



access health

healthcare for all in the ACT



The ACT Government is committed to further improving the health of people living in the Canberra region.

To achieve this we must plan: we must identify the priority health issues, we must focus on those key initiatives that

will deliver the best results, and we must invest wisely to reap maximum returns.

access health will help us do this. As a key health document, it sets the future direction for public health services for the next three years. access health is about ensuring that people have access to the right type of health care. We will work with our partners in primary health care to provide the health services that meet people's needs.

The views expressed by community members at a Health Forum in March 2007 have influenced the development of *access health*. This continuing partnership between consumers, government agencies, general practitioners and other private health care providers and non-government organisations will be essential to the success of the plan.

Over the next three years, pressures on our health system will undoubtedly increase. *access health* will help us maintain our high standard of health in the ACT and ensure that we build on that good foundation to provide health care to our residents when and where they need it.

Katy Gallagher



The ACT Government is committed to maintaining the high standard of health enjoyed by people living in the Canberra region. Our top priority is timely access to care, based on clinical priority, and we will monitor our progress against the following targets:

- Emergency Department access block
- occupancy rate for overnight hospital beds
- access to appropriate care for mental health clients
- waiting time for access to emergency dental health services
- the average length of stay for acute rehabilitation care
- breast screening participation rate
- rate of discharge planning
- access to elective surgery based on clinical priority
- access to radiotherapy services

We will continue our investment in our Territory's health system to ensure that we maximise the benefits to our community. People are waiting less time to be admitted to a hospital bed, we have more frontline staff, our health system is safer and our child immunisation rates are the best in the country as a result of the following:

- more staff in emergency departments
- an improved system for identifying and managing clinical risks
- investments in the local tertiary education facilities for doctors, nurses, midwives, allied health professionals and technical staff
- providing staff with opportunities for ongoing learning and development
- partnerships with general practice and non-government organisations



The ACT Government is working hard to deliver good health but we know that in an environment with an ageing population, new technologies and increasing community expectations this will not be easy. We must therefore be realistic and concentrate our efforts on where we will achieve the best gains. The ACT Government has identified the following as priority action areas:

Timely access to care

- two new linear accelerators to provide cancer treatment
- increased access to elective surgery
- development of a shared electronic health record and health provider index
- implementation of mental health promotion, prevention and early intervention strategies
- additional support services to assist people to remain in the community
- boosting the bed and service capacity of our public hospitals

Aged care

access to acute and sub acute beds

access to Home and Community Care services

outreach health care to nursing homes

land sites for future residential aged care facilities



Mental health

- implementation of the ACT Promotion, Prevention & Early Intervention Plan
- investment in infrastructure
- implementation of Mental Health Services Plan
- review of the Mental Health Act
- work with the Commonwealth and non-government sector to provide continuity of care

Chronic disease management

- improve prevention and management of diabetes, heart failure and respiratory disease
- case management program for heart failure and chronic airways disease
- a chronic disease strategy
- self management and integration with general practice
- investment in smart information systems and case coordination

Early childhood and vulnerable families

- identify and respond more effectively to the needs of young children and vulnerable families
- improve service response with targeted follow up of at-risk children
- strengthen community supports for good parenting

Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Health

- Aboriginal health worker course
- improve capacity for mainstream services to provide culturally appropriate services
- partnership with Winnunga Nimmityjah

How will we address our priorities?

To achieve better outcomes in our priority action areas the ACT Government will also invest in the foundations of a good health system:

- a sustainable workforce
- health promotion and preventive care
- effective primary health care
- integrated information systems
- progressive health facilities

The ACT Government is committed to working in partnership with consumers and the community and other stakeholders such as Commonwealth agencies, General Practitioners, tertiary education providers and non-government organisations to ensure that we plan, implement and monitor initiatives in these priority action areas in a way that maintains and enhances access to health.

ACT Health

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