



Madam Speaker, I am very pleased to provide an update to this

Assembly on the significant work underway to meet Canberra's future health needs, in particular the Government's significant commitment to invest in health infrastructure to meet these needs.

I am pleased to update the Assembly about the Building Health Services Program and the SPIRE project in particular, in response to questions I took on notice during Question Time on Tuesday 29 October this week.

As members are aware, ACT Labor had a significant health policy package during the last election. A key component was SPIRE.

The SPIRE project, expansion of the Centenary Hospital for Women and Children and planning for expanded hospital facilities in Canberra's north are major ACT Labor commitments, and go to the very heart of our plans to build new hospital infrastructure and future-proof our public health system for the long-term benefit of Canberrans.

Indeed, the government has committed to investing approximately \$500 million to build the SPIRE Centre at the Canberra Hospital campus.

SPIRE will increase the capacity of the ACT's theatres, future proofing

for future technological innovations, have expanded capacity to offer day surgery as well as meet the increasing demand for elective and emergency surgery, expand coronary care, more inpatient beds, improved diagnostic and imaging facilities,

Our 2016 election commitment stated that SPIRE was planned to open in 2022-23, but noted this was prior to any feasibility, planning and early design works being undertaken. In the past two Budgets the Government has signalled its absolute commitment to deliver SPIRE by committing \$433 million for this project and the community and Assembly with further out years to come in the next ACT Budget.

Alongside this commitment is also a commitment to ensure such a major project proceeds with careful and detailed planning to deliver our commitment to ensure the success of SPIRE.

Planning and Design for SPIRE needs to be considered carefully, for a range of reasons, but two important ones. 1. Consideration of both current and future service demand, detailed modelling and understanding of the Territory's health needs, service demand and clinical requirements of the territory wide public health system, which importantly includes collaboration with Calvary Public Hospital and the

importance of the appropriate role delineation between both hospitals.
And 2. As the hospital campus is an operational site, the most efficient and effective way to continue to deliver existing services while construction is underway,

Both these considerations must be thoroughly and methodically explored. And they have been. These are critical part of due diligence, to ensure appropriate integration with existing services and facilities.

With this work already well progressed, decanting and planning for early works will be the focus for SPIRE for the rest of 2018, through 2019, and early 2020.

Territory-Wide Health Services Planning processes have been key to the Government's ability to carefully plan for of the SPIRE project, and this has included careful consideration by the Building Health Services Program Strategy Steering Committee.

The Strategy Steering Committee was convened to provide advice to me and to Government on the next phases of the Building Health Services Program, of which a major feature is the SPIRE project.

The Strategy Steering Committee included senior representatives from ACT Health and what is now Canberra Health Services, other ACT Government Directorates, our partners at Calvary and the Capital Health Network, to ensure an integrated strategic approach. This has also given us the ability to draw on the broad expertise of these partners within government and outside.

The integrated approach of the committee has been critical to ensure planning for projects meets the long-term health needs of our community.

The committee's recommendations have been essential to informing Government's consideration of the projects and of the most appropriate site location for SPIRE.

With the best advice, the Government remains confident that project works will commence in 2020, and we will continue to work towards project completion in the 2023-24 financial year.

Madam Speaker, over the coming weeks, we will be embarking on a critical next step, undertaking information briefings with key clinical staff from Canberra Hospital and Calvary Public Hospital Bruce, to provide an

update regarding the project, and present material that informed the steering committee's deliberations and our infrastructure priorities.

This builds on the engagement of staff through the territory wide health services strategy and the ongoing development of Specialty Service Plans, which has also been a key component of the Government's commitment to territory wide health services planning and to future proof the ACT's public health system.

These information briefings are part of essential clinical involvement in the SPIRE project and will be complemented throughout 2019 with the establishment of the Clinical Leadership Forum in the next two months, as well as further engagement with clinical and other staff, and key stakeholders.

Following the briefings with our clinical staff, the Government will make further announcements prior to the end of 2018 regarding SPIRE and our next steps to begin the project in 2020.

I would remind Members that 2018 has seen a lot of progress in the provision of health infrastructure, in our hospitals and within our community based health services.

In 2018 we opened the brand new University of Canberra Hospital, which has significantly changed the way we deliver health services at our public hospitals, including the way we care for people recovering from surgery or experiencing mental illness.

We opened a new Walk-in Centre in Gungahlin and started the design process for a new Walk-in Centre in Weston Creek.

And we refurbished the maternity ward and operating theatres at Calvary Public Hospital Bruce.

The SPIRE project continues to be a key priority for the ACT Government and I look forward to updating the Assembly, and the community, on this significant health investment for the people of Canberra.

ENDS.