



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

SELECT COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES 2016-17

MR BRENDAN SMYTH MLA (CHAIR), MR JAYSON HINDER MLA (DEPUTY CHAIR), MS JOY BURCH MLA, MR STEVE DOSZPOT MLA

COMMUNITY AND INDUSTRY REPRESENTATIVE GROUPS SURVEY

SURVEY OF COMMUNITY AND INDUSTRY GROUPS ON THE
ACT BUDGET 2016-17 PRESENTED BY THE ACT GOVERNMENT ON 7 JUNE 2016

If you wish to respond to this survey, please return it to committees@parliament.act.gov.au by **3.00pm Friday 10 June 2016**. If there is insufficient room for any of your comments, below, please append additional comments.

1. Full name of group/organisation:

Mental Health Community Coalition of the ACT Inc.

2. Name of contact person for this survey and their telephone number and email address:

Simon Viereck, Executive Officer

3. Please provide a brief overview of your organisation/group and its purpose.

The Mental Health Community Coalition of the ACT (MHCC ACT), established in 2004 as a peak agency, provides advocacy, representational and capacity building roles for the community managed mental health sector in the ACT. This sector covers the range of non-government organisations that offer recovery, early intervention, prevention, health promotion and community support services for people with a mental illness.

4. Has your organisation/group developed a written analysis of the ACT Budget that it would like to submit to the Committee?

Yes (If yes, please email it to the Committee Secretariat with your completed survey.)

No

5. Please list, in order of priority, your three key priority areas regarding the ACT Budget 2016-2017 (you can expand on these in Question 6):

a. Growth in community mental health sector services and supports, including a Mental Health Recovery College and Prevention, Promotion & Early Intervention initiatives

b. NDIS transition initiatives, including Psychosocial Rehabilitation and Recovery Supports for individuals not eligible for NDIS

c.

6. Please provide detail of your views on the ACT Budget in relation to your three priority areas?

a. MHCC ACT welcomes the significant investment in mental health in the ACT 2016-17 Budget. We particularly welcome the capital and operational funding for another Step Up Step Down facility and the investment in establishment of a Mental Health Recovery College. However, MHCC ACT is disappointed that the investment in mental health services is so heavily weighted towards hospital-based and clinical services, rather than community-managed, recovery-focused services. MHCC ACT is particularly disappointed that funding for the Recovery College as well as expansion of the Detention Exit Community Outreach program and Way Back suicide prevention program is for one year only.

Contrary to current National and ACT strategic mental health policy directions the vast majority of the new mental health spending initiatives are in clinical and hospital-based services, rather than recovery-focused services in the community. This budget reduces the proportion of the mental health budget spent on community-based and community-managed services when we should be diverting growth funds to keeping people well in the community.

b. The ACT 2016-17 Budget includes two limited measures in the Community Services Directorate area to support transition to the NDIS in the coming year. However, neither of these measures addresses the very real and imminent issues concerning cessation of critical psychosocial rehabilitation and recovery support services for people not eligible for the NDIS.

Only the 10 to 12% of people with severe mental illness with the most complex needs will be eligible for an individual NDIS funding package. It is estimated this amounts to about 960 people. In comparison ACT Mental Health Services see 9 – 10,000 individuals each year and about 3,500 at any one time. Further MHCC ACT knows from our membership that a proportion of their existing clients are not eligible for NDIS. It is obvious to all of us that there will be an ongoing need for psychosocial rehabilitation and recovery support services outside of the NDIS, yet this budget does nothing to address this need.

c.

7. Are there any other particular issues with the ACT Budget that you would like to bring to the Committee's attention?

Yes No

a. If yes, please comment/attach further details:

Overall the 2016-17 ACT Budget appears fair and is taking steps in a positive direction on important issues such as family violence and investment in public housing renewal which MHCC ACT support. MHCC ACT also welcomes the investment in alcohol, tobacco and other drug services.

MHCC ACT would like to raise concerns about single-year funding for key mental health initiatives and investment in clinical health (including mental health) services instead of prevention and early intervention measures.

8. Did you provide a budget submission to the ACT Government?

Yes (go to question 9) No (go to question 10)

9. Do you think that the ACT Budget has addressed the issues raised in your submission?

Yes No

a. If yes, please comment

The 2016-17 ACT Budget has allocated funds towards establishment of a Mental Health Recovery College, which MHCC ACT advocated for. However, funding is for a single year only.

The Budget has also in minor ways addressed the priority area of the MHCC ACT budget submission concerning Housing, Homelessness and Supported Accommodation by investing in an additional Step Up Step Down facility and allocating funds to investigate accommodation and support options for people leaving mental health facilities.

However, the budget fails to address the other priority areas in the MHCC ACT budget submission.

10. Does your organisation/group wish to give its views in a Committee public hearing on Friday 17 June 2016, at the Legislative Assembly, London Circuit, Canberra.

Yes No

If you indicate yes, and the Committee selects you to appear at the hearing, the Committee Support Office will contact you by close of business Wednesday 15 June 2016 to confirm arrangements. Please note that the Committee may not be able to hear from all groups/organisations.

Thank you for contributing to the inquiry.
