

ACTCOSS 2018 Budget Estimates Submission - Questions

Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander community services

1. Will the ACT Government ensure Aboriginal community controlled and managed organisation participation in the full implementation of the Aboriginal child placement principles?
2. Will the ACT Government support an Aboriginal community controlled and managed Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander drug and alcohol rehabilitation including residential service?
3. Will the ACT Government support the establishment of an independent sustainable Aboriginal community controlled and managed Justice Centre?
4. When will the ACT Government take on the ground action to address the over-representation of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children in out of home care in the ACT? Less talking and reviewing and more on the ground action is required. The longer things drag on more Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander kids will be removed and more families will be at risk.

Alcohol and other drug services

5. The 2018-19 ACT Budget includes investment in early planning to expand drug and alcohol services. The funding provided will support developing a process but does not change the capacity of the sector. With high levels of demand, how will the ACT Government invest in increased capacity for alcohol and other drug services?

Community Services Industry Strategy

6. Investment in community services is as important as health and education and the community sector is a strong contributor to economic growth in the ACT. How will the ACT Government resource the implementation of the projects jointly agreed between Government and the community as priorities for investment in the ACT Community Services Industry Strategy 2016-26?

Disability services

7. Dementia is the largest cause of disability over the age of 65 and the third leading cause of disability overall. Will funding under the Disability Inclusion Grants Program extend to supporting community groups, organisations and small businesses to become more inclusive and accessible for people living with dementia?
8. How will the ACT Public Service Inclusion Employment Program incorporate the recommendations from the Standing Committee on Health, Ageing and Community Services Inquiry into the Employment of People with Disabilities? In what ways is the ACT Government supporting the improvement of employment outcomes for people with a disability beyond ACT government jobs?
9. How will the ACT Government address their obligation as a 'provider of last resort' for people with disability in the longer term?
10. What measures are in the 2018-19 ACT Budget to support people with disabilities to access suitable and affordable housing and transport, service provider facilities, community-based amenities and greenspaces?

Domestic and Family Violence

11. How is the ACT Government ensuring that its domestic and family violence initiatives cater to diversity of needs across different population groups in the ACT, including accessibility for people with mobility and/or cognitive barriers?
12. The 2018-19 ACT Budget includes funding for more frontline domestic violence and rape crisis services with funding beyond 2019-20 being provisioned while the Government examines future expected demand. How will the ACT Government evaluate this demand?

13. The 2018-19 ACT Budget states that the Family Safety Hub is to be delivered by reprioritising existing projects funded by the Safer Families Levy. How will the Hub deliver innovative approaches without impacting existing capacity to support victims of domestic and family violence to achieve lasting safety?

14. One apparent gap in the 2018-19 ACT Budget in relation to addressing domestic and family violence is the need to support access to legal services for women and children who are escaping domestic violence. How will the ACT Government address this gap?

Early intervention

15. The ACT Government is currently undertaking the Early Intervention by Design Project. What funding is being considered in scope for this project and what is the methodology for costing the funding gap?

Education

16. How will the Early Childhood Strategy and the Future of Education balance the need for inclusion and access to specialist support?

17. What action is the ACT Government taking to support disengaged young people or young people at risk of disengagement under the Future of Education process?

18. In relation to needs-based funding for students with a disability, what measure or definition of disability will the Education Directorate use to determine access?

19. The 2018-19 ACT Budget includes extended support for schools, does this include capital works?

Employment

20. Canberra still experiences considerable inequality. Relying on the market to distribute economic and opportunity benefits is not achieving equality. How does the 2018-19 ACT Budget promote distribution of employment opportunities to the outer edges of Canberra? How does it foster entry-level employment opportunities? How has it linked these types of opportunities to transport and other infrastructure?

Homelessness services

21. The 2018-19 ACT Budget includes \$6.5m investment in more frontline homelessness services including an additional 36 places at frontline shelters. What will this increase investment fund in terms of increasing the physical (capital) and service (operational) capacity of specialist homelessness services? How is the ACT Government ensuring that the funding will address barriers to access for people, including people living with a physical or intellectual disability? How will the investment create different pathways based on different barriers and needs?

Housing

22. What is the single biggest problem that the ACT Government wants community housing providers to help solve? How does the 2018-19 ACT Budget help facilitate this?

23. What will be the key elements of the upcoming ACT Housing Strategy that have not been announced in the 2018-19 ACT Budget?

24. For 2018-19, the ACT Government has set a target of 552 dedicated public, community and affordable dwelling sites. In terms of affordable housing, why is the focus overwhelmingly on a target of 472 affordable purchase opportunities (85%) over affordable rental properties (target of 60 public (11%) and 20 community (4%) dwellings)?

Human services

25. Under its investment in stronger oversight of human services delivery in the 2018-19 ACT Budget, why is the ACT Government prioritising regulatory oversight of disability services over other specialist service delivery areas when the NDIA is investing in the implementation of quality and safeguarding framework nationally? How does this meet the ACT Government's commitment to reducing red tape?

Justice and community safety

26. What action is the ACT Government taking to address recidivism through initiatives around high density community housing, victim support and community development?
27. The 2018-19 ACT Budget invests in resourcing the Alexander Maconochie Centre to allow for higher numbers of detainees and safety for workers. How is the ACT Government also addressing the safety and human rights needs of detainees? When will we see substantial investment focussed on preventing offending and adequately supporting the housing and employment needs of people exiting the prison system?

Mental health

28. The 2018-19 ACT Budget includes investment in more mental health services for older Canberrans. People with dementia often experience issues with mental health, with 44 per cent of people in residential aged care having a mental health condition. Will people with dementia be considered as a high needs group as part of this initiative?
29. The 2018-19 ACT Budget includes investment in more mental health outreach for young Canberrans. Is this funding increasing capacity to meet unmet need? What action is being taken to address the needs of 8-12 year olds? How are pathways and barriers to access to this service being addressed?
30. How is the ACT Government supporting adolescents with high mental health needs who can no longer live at home? (Noting that NSW services are no longer accepting referrals).

Transport

31. Transport is a social determinant of health. Critically, given Canberra's physical structure, transport services tend to cluster in the town centres and CBD. How will the ACT Government ensure effective, affordable and accessible public transport in the urban and suburban fringes across all forms of transport – bus, light rail, electric, shared options and active transport infrastructure?

Women

32. What will the initiatives in the ACT Government's 2018-19 ACT Budget related to the ACT Womens' Plan deliver? How were the initial actions for investment selected by the ACT Government? Will there be further community engagement around the Plan to ensure that it addresses critical issues facing women and girls in the ACT?