment to provide as many services as possible in the least invasive and most convenient locations for patients and their families and support networks. The Walk-in-Centres are designed to complement existing health services including both Emergency Departments and GPs. They provide free one-off advice and treatment for minor illnesses and injuries.

Education

Education is central to the concept of social inclusion since it helps equip people with the necessary life-skills and qualifications to establish social networks, make informed choices, and participate in cultural, economic and political life. This is especially true for 'at risk' population groups such as people who have a mental illness or disability, people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds, and people from low socioeconomic backgrounds who are subject to inter-generational disadvantage.

Universal access to a quality preschool program for every child

Every child is guaranteed access to a quality preschool program in the year before formal schooling.

Educational opportunities for pregnant and parenting students

The Canberra College in partnership with ACT Health and government and non-government community agencies, provides an education and support program for pregnant and parenting students in the ACT and surrounding districts. CCCares offers Year 12 Certification, goal orientated learning packages, online learning, education and welfare support, health services, and vocational education and employability skills within a mainstream ACT Government College context.

New Introductory English Centres

On 20 March 2015, Minister Burch opened the new Gungahlin Introductory English Centre (IEC) at Palmerston District Primary School. This centre is the sixth IEC established in Canberra. It provides a more suitable location for newly arrived students residing in Gungahlin to begin their education in a safe and supportive environment.

These centres are an important part of our inclusivity practice in ACT public schools. They focus on the development of beginning English skills whilst learning the Australian curriculum, and help prepare students both academically and culturally for future learning in a mainstream school.

English as an Additional Language/ Dialect (EAL/D)

Over the last two years, 137 teachers have attended a Teacher Quality Institute accredited English as an Additional Language/ Dialect Teachers' Professional Learning Forum. The focus of the forum was on improving teacher understanding of the complexities for students transitioning from an Introductory English Centre into mainstream settings and to build their capacity to support both the students and their mainstream class teachers through the transition period.



Law and Justice

Youth Justice Blueprint

The *Blueprint for Youth Justice in the ACT 2012-22* continues to demonstrate reducing numbers of young people coming into contact with, or becoming further involved in, the youth justice system; ultimately improving outcomes for young people in the ACT.

- The rate of young people 10–17 years under youth justice supervision decreased by 29% overall and by 36% for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people from 2011-12 to 2013-14.
- The rate of young people 10-17 years under community-based supervision decreased by 28% overall and by 32% for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people. It is now the lowest it has been in the ACT for five years.
- The rate of young people 10-17 years in detention decreased by 39% overall and by 53% for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people from 2011-12 to 2013-14.

Justice Reform Strategy

The Justice Reform Strategy is a project to review the sentencing laws and practice in the ACT. Funding for the strategy was provided by the Government in the 2014-15 Budget.

The initial focus of the Justice Reform Strategy is to develop recommendations for a community based sentencing alternative to imprisonment. The strategy will also consider broader reforms, including options relating to restorative justice and therapeutic jurisprudence.

The Justice and Community Safety Directorate, in partnership with other government directorates and the community sector, is in the early stages of developing justice measures that aim to identify the impact of justice services and support on target cohorts that interact with the justice system.

Human Rights Bill

On 7 May 2015 new human rights laws legislation was agreed in principle by the Legislative Assembly. The Bill acknowledges the material and economic relationships that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have with the land, waters and other resources, and also strengthens the right to education. The Bill also makes it clear that children are to be treated as individuals and enjoy the full range of rights under the *Human Rights Act 2004*. The changes in the Bill represent small but significant enhancements of the protection and enforceability of the right to education and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural rights.

These proposed changes to the Human Rights Act result from the 2014 review of the Act and consultation with the Human Rights Commissioner and the Elected Body.



