



ACT Government
2005-2006 BUDGET

MEDIA RELEASE

**NEW CAPITAL WORKS FOR DISABILITY, HOUSING AND
COMMUNITY SERVICES**

People accessing therapy services, the homeless and people with dual disabilities will benefit from extra capital works funding announced in the Stanhope Government's 2005-05 Budget.

The Minister for Disability, Housing and Community Services, John Hargreaves said an additional \$3.86 million would be available to the Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services to:

- progress the development of a single therapy service,
- develop specialised accommodation for people with dual disabilities who need a period of intensive treatment and support and
- fund a feasibility study for a drop-in-centre for the homeless.

"A total of \$1.5 million is being provided to Therapy ACT to further develop the Single Therapy Service into north and south service hubs," Mr Hargreaves said.

The north hub will mirror the services currently provided at Holder. Outreach Services will also be provided at Gungahlin and in the Tuggeranong Valley through the Government's Child and Family Centres.

Mr Hargreaves said the Government would provide \$1.660 million to develop a flexible and secure facility to help meet the needs of people with dual disabilities (mental dysfunction and mild to moderate intellectual disability) and who are at risk of entering the criminal justice system because of complex behavioural problems.

"This facility will provide care, support and treatment for a small number of people in Canberra who — as a result of their disabilities — present a risk to themselves or the community."

Mr Hargreaves said the Government was keen to assess the feasibility of establishing a centrally located drop-in and support centre for people who are homeless, at risk of homelessness, or experiencing social isolation.

"The 2005-06 Budget will fund a study that will evaluate demand for such a service, as well as the broader community impact.

"The funding will also enable work to be undertaken with service providers to assess the best way to co-locate a number of support services at the same centre."

Mr Hargreaves said the total capital works Budget for the Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services in 2005–06 would be almost \$13.359 million.

“Work in progress includes the provision of extra community space in the new Griffin Centre, the new Palmerston Hall, the Multicultural Centre and the Child and Family Centres.

“As well, funding of \$600,000 will also be provided in the Budget to ensure the capital upgrade of valuable community services across Canberra.”

Mr Hargreaves said the Government would also — through the 2005–06 Budget — invest \$1 million to improve the water and energy efficiency of public housing.

He said several initiatives would be funded, including an extension of the Water Energy Savings Trial (WEST).

“During 2004-05 there was a small-scale pilot of WEST involving public housing tenants, which was very successful. The new funding will assist approximately 500 public housing tenants identified as having unusually high energy costs.”

Statement ends