



ACT Government
2004-2005 BUDGET

MEDIA RELEASE

NEW PROGRAM FOR PEOPLE WITH DUAL DISABILITIES

The Stanhope Government will allocate almost \$3.5 million over the next four years to establish a specialist intensive care and treatment program in the ACT for young people who have an intellectual disability and a mental dysfunction.

Disability, Housing and Community Services Minister Bill Wood said many young people with a dual disability who do not have adequate support and intervention are at risk of entering the corrections system.

“This program will target young people in the 17 to 25 year age bracket who may ‘fall between the cracks’ because their disabilities have not been properly supported, and who consequently end up before the ACT Courts and in our correctional system,” Mr Wood said.

“These are young people who have difficulty adjusting to life in the community. They should not be locked away in a remand centre or prison as a result of these difficulties.”

“An amount of \$250,000 has been set aside in the Budget to undertake a feasibility study to explore the program options that would best suit these young people. This includes a study of existing programs operating elsewhere and the development of a program in the ACT.

“A further \$3.2 million has been set aside in 2005-06 to 2007-08 to implement the program. This is an intervention program and will provide a ‘learning and development’ environment in a purpose-built facility to support residents.

“The program is a joint initiative that will involve Disability ACT, Mental Health ACT and ACT Corrections.

“Strong links will also be established with the children’s, youth and family services sectors to identify factors that contribute to behaviour problems and identify early intervention initiatives.”

Mr Wood said a multi-disciplinary support team would provide life skills, behaviour modification, education and employment-based skills development for residents.

“Staff with specialist skills in disability and mental health support will be engaged to develop and implement individualised programs for each young person.

“The program will provide a range of residential and rehabilitation options for each young person to ensure continual support over a sustained period of time,” Mr Wood said.

Statement Ends.