

ACT LABOR

HEALTH POLICY POSITION STATEMENT

2024



PROGRESSIVE
PRACTICAL
PROVEN

DELIVERING HIGH QUALITY HEALTH CARE FOR ALL CANBERRANS

ACT Labor will always be committed to delivering high quality healthcare when and where Canberrans need it with more healthcare workers and the infrastructure we need for the future. Over the last decade, the ACT Labor Government has invested more than \$1.7 billion in health infrastructure and invested in frontline services.

What we've achieved this term

The Barr Labor Government has delivered on the health commitments we took to the last election to build an even better health care system for Canberra and surrounds.

This term, Labor set the path for the next decade of our health system to deliver on our vision for a more accessible and sustainable healthcare system that serves the needs of all Canberrans. Our comprehensive plans provide a platform for health service development, workforce, infrastructure, the maternity system, child and adolescent health services and health research.

ACT Labor knows our frontline healthcare workers are vital to delivering the care Canberrans need. That's why, Labor committed at the 2020 election to expanding this workforce by an additional 400 health care workers – more nurses, midwives, doctors and allied health professionals. We met this commitment two years ahead of schedule and we have continued to grow our workforce, investing in them and supporting the next generation of healthcare professionals to deliver better care for Canberrans now and into the future.

Labor also rolled out nurse-patient ratios across our public hospitals, allowing our nurses to deliver safer care for Canberrans and improved outcomes for consumers.

Labor implemented a Digital Health Record across all ACT public health services, connecting care and improving consumer experiences with MyDHR. This change means better care for Canberrans and supports our workforce to deliver care more effectively and safely when and where it is needed.

Delivering state-of-the-art health facilities has been central to ACT Labor's commitment to delivering better health care with more than \$600 million invested since 2020.

Through the Canberra Hospital Expansion project, we've opened the new Critical Services Building – the first all-electric major hospital building in Australia. This is the single largest health infrastructure investment since self-government, significantly increasing Canberra's emergency department capacity, the number of operating theatres and other critical services for when Canberrans need them most. We also completed the expansion of Centenary Hospital for Women and Children and opened the community-based Weston Creek imaging service, a new Canberra Health Services hub in Molonglo and a residential eating disorder facility.

This term, Labor also made a historic change to the ACT's public health services with the merger of the ACT's public hospitals under Canberra Health Services to support the delivery of a new more than \$1 billion northside hospital and a more accessible, accountable and sustainable health system.

What we will continue

ACT Labor will continue to invest in initiatives to strengthen the capacity of the ACT health system to meet the health and wellbeing needs of all Canberrans and to provide the critical infrastructure we need to bring health care closer to home.

A re-elected ACT Labor Government will continue to deliver on our plan and vision for our healthcare system. We will do this by continuing to invest in and support our health workforce to deliver exceptional care to Canberrans. We will continue to deliver on our comprehensive and detailed plans for healthcare infrastructure and improved maternity and child and adolescent health services across the community. We will continue to expand services at our public hospitals and build on our partnerships with our non-government partners to support those who need it most.

Build Canberra's health infrastructure for the future

- Begin construction on the more than \$1 billion new northside hospital that will include a bigger Emergency Department, Intensive Care Unit and more Operating Theatres. We will support our growing health workforce with modern state-of-the-art facilities that will include the latest medical technology and equipment.
- Complete construction of the Southside Hydrotherapy Pool to deliver rehabilitative and supportive care for those living in Canberra's south.
- Complete construction of the Watson Health Precinct, delivering new purpose-built youth mental health and alcohol and other drug facilities.
- Continue to modernize the Canberra Hospital in line with the *Canberra Hospital Master Plan 2021-2041*. Our 20-year plan for the tertiary hospital campus will support future generations to access the care they need, when they need it in state-of-the-art facilities.
- Deliver a new Yamba Drive Entrance to the Canberra Hospital, including an accessible bus stop, the next stage of the expanded Aboriginal and Torres Islander patient lounge, a new Veterans Lounge and Garden designed with the veteran community.
- Complete construction of the Cancer Research Centre and Cancer Wellbeing Centre to support the Canberra Region Cancer Centre becoming a comprehensive cancer centre for Canberrans that will support improved outcomes and better research opportunities for our world-class public health workforce.
- A new acute palliative care ward and expanded endoscopy services will be delivered at Canberra Hospital to continue to grow our health services on the campus.
- Deliver more parking at the Canberra Hospital campus with the opening of more spaces at the CIT site, on Garran Oval and the former helipad to support consumers, visitors and staff.
- A new specialist dementia care area at North Canberra Hospital to support the care of older Canberrans as part of the Centre for Excellence.

Expand and increase healthcare services

- Continue to develop a truly networked Territory-wide public health service across our hospitals and community-based health services with the transition of North Canberra Hospital.
- Reform planned care and improve access to specialist outpatient services, elective surgery and other procedures in line with health system planning and population needs. This includes boosting outpatient services to provide more prevention and support for oral health, which will reduce hospitalisation and untreated oral health issues in vulnerable communities.
- Continue to work with the Commonwealth Government to deliver expanded GRACE and RADAR services and the continuation of the SPICE program.
- Progress the Canberra Health Services Oral Health Services Reform as a priority and continue to work with the Commonwealth Government to deliver timely public dental services.

Health System Reform

- Continue our nation-leading approach to minimising the harm caused by alcohol, tobacco and other drugs by implementing the *ACT Drug Strategy Action Plan 2022-2026*.
- Progress our commitments to be the best place in Australia to have a baby through the vision set out in *Maternity in Focus*.
- Keep Canberrans healthy and prevent them from developing chronic diseases through the *Healthy Canberra: Preventive Health Plan 2020-2025*.
- Grow, deepen and establish health services as part of the *ACT Health Services Plan 2022-2030*.
- Continue our priority focus on the *Child and Adolescent Clinical Services Plan 2023-2030*.
- Continue to deliver improvements to publicly available health system performance reporting, including publishing outpatient care waiting times and outcomes as part of a refreshed monthly reporting program.
- Deliver the ACT Climate and Health Strategy and work with the Commonwealth Government to deliver health system-wide actions that address and mitigate the impacts of climate change.
- Finalise and commence implementation of a virtual care strategy to support more people to access health and hospital services at home while being supported by our expert teams.
- Deliver the *Better Together: A strategic plan for research in the ACT health system 2022-2030* and the *Canberra Health Services Research Strategy 2021-2025* to provide more opportunities for health workers to engage in innovation and development and support the ACT to become a world leader in health research.

What we will deliver

800 more health workers

When you or someone you love is sick, there's nothing more important than getting the very best care, close to home and we know an investment in our health workforce is an investment in our community.

That's why ACT Labor is committed to making the biggest investments in free public healthcare in Territory history. A re-elected Labor Government will hire at least 800 more health workers. It'll mean more nurses, doctors, specialists and other health workers providing free healthcare right across Canberra. From specialist appointments to mental health services, it'll mean better healthcare, closer to home – for every Canberran.

Labor recognises and appreciates our hard-working dedicated healthcare workers. We have invested throughout the last four years in their development, wellbeing and facilities to ensure they have the right environment and supports to deliver the best care to Canberrans. Only a re-elected Labor Government will continue to build on this support.

ACT Labor is the party that introduced and expanded the highly valued nurse-led Walk-in Centres and we've championed midwife-led continuity of care. While other political parties equivocate and pay lip-service to nurse-led care, only Labor has a record of backing our nurses and midwives because we know they deliver high-quality cost-effective care.

We will continue to work with the Commonwealth to ensure all health professionals are able to work to the top of their scope of practice. We will explore innovative models that support the expansion of scope of practice for all professions including ensuring continuation of important national work to enable Registered Nurse prescribing, an expanded role for GPs in the diagnosis and treatment of ADHD and an expanded scope of practice for pharmacists.

We will continue to invest in formal leadership training and take a proactive approach to health workforce wellbeing to support a safer culture in our health services. We will also develop a health professional capability framework to ensure our teams have the right skills as they move through each stage of their career.

A re-elected Labor Government will continue to deliver on the *ACT Health Workforce Strategy 2023-2032* to support a sustainable health workforce in the ACT.

Supporting our nurses and midwives

The Labor Government worked hard in the last term to deliver practical, proven and progressive initiatives that would improve working conditions for our nurses and midwives and continue to advance the profession. We worked with the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation, the Australian College of Midwives and our other valued nursing and midwifery partners to deliver key reforms including Mandated Minimum Nurse/Midwife-to-Patient Ratios, ongoing support for the Nurses and Midwives: Towards a Safer Culture Project and Undergraduate Student of Nursing and Midwifery positions at Canberra Health Services.

To continue our comprehensive plan to support nursing and midwifery positions, a re-elected Labor Government will:

- Legislate Positive Practice Environment Standards that will be developed with nurses and midwives, the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation and other nursing, midwifery and health stakeholders. We know high-quality health services need a high-quality workforce that feels safe and supported, and we are committed to delivering initiatives that will support them.
- Continue our work in developing health workforce data and deliver a workforce plan for the nursing profession and a plan for the midwifery profession. We will continue working with the Commonwealth as it finalises consultation and delivery of the National Nursing Workforce Strategy to ensure we are aligning national and local actions that support the nursing profession.
- Work with other jurisdictions as national work continues to support the midwifery profession, delivering aligned actions align that support the profession in the ACT.
- Continue to build on transition programs that support the professions through various stages of their career and retention in the nursing and midwifery workforce. This includes reviewing nursing and midwifery education and scholarship programs to ensure professional development, research and innovation opportunities continue to advance the professions into the future.
- Continue to work through our commitment in the ACT Public Service Nursing and Midwifery Enterprise Agreement to scope a framework for safe staffing levels in community health settings that will support a phased approach to implementing ratios in these speciality areas.
- Continue to support advanced practice nursing and midwifery positions across Canberra Health Services, including identifying and exploring new advanced practice positions.
- Continue to support the Nurse Practitioner Taskforce and introduce legislative changes that will enable nurses to work to a higher scope of practice. To support more nurses to access Nurse Practitioner positions through a formal program pathway, we will also work with the nursing workforce and industrial representatives to introduce a Nurse Practitioner Candidate classification and program.
- Discuss with Commonwealth, state and territory counterparts regulatory reforms that ensure an appropriate level of protection is provided to nurses and midwives when reporting workplace safety issues.

Increasing allied health staff across our public health system

ACT Labor understand the importance of a strong allied health workforce and we will continue to build on our investments in the allied health professions. A re-elected Labor Government will:

- Work with workforce representatives to develop evidence for safe staffing levels in our public health services.
- While scoping of safe staffing level evidence is underway, undertake a second phase of benchmarking of allied health positions across remaining sub-acute and rehabilitation areas, North Canberra Hospital and Clare Holland House. This will support holistic care, earlier intervention, better outcomes for Canberrans and increase the capacity of our public health services by discharging patients faster.

- Support additional advanced clinical and leadership positions in sub-acute and rehabilitation areas to meet the increasing complexity of care in our health services. This will include an additional four Health Professional Level 4 positions to support allied health advanced practice and leadership. ACT Labor knows that investing in advanced practice and leadership in allied health delivers benefits to consumers through better patient outcomes and to the workforce through increased job satisfaction and career advancement.
- Working with representatives and our workforce to recruit and retain allied health professionals and to support these vital members of the health workforce. Strategic planning will focus on areas of allied health that have relatively small numbers that can be greatly impacted by changes in workforce numbers. This will ensure we set out recruitment and retention pathways from student through to experienced professional that support the health workforce to train and work in the ACT.
- ACT Labor acknowledges the positive impact the Culture Liaison Officer has had on culture at Canberra Health Services. A re-elected Labor Government will make this role ongoing to ensure that culture continues to improve and to put a focus on staff wellbeing, which results in better outcomes for patients and the community.

Working with medical practitioners

We know a strong and healthy medical workforce supports good outcomes for Canberrans and ACT Labor will focus on reforming workplace conditions for medical practitioners at Canberra Health Services. We want to ensure they have great places to work and that we are continuing to support recruitment and retention of doctors at all levels. That's why a re-elected Labor Government will:

- Continue working with the Australian National University to secure more medical student training places in the ACT with a priority on those additional places being for local students.
- Work with industrial representatives and the medical practitioner workforce to deliver a new enterprise agreement that is equitable, supports competitive remuneration that makes them some of the highest paid directly employed medical practitioners in the country.
- Focus on safe work practices in the medical profession that support the delivery of health services and wellbeing for the future.
- Continue working with Commonwealth, state and territory counterparts to streamline pathways into Australia for specialist international medical graduates with initial priority on the four specialty areas of anaesthesia, general practice, psychiatry and obstetrics and gynaecology.
- Explore a single employer model and/or other incentives for Registrars in General Practice to encourage them to take up specialist training in General Practice.

Supporting health workers that support our health services

ACT Labor is committed to supporting low-paid workers to ensure they have secure employment and wages that mean they don't get left behind with the increased cost of living. An ACT Labor Government will insource cleaning services at Canberra Health Services to support these essential health workers to be directly employed by the ACT Government.

A learning health system

Canberra Hospital is the only tertiary trauma hospital between Melbourne and Sydney and supports the complex acute care needs of surrounding NSW as well as ACT residents. It continues to grow in importance as a teaching hospital and location for health and medical research.

Canberra is also home to world-class universities, including the Australian National University (ANU) and University of Canberra (UC) that train our future and current healthcare workforce and undertake cutting-edge research.

ACT Labor will continue to support a teaching and learning health service that is a world leader in research and training for all health workers, by expanding access to resources to support world-class research including a research data warehouse and tools to assist health researchers to complete their work.

Health infrastructure

ACT Labor is the party that prioritises and builds hospitals and health infrastructure for Canberra's future. We delivered the \$660 million Canberra Hospital Expansion in this term of Government, building on our proven track record of delivering hospital infrastructure. We are the party that delivered the Centenary Hospital for Women and Children, the University of Canberra Hospital and new health facilities right across Canberra, including the popular and successful nurse-led Walk-in Centres.

A re-elected Labor Government will continue our focus on delivering a new more than \$1 billion northside hospital. We will begin construction of the new hospital building in the next term of government as part of the exciting new Bruce Health and Sports Precinct.

We have already commenced planning and design of enabling and early works for the new northside hospital campus. We will build on the successful consultation for the Canberra Hospital expansion and continue to work closely with health workers, consumers and carers to deliver a hospital that will support Canberra's future healthcare needs.

The new northside hospital will include a bigger Emergency Department, Intensive Care Unit and more Operating Theatres. We will support our growing health workforce with modern state-of-the-art facilities that will include the latest medical technology and equipment.

At the Canberra Hospital we will continue to upgrade hospital facilities as part of our 20-year Master Plan to transform and modernise the campus.

We will deliver a new multi-storey car park on Yamba Drive to make it easier for staff, patients and visitors. We will explore options to work with non-government partners to deliver the new car park for the hospital, with construction expected to start in the next term. We will also continue to deliver the next stage of design and planning for new specialist and inpatient facilities on the campus. This includes continuing to plan for a new Pathology and Clinical Services building, a new inpatient facility and planning for a new mental health precinct.

In the community we will map community-based health service infrastructure to support the development of a Community Health Infrastructure Master Plan with input from the community sector to ensure we are delivering community health infrastructure and services that meet the needs of Canberrans.

To support Labor's commitment to deliver more health services in the community, a re-elected Labor Government will build four new health centres in South Tuggeranong, the Inner South, North Gungahlin and West Belconnen. Labor will also expand the planned North Gungahlin Health Centre in Casey to include spaces for community organisations. This could include information sessions, parents' groups and classes to promote health and wellbeing. We will also deliver the new West Belconnen Health Centre in Macnamara to support the growing population in Ginninderry and West Belconnen.

A re-elected Labor Government will also deliver a medical imaging facility at Belconnen Health Centre, co-located with the Walk-in Centre, enabling x-ray and ultrasound onsite.

Expanded services across our public hospital system

More public surgeons delivering 70,000 elective surgeries

Last election ACT Labor committed to deliver 60,000 elective surgeries over four years to 2024-25. Through this term, the public health system has faced significant adversity in delivering on this ambitious target, including managing the impacts of COVID-19 lockdowns and a surgical theatre fire at the then Calvary Public Hospital Bruce in December 2022. Our teams have worked hard in partnership with private providers to limit the impacts of these challenges to keep us on track to delivering this significant commitment.

This election, with the delivery of the Critical Services Building and North Canberra Hospital now part of an integrated public hospital system, a re-elected Labor Government will deliver 70,000 elective surgeries over the four years to 2028-29. We will do this by hiring more specialists in our public system to deliver more surgeries in a sustainable, efficient and effective way. This will increase our public hospital system's medical workforce and mean we can deliver more care across our new world-class facilities. More specialists will provide more paediatric procedures – especially ear, nose and throat – to reduce the risk of developmental delay and chronic recurring illness, with a focus on children at higher risk of poor outcomes. We will also increase the number of bariatric surgeries we complete in the public hospital system to support better outcomes for Canberrans.

A re-elected Labor Government will support innovation in person-centered care in the delivery of elective surgery, building on the success of the Enhanced Recovery After Surgery and GLAD programs. These programs have supported consumer needs pre- and post-surgery to ensure they could go home sooner and with fewer complications. We know any operation can be a scary time for a consumer and their loved ones, that's why ACT Labor will develop a person-centered elective surgery plan that supports consumers to access these programs and their elective surgery in ways that supports their preparation and rehabilitation following surgery.

Part of this innovation in elective surgery practices will be the introduction of robotic surgery with an investment in modern technology that reduces complications and promotes surgical techniques that enable consumers to go home faster. More efficient elective surgery means we can perform more operations and increase bed capacity across our health services.

Expanding endoscopy procedures and appointments within an increased workforce

During this term ACT Labor has been focused on increasing access to public endoscopy services. We delivered more endoscopy capacity at North Canberra Hospital with the refurbishment of suites that will deliver even more endoscopy procedures in the Territory and work is underway to deliver new endoscopy suites and outpatient rooms at Canberra Hospital. If re-elected, an ACT Labor Government would build on this strong track record and significantly expand our endoscopy services across the public system, meaning more specialists and nurses delivering more appointments and procedures.

We will also look at new models of delivering endoscopy procedures including investigating the introduction of nurse sedationists and potentially endoscopists. This will free up our specialists for more appointments and complex work, providing more options for consumers who need these services.

More specialists to increase access to cardiac care

A re-elected ACT Labor Government would boost cardiac care in our public hospital system, delivering more care, more quickly for Canberrans. This investment would take advantage of the new state-of-the-art Critical Services Building and deliver a significant uplift in multidisciplinary care, more specialists and nurses staffing a Cardiac Catheter Laboratory and additional Coronary Care Unit beds to care for patients undergoing procedures.

Rehabilitation services

ACT Labor will further expand rehabilitation and community-based services at the University of Canberra Hospital, including the Brindabella Day Service. We will continue to work with the University of Canberra to deliver advances to rehabilitation robot services, including staff training, teaching and research, alongside delivery of clinical services to consumers that will support better health outcomes after illness or injury. This will include advanced allied health positions that will also support career pathways for our allied health workforce and innovation in our health service.

We will deliver expanded movement disorder services including establishing a community-based Parkinson's Disease service for patients in the ACT with an additional Advanced Practice Nurse position in the Brindabella Day Service able to facilitate integrated care for people living with Parkinson's. We will also ensure the highly valued multidisciplinary Neuromuscular Clinic that was established in the last term of Government continues with ongoing support to grow into the future. We will work with key stakeholders in these areas to ensure these services connect with acute care, primary care and community organisations to support consumers to access the treatment they need.

We will continue the Long COVID Clinic at the University of Canberra Hospital including our partnership with the University of Canberra. We will also investigate expanding the scope of this service to provide ongoing support to people with ME/CFS when specialist support is required.

Emergency care

The ACT Emergency Departments have seen significant improvement in performance over this term of government. In 2023-24 our emergency departments have consistently performed in line with or better than other health systems across the country. Comparisons with peer hospitals have also shown Canberra Hospital continues to be among the best performing in the country for emergency care.

Building on this work, a re-elected Labor Government will continue to increase emergency department capacity with additional Paediatric Emergency Department beds and strengthening streaming of older people through our emergency departments, supporting the needs of older people who are more at risk of complications such as delirium.

ACT Labor will also deliver a phlebotomy workforce in the Canberra Hospital Emergency Department to facilitate early access to pathology that would reduce wait times and earlier results to facilitate treatment and care faster. This will support consumers and patient flow in Canberra Hospital's emergency department. We will also investigate introducing this service at the North Canberra Hospital.

We will also deliver a Territory-wide Operations Centre that uses the latest technology to support consumers to access the right care, at the right time and in the right place. This will mean we can move consumers through our hospitals faster to improve their experiences and improve bed capacity. The Canberra Hospital Operations Centre has already improved performance and we will build on this work in consultation with the workforce to establish a Territory-wide approach.

Rapid Access Clinics

A re-elected Labor Government will explore the introduction of rapid access clinics to our specialty services that will support unwell consumers to access a rapid review and management clinic without needing to go to the Emergency Department. This will support the Canberra community with faster access to specialty care and enable general practitioners to have their patients reviewed when they think they are deteriorating in the community.

Better care in the community

Labor has a strong track record of delivering more care in the community in partnership with health providers across Canberra. We have always recognised the critical role of primary care in keeping people healthy, preventing and managing chronic disease and helping people stay out of hospital.

ACT Labor recognises the challenge that Canberrans face accessing affordable appointments with general practitioners. Throughout this term the ACT Labor Government has made significant investments to ensure the most vulnerable in our community are able to access primary care, through partnerships with providers including Companion House, Directions Health Services, the Junction Youth Health Service and Meridian. We have also delivered a primary care pilot in partnership with the Commonwealth Government, supporting people with chronic disease to ensure regular access and treatment by a trusted general practice.

Delivering more bulk billing appointments

Building on our investments and recognising the challenges of accessing affordable appointments, a re-elected Labor Government will establish an \$11 million fund to encourage more general practice bulk billing, so more Canberrans can access vital primary health care.

We will provide financial support for new bulk billing general practices to open in the ACT and for existing bulk billing practices to expand. This will include supporting construction, refurbishment and expansion of bulk billing practices.

This fund will also assist general practices that commit to bulk-billing children with the costs of running a practice – supporting Canberra families with the cost of living while ensuring all children can access healthcare when they need it. This fund will be developed in consultation with Capital Health Network, GPs and practice owners to ensure it provides meaningful support for things like hiring multidisciplinary staff, expanding services and engaging in integrated care arrangements.

We will review after-hours access to primary care, including through the Canberra After Hours Locum Service (CALMS) to support more bulk billed services after hours, particularly for babies under the age of one where Walk-in Centres cannot provide care.

Supporting the professional development and wellbeing of our primary care workforce

A re-elected Labor Government will work with the primary care workforce and professional bodies to co-design recruitment and retention initiatives that will support the GP workforce.

We will establish a \$4 million Professional Development and Wellbeing Fund for primary care. This program will help to attract GP Registrars in the ACT, support the wellbeing of the primary care workforce and create opportunities for GPs and other primary care professionals to participate in research, education and professional development.

In addition, Canberra Health Services will support general practice placements for junior doctors who are considering future specialty pathways to encourage them to consider further training in general practice in the ACT.

We will also establish a territory-wide GP Liaison Unit, bringing together teams from both public acute hospitals. We'll hire additional staff for the unit to enhance the engagement between Canberra Health Services and our local primary care sector.

A re-elected Labor Government will work with GP representative organisations and the Chief Health Officer to support an increased scope of practice for GPs, including an expanded role in the diagnosis and treatment of ADHD for GPs with an interest in this area.

These measures will ease pressure on GPs and give them more capacity to focus on what they do best – providing person-centered, quality healthcare to Canberrans.

Expanded scope of practice for pharmacists

Community pharmacists play a key role in supporting the health and wellbeing of our community. They are a trusted and valued part of our overall health system. A re-elected Labor Government will expand the scope of practice for community pharmacists so they can provide more evidence-based care.

Noting the ACT's place in the broader region, we will seek to align pharmacy scope of practice with that in regional NSW where possible. In addition to the conditions that can be treated under the existing pilot in the ACT, we will work to expand pharmacists' scope of practice to include the following conditions:

- Acute otitis media (middle ear infection) and externa (outer ear infection);
- Acute minor wound management;
- Acute nausea and vomiting;
- Gastro-oesophageal reflux and gastro-oesophageal reflux disease;
- Mild to moderate acne; and
- Mild, acute musculoskeletal pain.

The ACT's model will also aim to include elements that are being piloted in regional NSW locations, such as protocol/structured prescribing as part of chronic disease management programs to continue to build the evidence base for scope of practice expansions. In addition, we will work to enable pharmacists to administer vaccines for people of all ages, as clinically appropriate.

As is the case in NSW, pharmacists in the ACT will be required to undertake mandatory training before they are approved to provide expanded scope services.

This will provide Canberrans with easier access to more healthcare options and help reduce pressure on the health system.

Delivering better care closer to home

Specialist services in our new Health Centres and supporting Community Care

ACT Labor has been focused on expanding care closer to home in the ACT. We delivered an expansion of the Hospital in the Home program and the GRACE program supporting Residential Aged Care residents to receive more care at home. We delivered the Weston Creek Imaging Service that has supported thousands of Canberrans to access bulk-billed imaging services in the community, many of those presentations coming from the Walk-in Centre to have all their treatment in one place. We know this supports good consumer outcomes, is more cost-effective and prevents people from needing to go to the hospital.

We will expand care closer to home through our four new health centres in South Tuggeranong, Inner South, North Gungahlin and West Belconnen that will integrate care across our health system. This will include connecting with Hospital in the Home services, more specialist support for consumers to safely access care in the community, and virtual care facilities. We have been working closely with the community in each region to understand the services that will best meet their needs.

In South Tuggeranong we will deliver a facility that supports access to paediatric specialist care, pathology, dementia care, diabetes clinics, falls and falls injury prevention, chronic disease programs and a virtual care space to access even more specialist services closer to where people live.

In the Inner South we will ensure more support for chronic disease management and continue to work with the community on the design and delivery of multidisciplinary and specialist services, including public dental services.

In North Gungahlin we will provide specialist services for chronic and complex disease management and space for community organisations to deliver programs in the community.

We will continue to map Community Care provided by Canberra Health Services across our six Community Health Centres and other community-based health services that are offered from Child and Family Centres and other locations across the ACT.

Public imaging in Belconnen

A re-elected Labor Government will build on the success of our first community imaging service and provide Canberrans with easier access to free x-rays and ultrasounds on the northside through a new public medical imaging service in Belconnen. The medical imaging service will be co-located with the Belconnen Walk-in Centre, supporting people who present to the Walk-in Centre with access to medical imaging immediately, without needing to book another service or visit a different location.

Providing more imaging services in the community will help to free up the hospital imaging services and reduce wait times for patients with urgent and complex needs. Canberrans will also be able to book an x-ray or ultrasound through the Canberra Health Services booking system or be referred by a GP.

More nurses in schools

A re-elected Labor Government will establish nurse-led clinics in four public colleges to provide more access to health services for young Canberrans. The nurse-led clinics will be staffed by Advance Practice Nurses who will provide preventive health services and education, mental health and sexual and reproductive health services as well as treatment and care for wounds, concussions, minor burns and other minor injuries and illnesses. Nursing teams will be located full-time at the college clinics and conduct visits and health sessions across other public colleges on a regular basis.

They will also work with an expanded School Youth Health Nurse Program. We will ensure every public high school in the ACT is able to access a School Youth Health Nurse by growing the number of nurses that work in this program so more young people can get health advice and support. We know they are providing essential services to young Canberrans and work closely with School Psychologists and other allied health professionals to provide comprehensive health promotion and early intervention to students in the ACT.

Better care for older Canberrans

We know that demand for health services will continue to grow with our ageing population. Supporting healthy ageing and access to health services at the right time and in the right place is essential.

A re-elected Labor Government will develop a pathway for older adults throughout Canberra Health Services to ensure we can support positive health outcomes at each point of care for older people when they need to access our healthcare services. This will include working with consumers, carers and key stakeholders to map and report on the journey of older adults through our health system and the ways we can support improvements in care.

We will scope a program that supports acute and emergency care that can be delivered in the community for older people based on the successful models implemented in other jurisdictions. This includes a supported emergency department step-down pathway and Hospital in the Home services that can support more older Canberrans to remain at home with support when they are unwell.

We will build on the successful work of the Centre of Excellence in the Care of Older People to deliver expanded services in the GRACE and RADAR program, and a continuation of the SPICE program following funding from the Commonwealth Government to support this work. We will also ensure further research and best practice innovations are supported as part of an expanded Centre of Excellence in the Care of Older People to meet their health and wellbeing needs in the ACT, particularly those with complex healthcare needs.

A re-elected Labor Government will continue to work with our tertiary partners, key stakeholders and across Government to deliver these innovations and support healthy ageing in the community.

Best Start for Canberra's families

ACT Labor has a comprehensive plan to make the ACT the best place to have a baby and to support good health and wellbeing for children, young people and their families.

We delivered *Maternity in Focus: The ACT Public Maternity System Plan 2022-2032*, the *Best Start for Canberra's Children: The First 1000 Days Strategy* and the *Child and Adolescent Clinical Services Plan 2023-2030* in this term of Government.

A re-elected Labor Government will continue delivering on these plans to ensure we are supporting the best start for Canberra's families and making it easier for Canberrans to access the care they need.

To support the best start in life for Canberra families a re-elected Labor Government will partner with Roundabout Canberra to provide a Baby Bundle to babies born to first-time parents who are residents of the ACT. We will also establish a program with Roundabout Canberra to provide a Baby Bundle to vulnerable families that might be supporting babies in care or families that need a bit more assistance. Baby Bundles will include essential items and information to support the safety, health and wellbeing of a newborn and their family.

ACT Labor will also increase access to evidence-based prenatal and postnatal parenting programs and playgroups to increase support beyond parents with a first child to parents with diverse needs, parents with disability and culturally and linguistically diverse families.

We know it is difficult for families when children need to access highly specialised health care interstate and that is why we will review the Interstate Patient Travel Assistance Scheme (IPTAS) to reduce administrative burden and upfront costs for children and families that need to travel for care.

A re-elected Labor Government will also establish a low-cost public IVF service in the term of Government. Scoping work is currently underway and if re-elected we will continue to explore options for making fertility treatment more affordable.

To ensure the ACT is the best place to have a baby we will:

- Expand the continuity of midwifery care program over the term of Government to support our ambition of 50 per cent of women and pregnant people being able to access the continuity of care program by 2028.
- Implement Phase Two of Mandated Minimum Nurse/Midwife-to-Patient Ratios across the Canberra Hospital and North Canberra Hospital maternity services. This includes counting the baby in the ratio to support even better care for parents and babies and to ensure the safety and wellbeing of our health workforce.
- Provide specialist services for parents experiencing perinatal mental illness by establishing a perinatal mental health residential mother and baby unit and open a peer-supported safe space in a community setting.
- Work with Winnunga Nimmityjah and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community to co-design and establish a Birthing on Country program for First Nations families.

- Work with the community to ensure we are supporting holistic wraparound Aboriginal antenatal and postnatal services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children.
- Pilot a bereavement companion program at the Canberra Hospital that is co-designed with consumers.
- Co-design a second early pregnancy unit as part of the new more than \$1 billion northside hospital.
- Co-design with midwives and consumers a standalone or alongside Birth Centre as part of the new northside hospital redevelopment.
- Continue to participate in the Whole Nine Months public health campaign to reduce the rate of pre-term births.
- Continue to progress key priorities in *Maternity in Focus: The ACT Public Maternity System Plan 2022-2032* and develop the second *Maternity in Focus Action Plan 2026-2029*.

Improved paediatric care for children and young people

ACT Labor will always focus on delivering the best care for children and young people. Throughout this term of Government, there has been a focus on significantly expanding community based and hospital based paediatric services for our youngest residents.

We have delivered a paediatric hospital in the home service, increased allied health staffing in the Centenary Hospital for Women and Children, funded a new multi-disciplinary service for the community paediatrics team and co-designed and delivered a new Paediatric Liaison and Navigation Service.

We have made significant investments in new facilities and services for children. ACT Labor completed the expansion of the Centenary Hospital for Women and Children that provided refurbished paediatric wards and delivered a new Adolescent Ward and Adolescent Mental Health Day Service. We have worked closely with the community and clinicians to open the new Critical Services Building at Canberra Hospital that includes a dedicated Paediatric Emergency Department, paediatric spaces in the new Intensive Care Unit and welcoming family lounges across services.

In Government we developed with an expert panel a Child and Adolescent Clinical Services Plan 2023-2030, which will guide our focus over the coming six years and which ACT Labor is committed to implementing.

To support and build on the significant progress made during this term, ACT Labor has made a significant commitment to support our paediatric services.

We will significantly expand community paediatric services by establishing a new hub at Canberra Health Services in Molonglo, which will include specialist medical treatment for developmental delay and behavioural challenges. This will be supported by advanced practice nurses and allied health services such as physiotherapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy and psychology.

We will deliver additional paediatric specialist care in the new South Tuggeranong Health Centre that will support local families to access this care closer to home.

Taking advantage of our new facilities at the Canberra Hospital we will establish a Close Observation Unit in the High Care Paediatric Unit at Canberra Hospital with additional staff and dedicated specialists to provide a higher level of care for unwell children and young people. This Unit will work closely with the Paediatric Critical Care team to provide a higher level of care for children that need acute support.

A re-elected Labor Government will also expand the Paediatric Emergency Department in the Critical Services Building to continue growing emergency care for children. We will also work with clinicians, the community and stakeholders to design appropriate paediatric services for the new northside hospital including dedicated paediatric emergency department spaces.

We will fully establish a formal Acute Clinical Care Child Network that includes the two hospital emergency departments, our Walk-in Centres, general practitioners, other acute primary care providers like Winnunga Nimmityjah and general paediatric services that will be supported by an education team to upskill more clinicians in the care of unwell paediatric patients.

We will establish a Women and Children's Research, Innovation and Development Fund that will support health workers in the ACT to develop services, research and their own skills in caring for the ACT's children and young people.

Mental Health

ACT Labor has been focused on improving the health and wellbeing of Canberrans by investing in programs to improve the mental health of the community, including additional funding for the community sector and public mental health services to increase capacity across the system.

ACT Labor has pushed Greens Ministers to deliver action on mental health support and reform. We've made substantial investments to better support the mental health of young people and have significantly reduced emergency department waiting times for people presenting in a mental health crisis. There is more work to do and ACT Labor will continue to prioritise support to address the growing mental health needs of the community.

Mental health support in our Walk-in Centres

To provide Canberrans with more accessible mental health support, we will introduce advanced practice mental health nurses and mental health nurse practitioners in Walk-in Centres.

Specially trained nurses will provide treatment and a safe space that supports people with their physical and mental health needs. This means more mental health services in the community for extended hours, taking the pressure of our emergency departments and providing an accessible option for people who don't need to be in hospital.

Better mental health supports for young Canberrans

We will expand the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service to support children and young people experiencing moderate to severe mental health difficulties.

A re-elected Labor Government will also increase funding to mental health community sector partners so they can continue delivering critical community mental health programs. We'll fund services we know are working, like MOST, WOKE, Stepping Stones and Youth Aware of Mental Health, and we'll support the ACT Child and Youth Mental Health Sector Alliance to continue its work to build a better integrated youth mental health system.

We will deliver a new facility for the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service – CAMHS Cottage – a day program that supports young people with moderate to severe mental illness.

Working with the community, a re-elected Labor Government will also investigate options to tackle loneliness by supporting activities that build human connection and co-designing a social prescribing program with GPs and youth health services.

Delivering better and more integrated public mental health services

To ensure our services are getting the best possible outcomes, we will develop and implement a co-designed consumer-centred public mental health services plan by the end of 2026, which will aim to improve integration and care pathways across the service system, including pathways between alcohol and other drugs services and mental health, suicide prevention and postvention, primary health and

physical healthcare services. This will also include investigation of options to expand public mental health services for people with intellectual disability, including children and young people.

We will work across the region, particularly Capital Health Network, to ensure we are also integrating services in the community sector and supporting high quality outcomes for Canberrans experiencing a mental illness. We will also ensure specific support is available for children whose parents experience mental illness, especially young carers.

We know that delivering mental health services is a core part of the public health system, so we will work across our public health services to upskill health workers to provide mental health support and understand the impact of trauma on people's lives.

A re-elected Labor Government will also work with unions and the workforce to review and increase the capacity of Community Mental Health Teams and the Home Assessment and Acute Response Team and investigate other models of intervention for people experiencing a mental health crisis in the community. We will also trial a mental health rapid assessment unit at the Canberra Hospital that will support consumer-centred care for people presenting in crisis outside of the Emergency Department.

ACT Labor will also explore the establishment of a Mental Health Hospital in the Home service to support more consumers to access acute mental health care when they need it without needing to stay in an acute inpatient ward.

We will work with the consumers, the mental health workforce and key stakeholders to deliver an expanded mental health, alcohol and other drug and co-morbidity peer workforce across ACT public health services. Working with non-government partners, the ACT's public mental health system will be better equipped to support consumers whose complex lives and challenges mean they are at risk of falling through the gaps in a siloed service system.

A re-elected Labor Government will also undertake detailed design of a new and expanded Mental Health Precinct on the campus as part of the Canberra Hospital Master Plan implementation and we will work with consumers, carers and the mental health workforce to design new mental health facilities as part of the new northside hospital.

Better mental health supports in the community

Our community sector provides critical support outside the public mental health system and peer support is often a vital part of a person's mental health journey. We will investigate options to establish a peer-led acute mental health supports as an alternative to hospitalisation and we will work with the community mental health sector to re-establish the evidence-based ACT Recovery College to provide an education-based mental health support service where people with lived experience of mental ill-health teach others with lived experience general life and psychological skills

In addition to the mental health, alcohol and drug, and co-morbidity peer workforce across ACT public health services, we will expand this network to include peer workers in the community sector.

And we will work with the Commonwealth to develop psychosocial foundational supports, including for family mental health support, early psychosis youth services, mental health respite and carer support, as well as an evidence-based early intervention service aimed at capacity-building.

A health system for all Canberrans

The Barr Labor Government has an unmatched record when it comes to building a more inclusive city for all Canberrans.

Across our health system, we know that some consumers can feel excluded, making them less likely to access the care they need in a timely way. For others, the lack of a specific service or financial barriers to access can cause unnecessary hardship. A re-elected Labor Government will continue to act to build an inclusive health system that meets the needs of all Canberrans.

Building on the success of our co-designed Paediatric Liaison and Navigation Service and Liaison and Navigation Service for adults we will support a project to scope an individual consumer advocacy service. As part of this work, we will negotiate with the Commonwealth Government to ensure this service meets the needs of Canberrans when accessing care across the entire health system.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Canberrans continue to experience poorer health outcomes compared with other Canberrans. ACT Labor is committed to working to close the ongoing gap in health and life expectancy.

We are committed to delivering the Government's commitments under the National Agreement on Closing the Gap and the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Agreement. This includes working to improve health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Canberrans by strengthening the ACT Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation (ACCO) sector. ACT Labor acknowledges that community control is an important form of self-determination and that ACCOs often deliver better and more trusted services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. ACCOs are critical partners in improving health and wellbeing outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Canberrans.

That is why, over the last four years, the ACT Labor Government has made significant investments to support the ACT ACCOs, as well as to improve mainstream public health services to ensure they are culturally appropriate. We have partnered with Winnunga Nimmityjah Aboriginal Health and Community Services through the construction of a dedicated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residential rehabilitation facility in Watson, and established a \$3.86 million fund to support ACCOs to establish, upskill and grow sustainably.

The ACT Labor Government has also been working with consumers, community organisations, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders and other stakeholders to co-design an ACT specific Birthing on Country model, to improve health and birthing outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander pregnant women and their babies.

We have also expanded the Aboriginal Liaison Service at Canberra Health Services and co-designed, and delivered the first stages of, a new Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Lounge as part of the Canberra Hospital Expansion project, to make the hospital environment more culturally safe and supportive for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

If re-elected, ACT Labor will build on this work and continue to take steps to improve health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the ACT.

A re-elected Labor Government will:

- Work with Winnunga Nimmityjah and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community to co-design and establish a Birthing on Country program for First Nations families.
- Work with community to ensure we are supporting holistic wraparound Aboriginal antenatal and postnatal services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children.
- Continue to work in partnership with the community to implement the recommendations of the 2023 review into the Ngunnawal Bush Healing Farm and to develop a clear plan to transition the Farm to residential service delivery and community control, with the aim of establishing a community-led governance body within the first 12 months of the next term of government.
- Deliver the ACCO Establishment and Expansion Fund to provide additional financial support to ACT ACCOs to boost their organisational capacity and capability.
- Complete the expanded Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Lounge at Canberra Hospital.
- Continue to work in partnership with Winnunga Nimmityjah to complete the construction of its new dedicated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residential rehabilitation facility in Watson.
- Continue to work in genuine partnership with the ACCO sector and will engage with the wider Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community to identify opportunities for further investment and partnerships in health service delivery and to improve access to primary healthcare.

More accessible services for culturally and linguistically diverse Canberrans

The ACT is proud of our multicultural community and welcomes new residents from across the world. This is reflected in our health services and the dedicated public health workers who deliver exceptional care every day. But we also know that some people face barriers and challenges accessing the healthcare they need.

Over this term we have continued work to improve the accessibility of our health services for all Canberrans. If re-elected, ACT Labor will continue to improve accessibility of the ACT's Digital Health Record for languages other than English to ensure all Canberrans can benefit from this revolutionary system for our healthcare workers and consumers.

We have increased funding for Companion House to provide free primary care and counselling services for refugees and asylum seekers and will continue to support this vital service if re-elected.

ACT Labor also committed to improving health service access for diverse populations through a multicultural health care hub in the Gungahlin Community Health Centre that will be developed with cultural and linguistically diverse communities. This will include a scoping study that investigates the needs of multicultural communities when accessing health care services in the ACT.

More LGBTIQ+ inclusive health services

ACT Labor is committed to making Canberra the most welcoming and inclusive city in Australia for the LGBTIQ+ community. We recognise that LGBTIQ+ people can experience stigma, stereotyping, discrimination, harassment, exclusion and other barriers to accessing health services. There are also specific health issues that can occur for LGBTIQ+ people, which may not be adequately or appropriately addressed by mainstream health services. Unacceptably, this can result in poorer health outcomes for LGBTIQ+ Canberrans.

The ACT Labor Government has delivered the LGBTIQ+ Health Scoping Study and invested more than \$9.7 million to deliver and implement the recommendations from the Scoping Study.

We have:

- Delivered legislative protections for children and young people born with variations in their sex characteristics, protecting them from unnecessary and harmful medical interventions without their consent.
- Established wraparound psychosocial support services for intersex people and their families at Canberra Health Services.
- Delivered a new Adult Gender Service in the Canberra Sexual Health Centre at Canberra Hospital, providing gender affirming hormone therapy for trans and gender diverse Canberrans aged 16 and over.
- Funded the establishment of a new Pediatric Gender Service at Canberra Hospital, which is expected to open soon.
- Completed co-design for a new, community-based gender-focused health service.

A re-elected Labor Government will build on these achievements by:

- Delivering a peer-led, community-based gender-focused health service, which will provide trans and gender diverse Canberrans with access to critical gender affirming care closer to home in a safe and supportive environment.
- Continuing to advocate for the Commonwealth Therapeutic Goods Administration to move to an individual risk assessment or equivalent model that removes discrimination in blood donation policy for the LGBTIQ+ community, while supporting the “plasma pathway” that enables more people to donate this live-saving blood product.
- Continuing to support capacity building in the health sector to ensure medical professionals across the sector understand the specific needs of the LGBTIQ+ community, particularly the trans and gender diverse community.
- Establishing a low-cost public assisted reproductive technology service that will not discriminate against LGBTIQ+ people or single people.

Women's health

ACT Labor will continue our strong record of delivering on Women's health by delivering more services and support for women in Canberra. We are the party that delivered the Women's Health Service and the Canberra Endometriosis Centre. We are the party that will continue to address medical misogyny alongside our Federal Labor colleagues.

A re-elected Labor Government will:

- Expand the Women's Health Service to more locations across the ACT. The Women's Health Service is run by women for women, providing dedicated health care in a supportive and safe environment. The expansion of this service will mean more women's health general practitioners, advanced practice nurses and allied health professionals closer to home.
- Establish a high-risk breast cancer clinic at North Canberra Hospital, working with clinicians, researchers, specialists, consumers and advocates to design the clinic and its services. This will ensure Canberrans who are at high risk of breast cancers will have better access to specialised screening, treatment and support services.
- Expand gynaecology services in the ACT with more nurses and allied health workers and continuing the focus on hiring more specialists. We will specifically focus on expanding the Canberra Endometriosis Centre and ensure our services are working closely with the new pelvic pain clinic at Sexual Health and Family Planning ACT, primary care providers and private specialists to ensure women with endometriosis and pelvic pain get the care they need when they need it.
- We will continue to support the health workforce with training and development to identify and treat concerns that overwhelmingly impact women. This includes training on pelvic pain, ovarian cysts and endometriosis.
- We know women are more likely to experience chronic pain and conditions which can often go undiagnosed or untreated. We will develop a Chronic Pain Services Plan with consumers, carers and stakeholders and boost funding and expand services to help people address and manage their chronic pain and complex health conditions. This includes expanding the Pain Management Services, Spinal Pain Service and Community Care Physiotherapy Service to support Canberrans with better access to multidisciplinary care and specialised treatment.

Better support at end of life

We know that Canberrans value having end-of-life choices. That's why we worked as a priority to legislate for voluntary assisted dying during this term of government and committed more than \$19 million to implement voluntary assisted dying over the next four years.

A re-elected Labor Government will also expand investment in palliative care and will increase end-of-life options, allowing people to get the care they need in ways that work for them, including by increasing home-based services, establishing a specific service for end-of-life supports for First Nations people, and establishing a paediatric palliative care service. We will also help people understand the care they can access by creating an end-of-life care navigator service, supporting families and carers by supporting a respite hub for people who wish to die at home, and increasing after-hours access to palliative care medicines.

We will:

- Support Palliative Care ACT to expand Leo's Place, the non-clinical hub for people with life-limiting illness who wish to die at home.
- Continue to increase capacity at Clare Holland House and expand home-based palliative care services, including allied health supports.
- Establish a paediatric palliative care service.
- Establish a First Nations end-of-life care service.
- Improve after-hours access to palliative care medicines.
- Establish an end-of-life care navigator service.
- Remunerate clinicians for their time to undertake VAD training.

Sexual and reproductive health

ACT Labor has a strong record on supporting sexual and reproductive health care rights. During this term of Government, we have provided access to completely free medical and surgical abortions for Canberrans and expanded the range of health care providers who can provide medical abortions.

We have also legislated to protect the rights of donor-conceived people and people undergoing assisted reproductive technology. In the next term of government, a re-elected Labor government would investigate options to provide a low-cost public assisted reproductive technology service.

We will also:

- Develop a sexual and reproductive health strategy that addresses issues of intersectionality for culturally and linguistically diverse people, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, the LGBTIQ+ community, and vulnerable groups.
- Work with the Commonwealth and other jurisdictions to implement a national support, information and referral model for sexual and reproductive healthcare services and sexual health literacy.
- Implement increased BBV testing options in community settings and introduce new testing options to increase access for hard-to-reach populations.
- Expand the highly valued Canberra Health Services Sexual Health Centre service to the northside of Canberra through a hub and spoke model that will support more Canberrans to access sexual health services without needing to travel to the Canberra Hospital.

Alcohol and other drug services

ACT Labor will always treat alcohol and drug use as a health issue rather than a criminal issue because we recognise that reducing harm delivers better outcomes for individuals, families and the community.

ACT Labor in Government has led the nation in placing harm minimisation at the center of all alcohol and drug policy. In line with this policy approach, this term Labor implemented nation-leading drug law reform, established the nation's first fixed-site drug checking service, and delivered a significant increase in investment for our alcohol and drug sector. In Government we also completed the first *Drug Strategy Action Plan 2018-2021* and codesigned the *Drug Strategy Action Plan 2022-2026*.

This term we have partnered with Winnunga Nimmityjah Aboriginal Health and Community Services to commence construction of the \$50 million Watson Health Precinct delivering Canberra's first Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residential rehabilitation facility. This new precinct will be completed in 2025 and will also deliver purpose-built new facilities for Ted Noffs youth rehabilitation services and CatholicCare's youth residential mental health services.

A re-elected Labor Government will continue to support families and carers impacted by alcohol, tobacco and other drugs. We will also continue to work toward establishing a supervised drug consumption facility, tailored to the unique circumstances of the ACT.

ACT Labor has a nation-leading track record that we will continue if re-elected to ensure we reduce the harm associated with alcohol, tobacco and other drug (ATOD) use.

ACT Labor leads the nation on harm reduction including through the introduction drug law reform. If re-elected, we will continue to monitor these reforms to ensure they are having the intended outcomes and work with our community partners to strengthen these reforms in line with expert evidence.

We will review and extend education and training for ATOD and allied sectors, to improve knowledge sharing and address the stigma and discrimination faced by people who have experienced problematic alcohol or drug use and dependence, including by establishing a formal network for mental health and ATOD sector workers.

We will also explore opportunities for greater co-ordination and collaboration across government, non-government organisations and people with lived experience to address the needs of people with co-occurring issues or complex needs, including ATOD use and mental health, suicidal ideation, family and domestic violence, trauma, homelessness, unemployment, and gambling harm.

Labor recognises the challenges with reducing the impact of nicotine in our communities. This term has seen significant coordinated action between all Australian governments to reduce the impact e-cigarettes. If re-elected, we will explore further opportunities to increase access to targeted nicotine cessation supports, especially for young people, people with mental illness, and other groups experiencing high prevalence of tobacco and e-cigarette use.

ACT Labor recognises that alcohol can have a negative impact on peoples lives. Acknowledging the role that Government can play minimising the harm from alcohol, a re-elected Labor Government will review

the Liquor Advisory Board and alcohol advertising laws to ensure that they are meeting community expectations. We will also reform online alcohol sales given the growing evidence of the impact and harm that they can cause to provide further protections for the community.

A re-elected Labor Government would also:

- Provide pathways into supported long-term accommodation for people impacted by alcohol and other drug dependence.
- Explore opportunities, working with Capital Health Network and the Commonwealth Government, to improve access to primary healthcare services for people experiencing issues with ATOD – for example, through increasing the number of medical professionals trained as Endorsed Prescribers for opioid maintenance treatment.
- Support peer worker development programs, including through establishment of a formal ACT ATOD peer worker network and exploring potential pathways to formal qualifications for ATOD peer support work.
- Continue to support harm reduction by providing police officers with naloxone.