

2019

**THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE
AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY**

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

HEALTH INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING

**Response to Assembly resolutions of 5 June and 18 September
2019; Select Committee on Estimates 2017-18 Report –
Recommendation 65; and Select Committee on Estimates 2019-20
Report – Recommendations 82 and 87**

**Presented by
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Minister for Health
November 2019**

Madam Speaker, I rise today in response to two resolutions in this place and three estimates committee recommendations about health infrastructure.

The statement I am making today concerns the health infrastructure and planning aspects of the following:

- A resolution of the Legislative Assembly on 5 June 2019, which called on the Government to “provide an update on Territory-wide planning for health infrastructure by the last sitting day in 2019”;
- A resolution of the Legislative Assembly on 18 September 2019, which called on the Government to report to the Legislative Assembly by the last sitting day of 2019 on the:
 - “Progress on the SPIRE project and its likely cost”; and
 - “Progress in developing other significant health infrastructure programs, such as plans to upgrade infrastructure at Bruce”;
- The Legislative Assembly Select Committee on Estimates 2019-20, recommendations 82 and 87, which stated, respectively:
 - “The Committee recommends that the ACT Government, by the last sitting day of 2019, ensures the Minister for Health reports to the Legislative Assembly on plans to upgrade the Intensive Care Unit at the Canberra Hospital prior to the development of the Surgical Procedures, Interventional Radiology and Emergency Centre”; and
 - “The Committee recommends that the ACT Government, by the last sitting day of 2019, ensures the Minister for Health, table in

the Legislative Assembly a detailed list of historical and projected milestones and their status for the Surgical Procedures, Interventional Radiology and Emergency project”; and

- The Legislative Assembly Select Committee on Estimates 2017-18, recommendation number 65, which stated: “The Committee recommends that the ACT Government provide a plan to the Legislative Assembly for how the Surgical Procedures Interventional Radiology and Emergency Centre will be built and opened by 2023.”

Given these recommendations and resolutions cover similar topics, for the convenience of members I am responding to these recommendations and resolutions in this single ministerial statement.

The non-health infrastructure aspects of the resolutions I just mentioned, such as reporting on the 2019 flu season, will be dealt with separately to this statement today.

Madam Speaker, demand for health care in the Territory is growing rapidly, and this growth is forecast to continue.

This is not unique to the Territory. Right around the world, and certainly in other Australian jurisdictions, the demand for health services is increasing.

As noted in the ACT Government’s infrastructure plan issued last month, between 2017-18 and 2031-32, public hospital admissions are expected to increase by 53 per cent, and overnight stays by 52 per cent.

Madam Speaker, over the last decade, the ACT Labor Government has invested more than \$1 billion in the Territory’s health infrastructure, to ensure

Canberrans continue to have access to world-class care where and when they need it.

We've opened a new hospital at the University of Canberra and we're about to open the fourth Nurse-led Walk-in Centre in the network of five centres we're committed to delivering by the end of 2020. We've built the Canberra Region Cancer Centre and expanded and upgraded community health centres.

As we enter the 2020s, the Government is continuing to invest in health care for Canberrans, and taking a proactive approach to future-proofing our health system for the years to come.

About 20 per cent of the Government's total infrastructure funding goes to health infrastructure, and almost one-third of the Government's annual budget is allocated to delivering healthcare services.

This demonstrates the Government's commitment to responding to our growing community's need for high quality, free health care. Whether you're having a baby, seriously injured in an accident, experiencing chronic ill health or need treatment for minor injuries and illness, we are building a health system that delivers the right care at the right time and in the right place.

Madam Speaker, within the ACT Government, Canberra Health Services, the ACT Health Directorate and Major Projects Canberra are collaborating closely on planning and procuring the Territory's largest investment in health infrastructure since self-government – the SPIRE project.

SPIRE will deliver a new state-of-the-art emergency, surgical and critical care facility at Canberra Hospital – providing high quality, person-centred care in an

environment that incorporates the latest advances in technology and models of care to improve healthcare outcomes and operational efficiency.

SPIRE will ensure the acute care needs of our region's growing and ageing population are met today, and into the future, and will form the anchor-point for future Canberra Hospital campus developments.

The SPIRE Project will deliver:

- 148 inpatient beds, including 60 Intensive Care Unit beds and 24 Coronary Care Unit beds;
- 22 operating theatres;
- 114 emergency treatment spaces;
- 55 day surgery beds;
- integrated radiology and medical imaging facilities; and
- patient, carer and staff spaces for respite, learning and meeting.

In addition to these increases in critical care service capacity, the project offers improved access between the emergency department and critical care facilities. Importantly, SPIRE's location within the hospital campus will ensure that critical operations such as the helipad and emergency care can continue to operate, uninterrupted by major construction works.

Madam Speaker, this complex project requires considerable planning and consultation to ensure we deliver the best possible outcomes. Ten clinical user-groups have been established that will direct and review the developing specifications and designs for the new facility. These include the emergency department, surgical and procedures areas and medical imaging.

A consumer reference group has been established in partnership with the Healthcare Consumers Association. This group will meet with representatives from the Canberra Hospital and the SPIRE project team on a regular basis throughout the planning and development phases of the project. As part of this initiative, consumer representatives will be a part of the design process and will be able to provide input which ensures that the SPIRE Project delivers a new facility that best meets the needs of patients, carers, families and the community.

The project team is also engaging with local residents and the Garran Primary School, in addition to the broader Woden community, to capture and respond to their views and input regarding the project's design and construction.

A Community Reference Group is being established to enable the local community to have its voice heard throughout the planning and development of the SPIRE Project. This will be an important mechanism for the community to provide comment and feedback, while also recognising that ongoing engagement with the broader community will be critical.

Madam Speaker, substantial progress has been made on the SPIRE project, but we still have a long way to go and many decisions on detailed design will be made over the next six to 12 months.

The procurement process for the main works began at an industry briefing on 24 October. An Invitation for Expressions of Interest for the Territory's design and construction partner was opened on 14 November.

The Government's procurement approach will see a head contractor engaged next year to further develop the project's design. This will enable pricing and

further scope details to be finalised. The head contractor will then be responsible for the delivery of the capital works.

During the rest of this year and during 2020, work will continue work on clinical engagement, significant stakeholder and community consultation, schematic and detailed design, and enabling works.

The project's final program will of course depend upon the program put forward by the Territory's construction partner during the procurement process. At this stage, the ACT Government expects that main construction works will commence in 2021, with the construction of the project being complete by mid-2024 ahead of an operational commissioning period.

Onsite enabling works, in particular the movement of service areas to enable the demolition of buildings 5 and 24, are currently a key focus for the project team. These works are being planned in close consultation with Canberra Health Services. Demolition of buildings 5 and 24 is currently due to occur in late 2020.

Alternative locations have been identified for the administrative and training services currently housed in these buildings, and for the Child at Risk Health Unit. The Canberra Sexual Health Centre will be relocated to new facilities to be constructed on the site of the existing Building 8.

Preparatory works have commenced on the construction of the first modular building which will house the Canberra Health Services staff currently located in Building 24.

Madam Speaker, the new areas for those functions that need to be relocated are being designed to meet the functional requirements of the users and community.

The relocation of staff and services from within Buildings 5 and 24 will be staged throughout 2020.

Regarding milestones delivered to date, Members will be aware that SPIRE was one of the Government's most significant commitments at the 2016 election.

Since the election, the Government has undertaken a needs analysis, proof of concept design, and a business case. The Government has established a delivery team, commenced early works, conducted an industry briefing and now is in the procurement phase for the project.

The timeframes I have noted today remain consistent with the Government's announcement in May this year and I am happy to report that very significant progress has and is being made on this very important project.

Madam Speaker, the SPIRE Project received \$13 million of capital in the 2018-19 Budget to progress early stages of design, and a further \$53.7 million in capital funding in the 2019-20 Budget.

In 2019-20, the allocation for the out-years is shown as 'not for publication'. This is prudent, and standard practice for large capital projects, in order to ensure value for money when the Government approaches the market.

The 2019-20 Budget includes infrastructure provisions of \$1.2 billion over the four years to 2022-23. These provisions provide funding for major capital works projects – including SPIRE – which are commercially sensitive.

As the procurement process progresses, specifics on the financial details of the SPIRE project will be updated in the budget papers. What we can say now is what we have repeatedly said – that this project is expected to cost more than half a billion dollars, making it the single biggest investment in health infrastructure since self-government.

Madam Speaker, the intensive care unit at the Canberra Hospital fulfils a critical role – serving not just Canberra but the entire south-east region of NSW. Design work is currently under way to provide an extra eight intensive care beds to help cater for the increasing demand for critical care at Canberra Hospital.

In the longer term, the new facility delivered by the SPIRE project will expand ICU capacity significantly. In the meantime, the current project will provide extra capacity before SPIRE comes online.

The project is being funded through an intergovernmental agreement between the Territory and Commonwealth Governments. The Commonwealth is providing the ACT with \$13.5 million for the project.

This funding is certainly welcomed. Unfortunately, the Commonwealth has programmed the payment of the \$13.5 million in 2022-23 and 2023-24, which is at least 12 months after funding will actually be required to pay for the project. Nevertheless, we are getting on with the planning work for this project and intend to deliver it in a timely way.

Madam Speaker, the Centenary Hospital for Women and Children has become a key part of the Territory's health system. To ensure it can continue to meet increasing demand, a \$50 million expansion will increase the capacity of the

Hospital and bolster the range of services it can offer, including services for women, adolescents, children and new-born babies with high care needs.

The Centenary Hospital for Women and Children expansion project will help meet increasing demand for obstetric, gynaecological, paediatric, adolescent and neonatal health care services across the territory and surrounding region.

It will also provide new adolescent mental health services including an inpatient unit and a day service.

Importantly, the project will utilise the expansion capacity built into the Centenary Hospital during its original design and construction, which included a slab floor plate to enable an extra floor to be added as the need arose. Preliminary Sketch Plan designs are expected to be completed in coming weeks, with early works to progress the Paediatric High Care Ward refurbishment having commenced in mid-November.

The main construction works for the project are expected to commence in mid-2020, with completion due in mid-2022.

Madam Speaker, Canberra's nurse-led walk-in centres have been a fantastic innovation and an ACT Labor Government initiative we can be proud of. These facilities provide an important service for Canberrans requiring non-acute care, so they can access timely, free treatment for minor injuries and illness.

In addition to the walk-in centres we have delivered in Belconnen, Tuggeranong and Gungahlin, work is under way on two more centres. The Weston Creek centre is expected to open by the end of this year, with the inner north centre to open next year.

Canberra Health Services also operates a network of community health centres in Belconnen, Phillip, Gungahlin, Dickson, Civic, and Tuggeranong. These health centres will continue to provide important services such as dental, nutrition, rehabilitation, drug and alcohol, and mother and baby health.

The ACT Government has also given a \$12 million grant to Winnunga Nimmityjah Aboriginal Health and Community Services for the construction of a new community health facility, which Winnunga will own.

Work began on this important project in September this year. This new facility, which fulfils a 2016 election commitment, will enable Winnunga to deliver even better services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Canberrans, in a way that is underpinned by self-determination and Aboriginal community control.

We also understand the growing areas of need across Canberra's health services, and we are stepping up our investment in drug and alcohol services to help tackle drug dependence and see more people get the support they need.

As part of this, the ACT Health Directorate is currently in discussions with Winnunga on the development and consultation of a comprehensive model of care for a new a culturally appropriate residential facility supporting drug and alcohol rehabilitation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the Territory.

This is the first step in the development of a new facility, and we anticipate this feasibility work will be completed by mid-2020.

Madam Speaker, there is significant work under way to boost services at both Calvary Public Hospital Bruce and at Clare Holland House. This Government

recognises that Calvary is a major part of the Territory's health network, particularly on the northside of Canberra.

We are expanding Calvary's capacity to perform elective surgery, with two new theatres being commissioned – one theatre will open in this financial year, and the second theatre in 2020-21. This will provide the necessary resources to expand the ACT's elective surgery program in the short term. The expansion will start with 250 more surgeries in 2019-20.

Construction on the \$6.7 million expansion of Calvary's emergency department is well under way and due for completion early next year.

The expansion will deliver 22 additional treatment spaces, bringing the total to 61, and will see more doctors, nurses, administration and other health professionals joining the hospital to support the physical expansion.

Madam Speaker, works are also well underway to co-locate the adult mental health unit and the older persons mental health inpatient unit, providing a cohesive mental health hub at Calvary. The upgrades will provide a more modern adult mental health unit, with improved ward layouts, allowing for increased security and visibility of patients, and an outdoor area. When completed later this year, these works will support the delivery of enhanced treatment and care.

A major expansion of the much-loved Clare Holland House will also begin later this year. The expansion will boost palliative care services in the Territory as our community grows. It will increase the number of specialist inpatient palliative care beds and provide more features to enable patients to enjoy the company of loved ones, family and friends, as well as improved administration and clinical support spaces.

The expansion is being made possible with the support of the Australian Government and The Snow Foundation.

Madam Speaker, the Canberra Hospital is the main tertiary hospital between Sydney and Melbourne. It is, and will remain, a vital asset for our community and our region.

With the SPIRE project under way, along with other projects such as the Centenary Hospital expansion, it is timely to look at the overall future of the Canberra Hospital site to ensure it continues to cater for the expected growth in demand for health care in the coming years and decades, and can continue to provide a wide range of cutting-edge and world-class medical services.

To ensure that the clinical and logistical operations of the campus receive the full benefit of current and future capital investment projects, we are developing a core planning document for the entire site – the Canberra Hospital master plan.

The master plan will provide a comprehensive planning framework setting out how the campus could change into the future. The change horizon is twenty years, commencing in 2021 through to 2040. The master plan will provide guiding objectives that will inform the development of options for implementing changes to the site, and act as a guide for ensuring that future changes reinforce or strengthen the features which are important to the campus. It will set out the development stages and design parameters for future development and investment phases to achieve a functional, collegiate, considered and efficient health campus.

As well as physical infrastructure, the masterplan will help guide the provision of clinical services, along with important features such as car parking and environmental sustainability.

Madam Speaker, the infrastructure plan that the ACT Government issued last month demonstrated our commitment to delivering the facilities and services our community needs into the future.

The plan highlighted that planning needs to be undertaken in a systematic, long-term and considered manner so that our growing city can remain healthy, happy, liveable and productive.

Canberra's northside has grown rapidly in recent years. Gungahlin was the second fastest growing community in the country between 2011 and 2016, and continues to grow. Belconnen is expanding at Ginninderry and with new developments in the town centre, and the construction boom along Northbourne Avenue is bringing revitalisation to the inner north.

With this population increase, the Government recognises that new and expanded facilities are needed in Canberra's north. That's why the Government has commenced scoping works on the future of northside hospital services in the medium to longer term.

Madam Speaker, we are also planning for a new hydrotherapy pool on the southside, to complement the rehabilitation facility at the University of Canberra Hospital. I look forward to updating the Assembly on this work later in the week.

Madam Speaker, cancer wards 14A and 14B at Canberra Hospital are currently under redevelopment to provide cancer and haematology inpatients with

better facilities, new medical equipment and furnishings. More than \$17 million has been invested in this project, which is on track for completion in the second half of 2020 with works on Ward 14A due to be completed at the end of this year.

Not only will this upgrade provide state-of-the-art facilities for those who need it, it provides an expansion of beds available for cancer, haematology and acute aged care patients by six. Additionally, there will be more single bedrooms to support patient privacy, infection control and recovery, and daybeds in patient rooms to enable family members to be more involved.

Madam Speaker, the Government is also investing in the upgrade and maintenance of existing assets.

The Upgrading and Maintaining ACT Health Assets (UMAHA) program began in 2016 and represents a capital investment of \$90.9 million. It is intended to minimise the risk of interruption of the delivery of health services and efficiently deliver remedial works on a planned basis.

In closing Madam Speaker, the projects I've talked about today demonstrate this Government's unshakeable commitment to continuing to provide Canberrans with world-class healthcare when and where they need it.

From new hospitals and walk-in centres to expanded services for women and children – underpinned by our significant investment in digital solutions and state-of-the-art technology - and digital transformation, this Government is continuing to build a Territory-Wide health system for the future.