



ACT Government  
**2004-2005 BUDGET**

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**MEDIA RELEASE**

**NEW PSYCHIATRIC SERVICES UNIT FEASIBILITY STUDY**

Health Minister Simon Corbell today announced the ACT Government has allocated \$70,000 funding in the 2004–2005 ACT Budget for a feasibility study into a new ACT psychiatric services facility.

Mr Corbell said the current refurbishment of the existing building would continue as recommended by two reviews, however in response to consumer and client comments a feasibility study into a new psychiatric services unit will now get underway.

“The study will examine changes currently being made to the unit, as well as assessing the needs of people who use the service, the strategic direction of Mental Health ACT and the number of acute adult mental health beds,” said the Minister.

The psychiatric services unit, commissioned in 1991 and refurbished in 2000, is being upgraded in response to the Patterson and Mann/LaRoche reviews into the facility’s operation and design following the deaths of three mentally ill clients.

“\$1 million is being provided in the current Budget to progress the upgrades, however consultation with consumers, carers and staff has found a perception that these changes may not be enough so the Government is hoping that this feasibility study will provide some additional answers and options to meet all the extra needs.

“If the feasibility study finds that the current upgrade is insufficient then further options will be explored, including the possibility of a new building as part of the Canberra Hospital Master Plan.”

It is expected the study will be undertaken within the next six months.

A further \$60,000 has been allocated in the ACT Budget for a separate feasibility study into the viability of an adolescent inpatient facility for the Territory. The Patterson Review and the current Standing Committee into the rights and wellbeing of young people recommended that this investigation take place.

Mr Corbell said this second study would investigate the structure, function and costs associated with establishing such a facility. “The proposed unit would be linked closely to the existing adolescent mental health day program and provide beds for those young people with eating disorders currently accessing the adolescent medical ward at The Canberra Hospital.”

**Statement Ends.**

