

2026

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

ELEVENTH ASSEMBLY

Canberra Health Services Half-Yearly Performance Report (31 December 2025)

**Presented by
Rachel Stephen-Smith MLA
Minister for Health
February 2026**

**CANBERRA HEALTH SERVICES
HALF YEARLY STATEMENT OF PERFORMANCE
FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025**

Output Class 1: Health and Community Care

Output 1.1 Acute Services

Canberra Health Services provides a comprehensive range of acute care, including:

- tertiary inpatient, outpatient and ambulatory services to the ACT and surrounding NSW.
- emergency department, intensive care unit and retrieval services.
- a range of medical specialty services including cardiology, respiratory, gastroenterology, neurology, endocrinology, rheumatology, and renal services.
- elective and emergency surgery services; and
- services for women, youth and children in obstetrics, gynecology, gynecology surgery, pediatrics, and pediatric surgery.

The key strategic priority for acute services is to deliver timely access to effective and safe hospital care services while responding to the growing demand for services. This means focusing on:

- strategies to improve access to services, including for the emergency department and planned surgery; and
- continuing to increase the efficiency of acute care services.

CANBERRA HEALTH SERVICES
HALF YEARLY STATEMENT OF PERFORMANCE
FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025

Table 1: Output 1.1 Acute Services

	Original Target 2025-26	YTD Actual Result 2025-26	YTD Variance from Target	Variance Note
a. Number of surgical complications requiring unplanned return to theatre per 10,000 hospital admissions	<45	27	0%	
b. Number of avoidable readmissions for selected conditions per 10,000 hospital admissions	<125	84	100%	
c. Percentage of emergency department presentations whose length of stay in the emergency department is four hours or less	81%	56%	(30%)	1
Percentage of ACT Emergency Department presentations that are treated within clinically recommended timeframes, by triage category				
d. Category 1 - Resuscitation patients seen immediately	100%	99%	(1%)	1
e. Category 2 - Emergency patients seen within 10 minutes	80%	60%	(25%)	1
f. Category 3 - Urgent patients seen within 30 minutes	75%	46%	(39%)	1
g. Category 4 - Semi-Urgent patients seen within 60 minutes	70%	62%	(11%)	1
h. Category 5 - Non-Urgent patients seen within 120 minutes	70%	84%	20%	2
Performing more Elective Surgery				
i. Number of elective surgeries performed	8,500 ²	8,678		
Percentage of ACT elective surgery patients admitted for surgery within clinically recommended timeframes, by triage category				
j. Percentage of Category 1 elective surgery patients admitted for surgery within clinically recommended timeframes (30 days)	100%	81%	(19%)	3
k. Percentage of Category 2 elective surgery patients admitted for surgery within clinically recommended timeframes (90 days)	80%	62%	(22%)	3
l. Percentage of Category 3 elective surgery patients admitted for surgery within clinically recommended timeframes (365 days)	93%	74%	(20%)	3

NOTE: The variance is 0 percent where the actual result is better than the target.

²The target presented here is the July-December portion of the full year target of 17,500.

**CANBERRA HEALTH SERVICES
HALF YEARLY STATEMENT OF PERFORMANCE
FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025**

Explanation of Material Variance (+/- 5%)

1. Emergency Department demand has increased significantly over the past three years, with ACT presentations per capita now at record levels. Sustained growth in activity has placed ongoing pressure on emergency department capacity and patient flow. Higher presentation volumes directly contribute to longer waiting times and increase overall emergency department length of stay as clinical resources manage a larger and more complex caseload. These impacts reflect structural growth in demand rather than short-term operational variation. Canberra Health Services remains focused on delivering safe, timely and high-quality emergency care while progressing system initiatives to manage rising demand and improve patient flow.
2. Category 5 patients are a small cohort of patients presenting to the Emergency Department. This combined with a longer window within to see these not urgent patients which results in the reported higher performance against target.
3. Elective surgery activity remains at record levels, with more than 8,600 procedures completed so far this year. Despite this, the backlog of overdue patient has not reduced and remains concentrated in several specialties and among a smaller number of surgeons. Canberra Health Services will review theatre allocations and align to wait list burden and continue to strengthen treat-in-turn practices. Specialty vacancies will be recruited to.

**CANBERRA HEALTH SERVICES
HALF YEARLY STATEMENT OF PERFORMANCE
FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025**

Output 1.2 Mental Health, Justice Health and Alcohol and Drug Services

Canberra Health Services provides a range of Mental Health, Justice Health and Alcohol and Drug Services through the public and community sectors in hospitals, community health centres and other community settings, adult and youth correctional facilities and people's homes across the Territory. These services work to provide integrated and responsive care to a range of services including hospital-based specialist services, therapeutic rehabilitation, counselling, supported accommodation services and other community-based services.

The key priorities for Mental Health, Justice Health and Alcohol and Drug Services are ensuring that people's health needs are met in a timely fashion and that care is integrated across hospital, community, and residential support services.

This means focusing on:

- ensuring timely access to emergency mental health care.
- ensuring that public and community mental health services in the ACT provide people with appropriate assessment, treatment and care that result in improved mental health outcomes.
- providing community and hospital-based alcohol and drug services.
- providing health assessments and care for people detained in corrective facilities; and
- engagement and liaison with community sector services, primary care and other government agencies providing support and shared care arrangements.

CANBERRA HEALTH SERVICES
HALF YEARLY STATEMENT OF PERFORMANCE
FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025

Table 2: Output 1.2 Mental Health, Justice Health and Alcohol and Drug Services

	Original Target 2025-26	YTD Actual Result 2025-26	YTD Variance from Target	Variance Note
a. Proportion of detainees at the Alexander Maconochie Centre with a completed health assessment within 24 hours of detention	100%	96%	(4%)	
b. Proportion of detainees at the Bimberi Youth Detention Centre with a completed health assessment within 24 hours of detention	100%	98%	(2%)	
c. Proportion of current clients on opioid treatment with management plans	98%	75%	(23%)	1
d. Proportion of mental health clients contacted by a Canberra Health Services community facility within 7 days post discharge from inpatient services	75%	89%	14%	2
e. The rate of mental health clients who are subjected to a seclusion event while being an admitted patient in an ACT public mental health inpatient unit per 1,000 patient days	<7 per 1,000 patient days	10.5 per 1,000 patient days	(100)% ¹	3
f. Proportion of clients who return to hospital within 28 days of discharge from an ACT acute psychiatric mental health inpatient unit	<17%	18%	(100)% ¹	4

Note

¹The variance is 0 percent where the actual result is better than the target and (100) percent where the actual result is worse than the target.

CANBERRA HEALTH SERVICES
HALF YEARLY STATEMENT OF PERFORMANCE
FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025

Explanation of Material Variance (+/- 5%)

1. This variance is partly attributable to an increase in demand for Opioid Treatment Service that resulted from external factors. Further work is required to support the administration process associated with Opioid Treatment Plan completion.
2. Mental Health Services have maintained a strong focus and prioritisation on post-discharge care and follow up as it represents a high-risk period for people.
3. There has been a higher number of seclusion events associated with a small patient cohort who have experienced significant mental health concerns. Staff continue to focus on de-escalation, safety and person-centered care.
4. This performance indicator is influenced by a small cohort who have required multiple admissions within the 28-day reporting period due to periods of acute mental health needs. Services are working closely with this cohort to provide coordinated and ongoing support.

CANBERRA HEALTH SERVICES
HALF YEARLY STATEMENT OF PERFORMANCE
FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025

Output 1.3 Cancer Services

Canberra Health Services provides a comprehensive range of screening, assessment, diagnostic, treatment, and palliative care services. Services are provided in inpatient, outpatient, and community settings. The key priorities for cancer care services are early detection and timely access to diagnostic and treatment services. These include ensuring that population screening rates for breast cancer meet targets, waiting time for access to essential services such as radiotherapy are consistent with agreed benchmarks and there is timely access to chemotherapy and hematological treatments.

Table 3: Output 1.3 Cancer Services

	Original Target 2025-26	YTD Actual Result 2025-26	YTD Variance from Target	Variance Note
a. The percentage of patients requiring a breast screen who attend for an assessment visit within 28 calendar days of their screening visit	90%	99%	11%	1
Radiotherapy Treatment Within Standard Timeframes				
b. Emergency – treatment starts within 48 hours	100%	100%	0%	
c. Palliative – treatment starts within 2 weeks	90%	93%	3%	
d. Radical – treatment starts within 4 weeks	90%	96%	7%	2

Explanation of Material Variance (+/- 5%)

1. Canberra Health Services is improving the reliability of breast screening services by keeping assessment clinics available year-round and strengthening follow-up arrangements. By confirming clients can be available for up to 28 days after their mammogram, we are helping ensure anyone who needs further assessment can receive it promptly.
2. Canberra Health Services has seen improvements year on year with the operation of four (4) Advanced Linear Accelerators and successful recruitment initiatives.

CANBERRA HEALTH SERVICES
HALF YEARLY STATEMENT OF PERFORMANCE
FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025

Output 1.4 Subacute and Community Services

The provision of timely and effective, coordinated, and comprehensive services which optimise the functionality and quality of life of adult patients. Following illness, injury or surgery, subacute services enable individuals to safely transition to community living. Community based services sees care delivered safely and closer to where people live.

The key priorities for Subacute and Community Services are:

- ensuring consistent and timely access to appropriate care and services, based on clinical need, including the efficient and appropriate transfer of people from acute to subacute settings, rehabilitation and ensuring community-based services are in place to support healthcare needs.
- ensuring effective planning for discharge and care planning occurs, including comprehensive aged care assessment where necessary, in order to provide appropriate support for independent living and minimise unplanned readmissions to hospital.
- for services that receive Commonwealth aged care funding, complying with the Commonwealth's quality and safety requirements.
- reduced waiting times for access to emergency dental health services; and
- achieving lower than the Australian Average in the Decayed, Missing, or Filled Teeth Index.

Table 4: Output 1.4 Subacute and Community Services

	Original Target 2025-26	YTD Actual Result 2025-26	YTD Variance from Target	Variance Note
a. Mean waiting time for clients on the dental services waiting list	12 months	12.7 months	6% ¹	1
b. Median wait time to be seen (all Walk-in Centres combined)	<30 minutes	47 minutes	(17%) ¹	2

Note

¹The variance is 100 percent where the actual result is worse than the target.

Explanation of Material Variance (+/- 5%)

1. The waitlist has decreased, and improvements are ongoing to meet the required target. Removal of overdue client from the restorative and denture waiting list is marginally exceeded.
2. The median waiting time at the ACT's Walk in Centres has risen to 47 minutes, reflecting both the growing number of people seeking care and the increasing complexity of presentations that can require longer assessments. Canberra Health Services is responding by exploring opportunities to further expand the role of the Nurse Practitioners, ensuring our community continues to receive timely, high-quality care as demand evolves.