

Health

Improving the health and wellbeing of Territorians is a key priority of the Territory Government. In Budget 2008 the Territory Government makes a significant investment to improve the health of families.

\$915 million is provided for health and families – an increase in funding of 89% since 2001.

Funding Territory Hospitals

Budget 2008 provides strong support for Territory hospitals with:

- \$225 million for the Royal Darwin Hospital – up 101% since 2001
- \$113 million for Alice Springs Hospital – up 109% since 2001
- \$26.3 million for Katherine Hospital – up 86% since 2001
- \$18.8 million for Gove District Hospital – up 70% since 2001
- \$11.6 million for Tennant Creek Hospital – up 90% since 2001

Tackling Renal Health

Budget 2008 continues support for increased renal health services in the Territory, including:

- \$1.7 million to meet the increased demand for renal services and improve the number of dialysis stations available
- \$0.75 million for the management of chronic and early kidney disease to reduce the flow of people entering end stage renal disease

Strengthening Support

Budget 2008 focuses on support to access specialist health services for people in remote areas.

The Budget will provide \$2 million to strengthen the Northern Territory Patient Assistance Travel Scheme, including:

- doubling the current commitment, adding \$1 million for a family member to travel with patients going interstate for surgery or intensive treatment
- \$225 000 to increase the commercial accommodation allowance from \$33 to \$35 per night – the equal highest in Australia
- \$60 000 to introduce a \$40 voucher for the return trip between the airport and accommodation if interstate

Improving Core Services

As part of the Australian Health Care Agreement, additional funding will be provided to enhance hospital core services, including:

- \$1.7 million for radiology services
- \$0.4 million to enhance respiratory services
- \$0.9 million for specialist dental chairs at the Royal Darwin Hospital

Health

Improving Facilities

This year significant work will continue to improve health care facilities across the Territory.

Budget 2008 allocates \$4.5 million to construct a new Milingimbi Health Centre to improve primary health services to the community and surrounding region.

New sobering-up shelters will be built in Tennant Creek and Katherine at a cost of \$2.6 million, with funding provided by the Commonwealth.

\$1.7 million has been allocated to undertake the final stage of fire safety upgrade work at the Tennant Creek Hospital.

Work will continue at Alice Springs Hospital at a cost of \$12.5 million, including work for the Emergency Department.

This is on top of \$1.7 million for the construction of a joint research and educational facility on the Alice Springs Hospital campus with the Baker Medical Research Institute and the Flinders University Northern Territory Rural Clinical School.

Budget 2008 also provides \$4.2 million for continuing work on the Kalkarindji, Yirrkala and Wadey health clinics.

Oncology

Negotiations are continuing to secure a service provider to deliver a dedicated oncology unit for Territorians. In anticipation of the negotiations being finalised, the Territory Government has committed additional funding for allied health professionals as part of the new service.

Health Services

Budget 2008 provides funding of:

- \$35.15 million for mental health services
- \$54.5 million for public health services
- \$73.3 million for support services for senior Territorians, frail aged people and people with a disability
- \$124.2 million for community health services

Closing the Gap

Budget 2008 continues initiatives aimed at closing the gap in health outcomes for Indigenous Territorians including:

- \$6 million over five years, with \$1 million in 2008-09, for the delivery of antenatal care and maternal health programs to mothers
- \$0.5 million over five years for additional clinical resources in Darwin and Alice Springs to support the community based and residential alcohol and other drug withdrawal service