



ACT Government

2003-2004 BUDGET

MENTAL HEALTH - BUDGET WINNER WITH ANOTHER FUNDING BOOST

The Stanhope Government has boosted Mental Health funding by an additional \$1.45M in the 2003-2004 Budget, delivering on Labor's commitment to improved funding for mental health services in the ACT.

"The new funding initiatives for mental health in this Budget will open up a range of services to those in need in our community who could otherwise have missed out," Mr Corbell said

"The Government is meeting the commitments in our Health Action Plan to further increase resources for mental health services, and to enhance collaboration between all elements of the mental health service system.

"A number of our Budget initiatives are designed to address the combined effects of historical under-funding from previous Liberal governments, and the growth in demand for services.

"We moved to address this in our first Budget by increasing funding by \$2 million per year, but we have improved our effort even more in this Budget, with a further \$1.45 million increase per year. This means that in just two years the Stanhope Labor Government has increased mental health funding by \$3.45 million per year recurrently.

"In terms of our Budget initiatives, one of the main aims is to integrate services across the whole system. Our stated aim in the Health Action Plan was to create a "seamless service" for clients and this budget funds initiatives for new and enhanced services for mental health consumers, wherever they may be in the community," Mr Corbell said.

"We have funded initiatives to assist consumers about to be discharged from hospital and in need of adequate support once back at home.

"We have also funded new services for consumers who have returned home but who are in need of on-going clinical services.

"Just as importantly, this Budget funds new services for mental health consumers who need help with every day social interaction and basic living skills, without which they cannot stay well.

"This Government has a firm and proven commitment to social justice, and increasing services for mental health clients targets those in our community who are potentially amongst the most disadvantaged," Mr Corbell said.

The following initiatives have been funded on a recurrent basis:

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Media Release



- **Drug and Alcohol/Mental Health Worker - \$80,000 per annum**
 This honours our commitment in the Health Action Plan to improve dual diagnosis services. Funding will make permanent the work done in a successful trial of a program for clients with a mental health illness, as well as an alcohol or other drug problem. The aim is to promote the integrated management of consumers with dual disorders to reduce the impact of substance use on people with a mental illness.
- **Supported Accommodation - \$240,000 per annum**
 The urgent need for this support has been identified in three recent Government Reports. The provision of support through a home-based outreach service can reduce the regularity of use of mental health in-patient and crisis support services. Supported Accommodation assists clients to continue to live in their own accommodation, whether it is a private dwelling, rooming house, supported residential service, or Government housing.
- **Discharge Planner for TCH Psychiatric Services Unit - \$80,000 per annum**
 This honours the commitment in the Health Action Plan for improved discharge procedures and better service integration. This initiative will ensure a seamless service and continuity of care for clients from hospital to community, and ensure that the continuum of care is maintained. It also meets the recommendations of the Patterson Inquiry.
- **Calvary Link Staff Position - \$80,000 per annum**
 This honours our commitment in the Health Action Plan for improved service integration. This role was successfully trialed as part of the Nurse Practitioner trial. Funding will make permanent the supervision and coordination of early assessment for clients at Calvary, as well as liaison with the other in patient wards at Calvary. It will also enable streamline access to services at Calvary through links with the Crisis Assessment and Treatment team.
- **Forensic - Court Liaison - \$80,000 per annum**
 With 20% of those on remand diagnosed as having a mental illness, the 2003/2004 Budget creates a Forensic Mental Health Court Liaison Officer to provide rapid psychiatric/psychological assessment of persons brought before the Courts on criminal matters. Establishing this position was recommended by the Patterson Review, and honours the commitment in the Health Action Plan to implement the recommendations of Reviews.
- **Clinical Data Management \$50,000 per annum**
 The Government is providing \$50,000 in response to the recommendation of the Patterson Review, for a Data Manager to administer the database attached to the *MHAGIC* clinical data tracking system. This funding will employ a part time data manager to provide high quality reports on the level and type of service to clients, which will assist in service analysis, planning and delivery. *MHAGIC* potentially represents an educational, clinical and consumer electronic interface that is unsurpassed in Australia.

- **Carer Support package \$35,000**
Carers ACT received \$100,000 one off funding in the last Budget from the Government's \$1 million Respite Care initiative. The Program commenced in March 2003, and requires top up funding to operate until June 2004. Funds are also included to evaluate the Program before the next ACT Budget. The Program provides education and training for clinical staff on the needs of carers. It also provides a carer peer support and peer information program. Additional funding for this program continues the Government's commitment to the involvement of carers in the planning and delivery of mental health services.
- **Gungahlin outreach program - \$400,000 per annum**
The initiative will enable the Belconnen Mental Health Service to offer improved clinical service delivery to residents of the Gungahlin area who have moderate to severe mental illness. (see individual media release)
- **7 Day extended service for Community Mental Health Teams - \$400,000 per annum**
This enhancement will provide evening cover Monday-Friday and all day cover over the weekend for the Tuggeranong and Woden areas to promote community living for consumers with high level needs, particularly those who are discharged from the in-patient units. Extra resources in community teams will enable a greater effort on early mental health promotion, early intervention and resilience building.
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