

Thank you Mr Chairman. The delivery of high quality healthcare is one of the most important areas of service provision for the ACT Government and I'm pleased to appear here this morning.

We have a proud record of investment in our health system and through the significant investments we are making in the 2017-18 Budget, we are demonstrating the continuing importance we place on ensuring Canberrans are healthy and well and have access to high quality health care where and when they need it. This is fundamental to planning for our community as our city grows and changes and as our community ages. This is why we are delivering the ACT Government's 10 year health.

### **Health services in 2015-16**

To set the scene for the Committee, in 2015-16, 135,307 people presented to our two Emergency Departments, we conducted 13,396 elective surgeries, saw 34,173 people at our two Nurse Walk-in –Centres and 602,276 non – admitted occasions of service were provided across both public hospitals and Community Health Centres excluding Mental Health Community activity and Pathology activity. In 2015-16, there were approximately 7,500 bed days of care for patients receiving care from the Hospital in the Home program at Canberra Hospitals.

High quality care is evident across our system, including in the new dedicated paediatrics streaming area of the Canberra Hospital Emergency Department. There have been over 19,500 presentations in a year and there has been much positive feedback on the significant difference it has made for young families.

We are seeing the highest numbers of Emergency Department presentations on record. In 2016-17, we're anticipating an increase of around 6 per cent.

Our EDs continue to perform well and timeliness has improved. An estimated 62 per cent of patients were treated in appropriate timeframes across all categories, up from 59 per cent in 2015-16.

72 per cent of patients in the ED stayed within the recommended four hour target, up from 66 per cent in 2015-16.

We have also continued to achieve high levels of elective surgery and have reduced the number of people waiting longer than clinically recommended.

Through our reforms, we have focused on waiting lists for medical imaging and have seen further improvements in this area.

As Minister for Health and, soon to be, Wellbeing, I am proud of the quality of care that is provided to the community through our health system. And with the positive feedback that we receive from patients and their families every day, I have confidence that Canberrans think this too.

This is a testament to the hard work of our doctors, nurses and health and other professionals that deliver health care in our community.

### **Strategic projects**

In order to deliver on the initiatives in this budget, there are some important pieces of work underway, the Territory-wide Health Services Plan, the Quality Strategy and the System-wide Data Review. We are also planning for the

opening of the new University of Canberra Public Hospital in just over a year's time.

ACT Health is currently in the process of planning clinical services as part of a new **Territory-wide Health Services Framework**.

This work is about providing a pathway over the next decade to strengthen the delivery of ACT health services, connecting preventative health services to primary and community-based care and through to hospital-based services. This work will transform how patients receive person and family-centred care in our system. I am very excited about what this will mean for the care of Canberrans. Just last week I opened a forum with senior ACT Health staff and health professionals about the progress of this framework.

I am also pleased to announce today, that as part of our commitment to engage with key stakeholders as this work progresses, ACT Health will establish a new 10 member Advisory Group.

The Group will be an important forum to provide high-level feedback to ACT Health on policies and programs as part of the Territory Wide Health Services planning work. It will meet monthly and consist of individuals, local non-government organizations and consumer representatives.

The expressions of interest process for the new Advisory Group has commenced today and will be open over the next two weeks and I strongly encourage those interested in contributing to the planning of territory-wide health services, to express their interest in being involved.

Underpinning the Territory-wide Health Services Planning work is an integrated and coordinated service model that keeps people healthy. 'Wellbeing' has been added to my portfolio title, to underscore that the efforts of everyone in our health system is to keep people as healthy and well as they can be. This is supported in this Budget by an additional \$4 million for preventative health initiatives.

We want to ensure we provide as many opportunities as possible to prevent people from developing chronic health conditions or if they do to live healthy lives while managing these conditions. We know that so many chronic diseases can be prevented, most notably diabetes and heart disease. We know the major risk factors, notably obesity, lack of physical activity, as well as smoking and alcohol use, and our preventative health work will develop initiatives to tackle these. Already this year we have held a stakeholder forum and the next step will involve more extensive community engagement on preventative health. I'll look forward to bringing these two pieces of work together to develop **Preventative Health Strategy** over 2017.

Improving healthcare quality is a key strategic priority for ACT Health and we are developing a new **Quality Strategy**, focusing on safe and effective care. This work will set out strategic projects to improve the safety and quality of care, reducing unnecessary variation waste and harm.

We will develop the Quality Strategy over the next few months and use this opportunity to understand what quality and person-centred care means to staff, consumers and families. This will help us to build capacity and capability in quality improvement and patient safety across the health service.

Work will also continue on the important **System-wide Data Review** over the course of the next financial year.

### **Delivering services and improving access**

I'd like to highlight some of the initiatives in this Budget that will improve the health and wellbeing of Canberrans. We have acknowledged the importance of primary care and specialist community based services in this the Budget with initiatives that include:

- \$14 million over five years to establish new Walk-in Centres;
- \$12.1 million to build a new health centre for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Canberrans;
- \$1.05 million for new grants to incentivise more bulk-billing services;
- \$3.2 million to purchase and operate two additional mobile dental vans to provide dental care closer to home for those that need it; and
- \$136,000 to commence the essential planning work for a significant expansion of the Hospital in the Home program.

### **Investing in infrastructure**

Of course, as part of an integrated and coordinated health service, there are the acute-based services in our hospitals. That's why the Government is funding key infrastructure projects to upgrade the Canberra Hospital campus, such as:

- \$17.3 million to renovate the existing acute aged care and oncology wards;
- a major expansion of Centenary Hospital for Women and Children; and
- \$236 million over the next four years for the Surgical Procedures, Interventional Radiology and Emergency Centre.

This investment builds on investments in previous budgets. Of course, we are

all very excited about the opening of the University of Canberra Public Hospital is on track to open in mid-2018, with the 2017-18 Budget providing funding to ensure its full operational readiness.

With the \$95 million from last year's Budget, there has also been substantial progress made to improve ACT Health assets in the past 12 months. The Upgrade and Maintain ACT Health Assets program contained a range of important upgrades and the replacement of critical infrastructure is underway.

For the Canberra Hospital campus, this includes essential upgrades to:

- lifts, heating, ventilation and electrical systems; and
- hydraulic, fire and electrical systems, among other areas.

All these important maintenance and upgrade works add to our continuous focus on supporting our workforce and providing a better care environment.

In regards to the switchboard fire and subsequent power outage earlier this year, as I have updated the Assembly, remediation work undertaken at Canberra Hospital since this incident has restored full pre-incident functionality to the Building 2 electrical main switchboard facility.

I would again like thank staff from ACT Health, ACT Emergency Services Agency, ACT Policing, Transport Canberra and City Services and other areas for their hard work and professionalism throughout the incident and since.

I would also like to thank staff from Calvary Hospital Bruce and National Capital Private Hospital for their assistance on the night and since.

Chair, we appear before the Committee proud of the many achievements over the past year, and committed to improving the health service that cares for our community.

Through this Budget, we are renewing our city's health services by delivering and planning for new initiatives and better programs across the ACT.

We understand the importance of renewing and boosting these essential services now and progressing important clinical services planning work and investing in health prevention so we're ready to meet the demand as our city continues to grow and to deliver a healthy city for our community.

With that, I am very happy to take questions from the Committee.

**ENDS**

