

Disability Analysis of Budget 2013

The 2013 Budget shows clear planning for Disability Care, but also includes important measures to cover critical shortfalls in current support. However there are still concerns that not everyone with disability will benefit.

For those who will be eligible for Disability Care this is a very good budget. After an historic Federal Budget a few weeks ago, the ACT has followed suit with a clear plan on implementing the National Disability Insurance Scheme (Disability Care), and measures to ensure community readiness for it.

Most importantly this dovetails into the arrival of Disability Care through initiatives to prepare people with disabilities and those around them.

Some concern must be raised at the continuing lack of initiatives to support the rights of all people with disabilities including better support for independent advocacy.

Major initiatives in Budget 2013 include:

- Addressing gaps before Disability Care:
 - Mobile Attendant Care and Evening Services – this will provide drop-in support and personal assistance outside of standard business hours. \$360,000 over 1 year.
 - Additional Support for Post School Options – additional funding for young people with disabilities to support their participation in socially valued activities after graduating school. \$245,000 over 1 year.
 - Readiness and Service Enhancements – increases in resources for support and preparations for people with disabilities, families, governments and providers. \$4.9 million over 2 years.
- Payroll Tax Rebate Post School Options for People with Disabilities – provides a payroll tax rebate of up to \$4000 to organisations who employ recent school leavers with disabilities. \$740,000 over 2 years.
- Trauma Recovery and Research Centre for children and young people who have experienced abuse, neglect and trauma. \$2.85 million over 4 years.

Concerns arising from Budget 2013 include:

- No increase in funding for independent disability advocacy. Advocacy will be crucial in assisting people with disabilities, especially those most isolated, to shape Disability Care into a quality system. It will also continue to be in high demand outside Disability Care.
- Parents with disabilities need parenting supports, which do not exist for people with disabilities in the ACT. We are concerned that Disability Care will not cover these needs. This is still unresolved at the Federal level.
- The increases to existing court fees will be a barrier for people with disabilities, unless they are exempt or access concessions. This is particularly concerning as people with disabilities already face significant barriers to equality of access to justice.
- Capital metro design (5 million over one year) – concern about the accessibility considerations involved in this development. Will it be fully accessible along the entire route?

improving life for people with disabilities

Media Release – 4 June 2013

ACT follows Federal Budget lead with an historic budget for disability

The 2013 Budget shows clear planning for Disability Care, but also includes important measures to cover critical shortfalls in current support. However there are still concerns that not everyone with disability will benefit.

“This year’s ACT budget is a vast improvement on last year for people with disability,” said Advocacy for Inclusion General Manager, Christina Ryan. “We’ve gone from a flat lining budget with a few bus stop upgrades to one that is well structured, addresses gaps, and is forward looking.”

For those who will be eligible for Disability Care this is a very good budget. After an historic Federal Budget a few weeks ago, the ACT has followed suit with a clear plan on implementing the National Disability Insurance Scheme (Disability Care), and measures to ensure community readiness for it.

While the ACT waits for Disability Care the Budget has announced payroll rebates, mobile attendant care, extra support for school leavers, and extra funding for individuals through an enhanced service offer.

Most importantly this dovetails into the arrival of Disability Care through initiatives to prepare people with disabilities and those around them. “We couldn’t ask for more at this stage on NDIS preparedness,” commented Ms Ryan.

Some concern must be raised at the continuing lack of initiatives to support the rights of all people with disabilities including better support for independent advocacy. “Not everyone will be covered by Disability Care, so we still have some way to go on supporting all people with disabilities across all areas of their lives,” said Ms Ryan.

The Advocacy for Inclusion budget analysis is on the Advocacy for Inclusion website at www.advocacyforinclusion.org, it will also form part of the ACT Council of Social Service analysis.

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