

## ACTCOSS Questions for Budget Estimates

June 2016

### Red Tape Reduction

Of the 46 organisations reported in July 2015 as able to transfer to a Grant rather than Service Funding Agreement (SFA), how many have transferred as of 30 June 2016?

Concerns about red tape increases were raised in Government consultations with NGOs regarding the new Service Funding Agreement template in May 2015 and March 2016. What changes were made to the SFA prior to finalising the new agreements in response to the input? Has the Government undertaken any analysis as to the costs of compliance, what costing methodology was used and what has this analysis found?

### Safer Families initiative

How will government work with community organisations to implement the **Safer Families** initiatives? How is government planning to measure and monitor the impacts and refine implementation based on what is learned through data analysis and independent and external evaluation?

Will the court translation services include Auslan, Braille and other assistive communication technology services?

How will people who experience violence in their home but who don't live with their family (e.g. live in a group home or in residential care settings) access protection via the justice system and the improved services available via **Safer Families**?

Will funding allocated in the Justice and Community Safety Directorate for a new staff based at Gugan Gulwan Aboriginal Youth Corporation be made recurrent?

How will the **Safer Families** initiatives address elder abuse? Will any funding be appropriated specifically to target elder abuse as part of the **Safer Families** initiatives?

What mechanisms will be used in **Safer Families** initiative to put disability access specifications in service agreements?

What part of the **Safer Families** initiative will be devoted to perpetrator intervention programs?

In the set-up of a Coordinator General for Family Safety under the **Safer Families** initiative include the capacity for co-location of services, such as in the SA Multi Agency Protection Service program?

Will the government commit, as part of the **Safer Families** initiative, to provide recurrent funding for social housing and homelessness services for the provision of support for children and young people living with domestic violence?

### Schools for All and Education

The Schools for All programs do not include funding to enable the kinds of cross sector relationships that are central to its success. Will the government provide additional funding to resource an increased role for community services to better engage with school staff, students and their families to support better education attainment?

How will the ACT Government monitor investment and progress by non-government schools in addressing the recommendations in the expert Panel report?

### **Gaps in Early Intervention**

What additional resources have been provided to support early intervention around at risk families, promotion of respectful relationships and violence prevention? How will any gaps in early intervention and prevention be monitored and addressed?

### **Health**

The health budget makes up a significant proportion of the ACT budget and is heavily focussed on the acute system. Most of the funding is for hospitals. What plans does the government have to enhance the services delivered in community health centres?

In relation to the improved and expanded mental health services fund there is uncertainty about what the investment in the Older Person's Mental Health Team is actually for. Is it to move older people with mental illness out of hospital and into aged care facilities? Or is the focus to support older people with mental illness to remain in the community/their own homes?

Several of the mental health initiatives named in this Budget (Supporting Good Mental Health – Expansion of the Way Back Support Service; Supporting Good Mental Health – Improved and expanded community mental health services) have only attracted funding for a single year. This lack of continuity undermines good practice. Why has the government not made long term commitments to these initiatives – including evaluation and redesign as needed?

What are the measures of success for the expanded mental health services?

How will the expanded services contribute to earlier intervention and reducing demand for acute services?

How will the Government attract and retain the skilled and qualified workforce to deliver the new Government mental health services initiatives?

What will the Government do to ensure people with mental illness who do not qualify for the NDIS have access to critical psychosocial rehabilitation and mental health recovery support services?

Why is so little funding provided for community managed mental health services, yet a significant amount of funding for clinical services for young people? We need a mix of resources in this approach that supports young people in their everyday lives, not just in the "treatment" of mental health conditions. The lack of funding for community-based services is particularly a concern as the mental health service reform, to be achieved through commissioning by the primary health

networks, will see significant funds put into clinical services at a time when NDIS transition is depleting services for people ineligible for funded packages yet require assistance in the community.

Given the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health plan is in the final stages of consultation, what actions and measures relating to infrastructure renewal and shortages and gaps in the workforce will be made a priority? How will the funding outlined in the budget support these priorities?

### **Out of Home Care**

What will the \$800k for OOHC be spent on? How were these spending priorities identified? How will the impact of this funding be measured?

Why is more funding invested into the child and youth protection service, already a high cost service of some \$91m annually, when the Glanville inquiry found that it wasn't delivering the services that people need. Why not also provide funding to the secondary service system, if only as a trial/pilot, to deliver a true differential response approach that will provide a focused early intervention service to people at risk of entering into the statutory service system. Funding for an integrated case management and quality system that only focuses on the tertiary end will reduce capacity to expand interventions in the secondary service system.

### **Jobs**

How will the ACT Government monitor jobs growth, track and report to the community on whether the jobs created:

- offer enough hours and a decent rate of pay so that they deliver genuine improvements in the spending power of the people who take on these jobs
- are filled by people in their early working life (16-25yo) – including young carers, those returning to work after critical life transitions, including returning to work as a single (or partnered) parent of young children, and returning to work later in life after fulfilling caring roles or retrenchment, people living with disabilities, Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

Given the commitments the ACT Government made to implement the National Disability Strategy will the government commit to developing an employment strategy for people with disability?

### **Affordable Housing**

To what extent will the Homes from Homes initiative increase supply of affordable housing? Will existing community housing providers be engaged as primary partners in delivering any housing funded out of this measure?

Affordable Housing is not adequately addressed in the Budget and access to affordable rental properties remains a concern. Will the government include representation from the community sector on the steering committee that is currently drafting the whole-of-government approach to affordable housing?

When will the government provide growth funding for homelessness services?

In regard to the Conveyance Duty – Disability Duty Concession Scheme, will the entire duty be forgone or only part? What are the details of the application of this measure?

We welcome the initiative to fund a substantial renewal of the public housing stock. We seek information on the steps the ACT Government proposes to take to ensure that that all new housing constructing pursuant to this initiative includes adaptable and liveable housing features and meets the standards for accessible housing?

In the ACT Government's 2016-17 Budget media release titled 'Increased support for Canberra's most vulnerable' states that the ACT Government will spend '\$184 million for housing and homelessness support' - what are the specific housing and homelessness initiatives being funded under this \$184 million?

### **Community infrastructure**

What is the 10-20 year infrastructure renewal plan for Community Based Services, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander controlled services, community organisations providing childcare services, community support services and civil society organisations? How will the ACT Government ensure that the plan incorporates a set out targets, actions and measures of progress and impact?

### **Social inclusion**

When will the Government articulate a plan and fund whole-of-government capacity for Territory action on a disability strategy and a carer strategy? How will the ACT Government ensure that the design and evaluation of these strategies will be led by the community?

A key focus of this year's Budget is addressing social inclusion and inequality. Will the government commit to a reporting framework to track its performance against social inclusion and equality measures? Specifically, developing measures to track improvements in the life outcomes for people whose income puts them in the bottom two income quintiles?

### **Funding arrangements**

The government's approach to building light rail highlights its willingness to invest long term in critical infrastructure. Will the government also commit to taking a long term, outcomes based approach in commissioning and contracting of community services, which provide essential social infrastructure?

To what extent does the government believe existing indexation arrangements for the community sector are adequate to 1) meeting growth in demand for services? and 2) cover the costs of workforce development to ensure staff qualifications and skills meet community expectations and regulatory requirements, and enable recruitment and retention of appropriately qualified staff?. What methodology would be used to calculate the costs implications of both 1) and 2)?

Translator and Interpreter Services (TIS) funding has been allocated for legal services and for domestic violence specialists. This will not address the broader needs in the community for TIS nor will it address the extent of the need for TIS by all people experiencing domestic violence who access services outside of legal services and for domestic violence specialist services. Rather than allocate

this funding to services would the government consider creating individualised grants for TIS so that a domestic violence survivor has access to TIS in all of their interactions with the service system?

What would be the cost to the ACT Government of meeting the funding gap caused by reductions in National Partnership Agreements that fund community legal centres and homelessness and housing support services?

In determining budget measures and allocations, how was the right to self-determination for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples (committed to in the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Agreement 2015-18) applied?

### **NDIS transition issues**

Why are there no carer specific initiatives that address gaps in carer support, in mental health and aged care as well as those being created through the NDIS transition process?

What are the plans for specialised school transport after the 1 year continuation ceases? How will transport be managed within an individualised support model that is both sustainable and offers choice to families? We know that this is a design issue that the NDIA is still coming to terms with at a national level and therefore ask what is the plan to address this issue in the ACT?