



ACT Government

## BUDGET 2007-2008

*Taking the Territory forward*

### MEDIA RELEASE

No. 28

#### **\$2.15 MILLION TO HELP DETECT AND TREAT CHRONIC DISEASE**

The ACT Government has allocated \$2.153 million over four years to enable the early detection of chronic diseases and referral of patients to appropriate disease management programs.

Health Minister Katy Gallagher said today the early detection and treatment of chronic disease can be instrumental in slowing its progress, leading to better outcomes for patients and a lesser burden on the broader community.

“Chronic conditions such as diabetes and heart disease not only cause suffering for the individuals affected,” Ms Gallagher said. “These conditions also cost the Australian community billions each year in increased medical costs and lost productivity.

“In order to minimise the effects of chronic disease, early diagnosis and access to appropriate treatment is vital. Treatment can include actions as simple as encouraging physical activity, increasing the patient’s intake of fruit and vegetables, reducing excess body weight and tobacco use.

“The funding announced today will support initiatives to provide early intervention for patients with newly diagnosed chronic disease, support better disease management programs for people at risk, and provide referral pathways for the public and health professionals.

“ACT Health will review its patient records to improve identification and accurate diagnosis of chronic diseases including congestive lung disease, heart failure and diabetes and forerunner conditions such as obesity, high blood pressure and glucose intolerance. This will include a direct mail program, risk factor awareness and promotion of GP health checks.

“Building on existing ACT and national programs aimed at the prevention of chronic disease, community-based activities including volunteer efforts and patient self management will be developed hand-in-hand with the activities of health care professionals.

Members of the public will also be able to access information about physical activity and healthy eating, enabling those people who are at risk through overweight and/or physical inactivity to begin their own lifestyle modification program.

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