



access health

healthcare for all in the ACT

access health is a future directions document for public health services in the ACT that will underpin health planning, policy, service delivery and infrastructure investments. The key priority issues identified in *access health* are: timely access to care, mental health, aged care, chronic disease management, early childhood and vulnerable families and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health. The ACT Government has already contributed substantial resources to these priority areas and has recognised that there is more to be done. Table 1 provides an overview of existing initiatives and future commitments.

Table 1: *access health* – what has been done and future commitments

Key priority issue	What has been done	Future commitments
<p>Timely access to care</p>	<p>In the last full year, ACT Health has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided almost 72,000 cost weighted inpatient separations • Cared for almost 100,000 people who attended our emergency departments - a 6% increase on the previous year's total and an increase of 28% in those patients with the most urgent needs over the last three years • Reduced access block between our emergency departments and hospital wards – dropping from 41% in 2004-05 to 33% in 2005-06. This figure has improved further in 2006-07, with an expected outcome of 29%. • Reduced waiting times for people arriving by ambulance – with the proportion of patients transferred from ambulances to emergency departments within 20 minutes of arrival increasing from 85% in September 2005 (when this measure was introduced) to 93% in May 2007 • Provided access to elective surgery for 9,120 people – the highest ever on record and almost 600 more than two years ago. This level will be exceeded in 2006-2007 with over 9,300 elective surgery operations performed • Managed an increase of 4% in the number of outpatient services • Managed a 14% increase in demand for radiotherapy services in 2005-06, with a similar increase in demand being managed in 2006-07 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A commitment over 4 years from 2007-08 to fund sustainable growth in key areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o An additional \$12 million to fund up to 20 additional hospital beds o Over \$2million for cancer services to keep pace with increasing demand for care o A further \$10 million for additional elective surgery to provide an extra 300 procedures every year o \$5 million to increase the capacity of Intensive Care Unit at The Canberra Hospital o \$3 million to meet additional demand for blood and plasma products o \$2 million to enhance the ACT's capacity to respond to communicable disease outbreaks and emerging threats and improve Hepatitis C treatment o Almost \$2million to expand youth services in the Civic, Belconnen/Gungahlin and Tuggeranong areas o Funding for a residential detoxification program for women and women with children o Funding to provide enhanced capacity to the Dental Health Program – this will enable an additional 415 clients on the restorative waiting list to access dental care o Funding for the implementation of the Human Papilloma Virus Vaccination program in the ACT

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Timely access to care (continued)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided 210,000 community occasions of service for mental health clients – a 14% growth over the year • Provided 11,495 breast screens for ACT residents, an increase of 8% over the previous year: this level will be exceeded in 2006-07 • Managed a 5% increase in the number of bed days within the Aged Care and Rehabilitation Service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expansion of services including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o new technology to improve reporting and storage of x-rays and other images o a shared electronic health record and health provider index o funding for state-of-the-art medical equipment
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since 2004-05 The ACT government has committed funding for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o an additional 126 beds to meet the increasing demand for hospital services o more staff in emergency departments, hospital wards, cancer, aged care and mental health services o additional public dental services <p>The additional bed capacity has improved the bed occupancy rates of our hospitals which have dropped from 97% in the last quarter of 2005-06 to 92% for the first nine months of 2006-07</p> <p>The additional bed capacity has not only increased the capacity of services, increasing access to care, but has also increased the treatment options available for clinicians to better provide for patient needs, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o The new sub-acute service that provides specialist services for people who no longer need acute care but cannot yet support themselves in the community o The new Medical Assessment and Planning Unit which provides fast track specialist treatment and care for people who present at emergency departments with complex care needs o The observation inpatient units adjacent to emergency departments that enable clinicians to continue to provide services for people who need longer term observation (rather than intensive treatment) – freeing up emergency department resources for patients with more urgent needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An extensive capital works program: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o two new linear accelerators to provide cancer treatment, with the first of these to come on line during 2008 o Redevelopment and upgrade of neonatal intensive care services with 6 additional cots at The Canberra Hospital and 2 at Calvary Hospital o A new Intensive Care Unit at Calvary Hospital that will provide an extra 2 high dependency beds and 2 coronary care beds. The ACT Government will provide additional funding to purchase major clinical equipment, including a clinical information management system. o A new multistorey car park at The Canberra Hospital

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Timely access to care (continued)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2006-07, the ACT Government allocated recurrent growth funding including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ \$2.9m acute health services which provided up to 20 extra beds ○ \$ 2.5m Additional Elective Surgery ○ \$ 1.2m Critical Care Capacity ○ \$0.750m Access Improvement Program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved performance – The ACT Government has set long term targets: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 20% Emergency Department access block ○ 85% bed occupancy rate ○ 95% of radiotherapy patients receive care within standard timeframes ○ 8% seclusion rate for mental health clients ○ 100% of assessed emergency dental health clients are seen within 24 hours ○ A reduction in the rate of broken hips (fractured neck of femur) to 6 fractures per 1,000 ACT residents aged over 75 years ○ Reducing the average length of stay for acute rehabilitation care to 15 days ○ A reduction in the youth smoking rate to 13% ○ 70% breast screen participation rate for women aged 50-69 years
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACT Health has improved the system for identifying and managing clinical risks and enhancing patient safety: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Established a Patient Safety and Quality Unit to provide an ACT Health wide approach to patient safety and quality initiatives ○ Development of processes to ensure all patient safety functions of consumer engagement, audit and review, incident reporting, coronial recommendations, accreditation and policy are utilised as sources to identify risk across territory 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ACT Government has invested heavily in local tertiary education facilities for doctors, nurses, midwives and allied health professionals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ \$12.1m for the ANU Medical School building at The Canberra Hospital which opened in August 2006 ○ \$1.75m to for the Calvary Hospital Campus of the ANU Medical School opened in May 2006 ○ \$10 million to build new teaching facilities at the University of Canberra, opened in February 2007, for allied health students to undertake studies in an expanded range of disciplines ○ \$3.4 million recurrent funding to the ANU Medical School for additional staff specialists positions to support teaching and training of doctors 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have strengthened our partnerships with general practice and non government organisations 	

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Mental Health	The ACT Government has: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided an extra \$25 million in funding since 2002-03 to provide a range of additional services including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Establishment of Mobile Intensive Treatment Teams o Enhanced forensic mental health services o Expanded Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services o Enhanced supported accommodation options 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growth funding over four years from 2007-08 of \$12 million to enhance service delivery including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o A 24 hour supported accommodation facility for young people with mental health and drug and alcohol issues as an alternative to inpatient psychiatric admission o Enhanced staffing of the Older persons Mental Health Unit o Recruitment of Emergency Department Mental Health nurses o Additional staff and training to ensure mental health continues to be staffed and skilled appropriately
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planned for a young people's inpatient unit 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implemented a range of mental health promotion, prevention and early intervention strategies • Completed a Suicide Prevention Strategy 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed a number of reviews of services including CATT, adult community mental health teams, Clinical Services and Clozapine treatment 	

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Aged Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$1.35million recurrent investment in health service wide Aged Care support in 2006-07 Budget • Funded additional support services to assist people to remain in the community • Opened a 60 bed older persons unit that will provide sub acute care as well as mental health services for older people • Commissioned a 14 bed Medical Assessment and Planning Unit at TCH which began taking patients in May 2007 • Implemented a Transitional Therapy and Care Program that provides comprehensive restorative, therapeutic and supportive care in 15 residential beds and 20 community places following discharge from hospital 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide an extra \$10 million over four years to increase the capacity of the Aged Care and Rehabilitation Service to meet the need for more acute level inpatient care
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ACT Government will ensure supply of land sites for future aged care facilities as part of its planning processes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved flows through the Emergency Department for older people with access block for people over 75 dropping from 54% in 2004-05 to 47% in 2005-06. This figure is expected to drop to 41% for 2006-07, and trend even lower as initiatives such as the Medical Assessment and Planning Unit and other Access Improvement Program initiatives are implemented • Implemented a Falls and Falls Injury Prevention Program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work closely with the ACT Division of General Practice and General Practitioners to develop integrated health services to aged care facilities
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement the RADAR (Rapid Assessment of the Deteriorating Aged and at Risk client) program to provide urgent Geriatric assessment and consultative services to older Canberrans

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Chronic Disease Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Achieved the lowest level of all states and territories of avoidable hospital admissions for chronic conditions demonstrating the effectiveness of our primary health services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$2 million over four years from 2007-08 to reduce the burden of chronic disease by improving the detection and diagnosis of people with undiagnosed chronic disease, providing early intervention for people with newly diagnosed chronic disease, supporting better disease management programs for people at risk and supporting good self management
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implemented an initiative targeted at people with heart failure and chronic airways disease who frequently present to Emergency Departments 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implemented a Self Management program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investment in smart information systems and case coordination
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health promotion initiatives: "Go for 2&5" and grants program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completion of <i>Be Active ACT</i> - a physical activity plan

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Early Childhood and Vulnerable Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allocated additional resources in response to the Vardon and Murray-Mackie Reports • Expanded the Child At Risk Assessment Unit to provide specialist health services to abused children and young people and their families and carers • Established ACT Child and Family Centres at Gunghalin and Tuggeranong • Introduced pre-natal reporting • Instigated the Vulnerable Families Project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the 2007-08 budget allocated \$2M over four years to establish a new integrated service model for those families and infants most at risk of harm, abuse or neglect • Develop programs to ensure that interventions, care planning and continuing support are co-ordinated within ACT Health, with other services and other government agencies, GPs, pharmacies and non-government community services, to ensure that the needs of the child and family are addressed in an integrated way • Strengthen community supports for good parenting • Prioritise access to training and other support to build the capacity of parents and multi-disciplinary teams to identify and meet the needs of at-risk children
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identified the key issues and supports required for children affected by parental incarceration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address issues of physical activity and nutrition in the early childhood sector

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Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Released the ACT Health, Aboriginal & Primary Health Unit Cultural Respect Implementation Plan 2006 – 2009 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement key objectives in the ACT Health Cultural Respect Implementation Plan including the development and implementation of the Cultural Awareness Training package in ACT Health
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed a Procurement Feasibility Plan for a rehabilitation residential facility, more often referred to as the “<i>Bush Healing Farm</i>” Evaluation of the ACT Health funded Aboriginal Hearing Health Program at WNAHS Completion of “<i>The Dennis Division Gathering Place</i>” at Clare Holland House Healthpact funding to undertake research into the development of a model for a prison health service dedicated to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples prison community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Renew ACT Health Service Funding Agreement with WNAHS Direct land grant to Winnunga Nimmitjiah Aboriginal Health Service (WNAHS)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A joint initiative between ACT Health, Department of Disability and Community Services and the Department of Education on a program targeting at risk families with Aboriginal babies and young children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement the “<i>Integrated Aboriginal Service Delivery Project</i>” as part of the Chief Ministers Department Whole of Government early intervention package for Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander People(s) Continue to implement and report against priority areas of <i>A New Way: The ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health and Family Wellbeing Plan 2006-2011</i> Finalise the Report for the “<i>Feasibility Study into Increasing the Completeness of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Identifier in ACT Government Registries</i>”