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Boost to Mental Health funding

ACT Minister for Health, Katy Gallagher, said today that mental health services in the ACT would receive a funding boost through the 2010-11 ACT Budget to help meet the demand for services and support the mental health workforce.

“\$4.184 million over four years has been allocated to meet the growth in demand for mental health services in our community,” Ms Gallagher said.

“The funding will increase the Government’s focus on promotion, prevention and early intervention while also providing high quality community based clinical and psychosocial support services,” she said.

“\$2.092 million has been allocated over four years to increase consumer participation in improving the quality of services, support Forensic Mental Health clinical training and supervision, provide better coordination of the clinical therapies for people with personality disorders, and strengthen the clinical record system to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of clients and clinicians.

“An additional \$2.092 million funding will provide community sector recovery and rehabilitation services, additional short term out of hours support for consumers where they live, and improved services for young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders who require mental health support. The funding for community sector recovery and rehabilitation services includes the enhancement of vocational services, family support services and individual advocacy in mental health tribunal processes.

“As part of our 2008 election commitments, the ACT Labor Government promised to provide an additional \$14.5 million over the next four years equally shared across community sector and government community based mental health services.

“The overall growth in Mental Health funding is a tangible demonstration of the ACT Government’s practical application of this commitment,” Ms Gallagher said.

“Mental health is a growing area of need and the Government will continue to invest in community and acute mental health facilities and services. In addition to this new growth funding, we are continuing to progress plans for new mental health facilities including a Secure Mental Health Unit and an Adult Acute Mental Health Inpatient Unit.

“The Commonwealth Government is providing \$26 million over four years to fund 22 new subacute hospital beds for the ACT as part of the historical COAG health reforms.

“In consultation with the sector, the ACT Government will consider how a portion of this funding could be used for mental health.”

The Government is committed to improving the health and wellbeing of people suffering from mental illnesses and has increased the mental health budget by 196 per cent to \$81.338 million for 2010-11 since coming to office.

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