

**2020**

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

**STATEMENT**

**UPDATE TO THE GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO THE  
SELECT COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES REPORT 2018-19  
RECOMMENDATION 56**

**AND**

**THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, AGEING AND COMMUNITY  
SERVICES REPORT 10 INQUIRY INTO MATERNITY SERVICES IN THE ACT  
RECOMMENDATION 3**

**CANBERRA MATERNITY OPTIONS SERVICE IMPLEMENTATION  
PROGRESS REPORT**

**Presented by  
Rachel Stephen-Smith MLA  
Minister for Health  
27 August 2020**



Madam Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to update the Assembly on the implementation of the Canberra Maternity Options service.

The Canberra Maternity Options service was developed from the ACT Maternity Access Strategy 2018. This strategy aimed to streamline services to create one public maternity system in the ACT. Canberra Maternity Options commenced operations on 30 September 2019.

A report to the Assembly on the implementation of a single point of entry for maternity services in the ACT was recommended in July 2018 by the Select Committee on Estimates 2018-2019. The Standing Committee on Health, Aging and Community Services Inquiry into Maternity Services in the ACT made a similar recommendation in June this year.

Since Canberra Maternity Options was established, public maternity referrals from General Practitioners and pregnant women are processed through Central Health Intake, a single point of entry.

The woman's first appointment with a midwife is offered at a community health centre close to where she lives, and she may also access early pregnancy information group sessions. The woman's referral, preference and pregnancy health assessment are considered in allocating her to the most appropriate model of care. This also takes into account service capacity and proximity to her home.

It was agreed a review of the Canberra Maternity Options service would occur in two stages, firstly through an implementation review at four months, and a formal external evaluation eighteen months from implementation.

While the COVID-19 response has necessitated delays in reporting, I am pleased to present today the Canberra Maternity Options Implementation Progress Report.

The report is based on service data in addition to consumer and stakeholder feedback. It highlights the strengths of the service and identifies improvement actions for Canberra Maternity Options. These actions will be overseen by the ACT Maternity Wide Clinical Governance Committee.

The findings of the report support the growth of this service and will strengthen provision of quality and safe maternity care to the women, children and families of the ACT.

Early advice from the service has been positive. Women now have the opportunity to speak with a midwife early in their pregnancy to discuss the different models of care available to them.

I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to the excellent work being done by the dedicated and hardworking health professionals providing maternity services across the ACT.

I table the Canberra Maternity Options Implementation Progress Report.