



**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

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STANDING COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND COMMUNITY WELLBEING

Mr Johnathan Davis MLA (Chair), Mr James Milligan MLA (Deputy Chair), Mr Michael Pettersson MLA

**Inquiry into ACT Budget 2021–22**  
**ANSWER TO QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE**  
**21 October 2021**

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QToN No - 12

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Asked by Mr Davis on 21 October: Mr Philp took on notice the following question(s):

Ref: Hansard Transcript, 21 October 2021, page 79

In relation to:

- 1) What the directorate is doing for smoking cessation in the broad?

MINISTER STEPHEN-SMITH: The answer to the Chair's question is as follows:–

- 1) Reducing the burden of disease from smoking is a central element of the *Healthy Canberra: ACT Preventive Health Plan 2020-2025* and the ACT government remains committed to supporting programs and activities that both stop the uptake of smoking in our community and supports those seeking to reduce or quit smoking.

Healthy Canberra Grants: Focus on Reducing Smoking-Related Harm provides targeted funding for community-based programs to prevent and reduce harms from smoking. This funding opportunity specifically includes a focus on targeting population groups who still have a high prevalence of smoking, the 'stubborn' figure of the remaining 6-7% within the community still smoking.

The prevalence of smoking is higher among lower socio-economic groups, some cultural groups and in groups facing multiple personal and social challenges. Healthy Canberra Grants: Focus on Reducing Smoking-Related Harm is providing \$349,245 in 2021-22 to three community-based organisations working with these specific population groups:

- Directions Health Service - Butt it Out! smoking support program for people with alcohol and other drug dependency, and comorbid mental illness. This program is working proactively and assertively with clients to address their nicotine addiction, in addition to their primary substance(s) of concern, through making smoking reduction/cessation a priority for staff and clients. The program utilises an integrated access model, encompassing primary healthcare, counselling, groups, in-house pharmacist and mobile clinic.

- The Worldview Foundation - Pre-Release Non-Indigenous Supplement and Post-Release Activity Support program that will target 50 detainees at the Alexander Maconochie Centre to address their smoking. This will be an extension of their existing Smoke, Booze and Drug Free Prison pre- and post-release program that targets Indigenous detainees. Both programs address issues associated with alcohol, tobacco and other drugs to support a more successful reintegration of detainees into the community, along with improvements to their health and wellbeing.
- The Cancer Council ACT - Tackling Tobacco program to address smoking in disadvantaged communities through not-for-profit community sector organisations, to increase their capacity to support people to stop smoking. The program is creating positive organisational cultures that enable clients and staff to feel supported and educated to address their smoking habits. Staff will have an increased awareness and confidence to provide ongoing support to a range of population groups and enable sustainable practices.

The ACT Government also provides recurrent funding to the Quitline Telephone Counselling Service and provides access to free Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) to the clients of ACT drug treatment services.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled services provide health promotion activities and intervention activities such as brief intervention, counselling and support for accessing NRT.

The ACT Government is supporting women to stop smoking when pregnant as part of its commitment to the Safer Baby Bundle, a national package of education and awareness measures aimed at reducing rates of stillbirth. Canberra Health Services provide NRT support, advice and Quitline referrals for patients in hospital who are smokers.

The ACT Health Directorate (ACTHD) has also established a Community of Practice on Tobacco including representatives from across government (JACS, CHS, CMTEDD) and across the ACTHD and with non-Government partners (ATODA, Cancer Council, Winnunga, Pharmacy Guild) to drive action on reducing tobacco related harm. The group has met twice (23 June 2021 and 28 October 2021) and additional activities are currently being considered.

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Health and Community Wellbeing

Signature:



Date:

1/11/21

By the Minister for Health, Rachel Stephen-Smith MLA