

ACT Budget 2018-19 has fulfilled community services expectations

The ACT Budget for 2018-19 gives a refreshing focus on Canberra's community sector. This Budget has fulfilled the ACT Government's commitment to invest in community services, inclusion, education and mental health.

Advocacy for Inclusion welcomes Budget measures, such as increased support for students with disability, investment in filling the gaps for people ineligible for the NDIS to include additional funding to individual advocacy services, increased funding for resourcing in areas like restorative practices and alternatives to the prison system.

We are pleased the ACT Government has committed \$1.1 billion over four years collectively to disability, housing, community services and mental health, particularly \$580,000 over 4 years to assisting people with disability through the justice system and additional funding to change and adapt the ACT corrective services facilities and resources. Such funding will ensure better collaboration for Advocacy for Inclusion working on the frontline and integrating people with disabilities back into the community through individual and self-advocacy measures.

Advocacy for Inclusion CEO Nicolas Lawler said that although it is a positive budget, "The devil will be in the detail as to how many of the proposed initiatives will be ultimately rolled out."

Advocacy for inclusion had recommended in the 2018-2019 Budget submission that funding is directed to frontline delivery services to greater assist people with disabilities in the justice system and child protection spaces.

This Budget is admittedly, the first that has fulfilled most or all of Advocacy for Inclusion's asks and recommendations. The ACT Government has gotten it right in 2018; we are a wealthy Territory and can afford to spend on community and social infrastructure and not just because our population is growing. We look forward to continuing the conversation with our consumers, members, communities and government while working together to put the focus back on people, in our case, people with disabilities, in the next Budget and continuing forward. With this Budget, the Barr Government have gotten it right – it is inclusive, fair and just

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