

ACT Election Commitments with Impact on Carers

Carers**ACT**

ACT Labor

- Reviewing the Mental Health Act 2015: Updates will strengthen person-centred care and better account for carer rights.
- Progressing the ACT Carers Strategy: Progressing actions under the ACT Carer Strategy and creating a second action plan will ensure that carers receive ongoing support, resources, and recognition through targeted initiatives.
- Supports for children of parents with mental illness: Introduces specific services for children whose parents experience mental illness, particularly benefiting young carers by offering them extra support.
- Review of Community Mental Health teams: Increases capacity and explores new intervention models, ensuring that mental health crises are managed more effectively within the community.
- Investment in community mental health programs: Expands evidence-based programs, including peer-led services and hospital diversion initiatives, giving you and the person you care for more localised mental health support options.
- Support for youth in justice and child protection systems: Focuses on trauma-informed care, providing continuity of care for young people, which can help carers along by offering long-term, consistent support.
- Continued funding for mental health programs: Ongoing support for critical programs such as MOST, WOKE, and Stepping Stones, helping young people access innovative services and resources that have proven to improve outcomes.
- Reducing wait times for child mental health services: Cuts waiting times and improves connections across health services, helping children and adolescents get quicker access to mental health support, which will better support you in managing care.
- Incentivised GP bulk billing: Expands access to affordable GP services, particularly for children, making regular health check-ups more accessible for carers without the financial worry.
- 800 more health workers: Improves access to healthcare professionals, reducing wait times for services like mental health and paediatric care and minimise the need for carers to travel interstate to access specialised support.
- Community paediatric services: Offers early intervention in one coordinated location, ensuring children with disabilities receive timely support and reducing the demands placed on those providing care, setting families and carers up for long-term positive outcomes.
- Increased school psychologists: 15 school psychologists or mental health practitioners and an expanded school nurse health program will make it easier and faster for young people to access the care they need to thrive during schooling and beyond.
- Walk-in Centre: Expands services that can be accessed when and where needed, making healthcare more convenient and available in the local area.

ACT Greens

- Carer Recognition Card: Offers recognition in public spaces and potential access to services or discounts for carers.
- Land for respite centre: Provides space for respite services for carers, giving them a dedicated space to rest and recharge, knowing their person is in good hands.
- Carer driven wellbeing grants: Letting carers decide how they want to rest and take a break from the caring role.
- Young carer mentorship program: Requires schools to identify young carers early, develop personalised plans, and connect them with education, career, and mental health support through a mentoring program.
- Mental Health Act update: Strengthens the recognition of carers' rights in policy, ensuring carers have more involvement in decisions that affect you and the person you care for.
- PACER program expansion: Provides an additional, safe residential option for individuals to access mental health support before reaching crisis, giving carers an emergency respite option when needed.
- Drop-in youth crisis centre: Offering children and young people in need of mental health support a safe and comfortable space to get help.

ACT Greens

- Support for emotional distress: Introduces early intervention support similar to the UK model for emotional challenges like grief or loss, helping prevent crises and providing support during periods of distress so that carers don't end up caught in the system in the long term.
- Eating disorder day program and inpatient unit: Ensures that carers supporting individuals with eating disorders have access to specialised, local treatment, making ongoing recovery at home easier.
- Free GP visits: Over 160,000 free GP visits a year will provide continuity of care for those with long-term mental health and physical conditions without financial strain.
- Accessibility grants for renters: Incentivising landlords to make necessary home modifications, giving people with disability and their carers the ability to live in housing that is more comfortable and suitable to their needs.
- Addressing 'School Can't': Centralising data collection on 'School Can't,' recognising it as a valid reason for absence, and providing schools with resources to better support students, families, and carers.
- Centre for Neurodivergence: Offers streamlined free access to assessments, diagnoses, and support, giving carers supporting neurodivergent individuals a place to access resources
- Expanded perinatal services: Improving safe, specialised options for families in need of extra care during the perinatal period
- Expanded palliative care: Enhancing care options with a new model for the 12-bed ward at Canberra Hospital, introduction of a paediatric palliative care service, and community support for families and carers using that service. Also includes funding for a research unit and advocacy for advanced directives for Voluntary Assisted Dying (VAD).

Canberra Liberals

- Increased access to GPs: Including incentivising GPs to offer after hours appointments and having GPs and additional medical imaging services in Walk-In Centres which may reduce emergency department and hospital service wait times.
- Improved access to ASD diagnosis: By increasing the age of autism spectrum disorder (ASD) assessments from 12 to 16 and including provisions for people (who are over 16 but under 25) who have been unable to access a diagnosis.
- Easier ADHD diagnosis: Training for GPs to diagnose attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and prescribe medication in 'straightforward cases' will mean less wait time and travel for specialist diagnosis, also freeing up availability of local paediatricians, psychiatrists and neurologists.
- Disability advocacy, employment grants and liaisons: Increased funding for disability advocacy services, establishment of a disability employment grants program and specific Disability Liaison Officers in hospitals.
- Reducing wait times for 'elective' surgery: Address waitlists for clinically overdue surgeries by partnering with private providers and using new facilities.
- Prioritise building the new Canberra Hospital: By not proceeding with stage 2B of the tram, the Canberra Hospital will be prioritised and built faster.
- Boosted mental health funding: Of \$10million for frontline mental health service delivery and funding for up to 7,000 additional psychology, counselling and behavioural services for ACT school children.
- Mental Health Housing: \$20million to build and manage housing for people with complex mental health issues and psychosocial disabilities, including those discharged from, or at risk of admission to mental health units.
- No-wrong-door Mental Health System: By fostering connections between mental health services and providers, including Government and community services, no one in need of support will be turned away.
- Free bus travel: Concession card holders, students and seniors will have access to free public transport at any time, every day.

Canberra Liberals

- Support for women to return to work: By expanding the current funding to include work placement, training and administrative and mental health support.
- Cost of living support: Including a \$50 electricity bill rebate for all households, vehicle registration rebates and a back-to-school and extracurricular activity voucher for all students from preschool to high school.
- Improve housing access: By releasing more land and building 125,000 new homes by 2050.

Independents

- **Independents for Canberra:**
 - Reducing wait times for social housing: Reducing the wait times for priority and high-needs social housing to 30 and 90 days respectively by 2030 will make it easier and faster to access suitable housing.
- **Strong Independents:**
 - 3,000 new and refreshed social houses: Expanding social housing will give more options for stable and secure housing
- **The Belco Party:**
 - Budget adjustment for healthcare: Redirecting funds from the light rail project to hospitals and health services will result in improved healthcare facilities and services, which could lead to better access to care for the people you support.
- **First Nation:**
 - Housing for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples: Addressing housing disadvantages for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples will help close the gap in housing outcomes, providing more secure housing options for Indigenous families and carers.
 - Caring for Country Framework: Working closely with Aboriginal groups to create a framework that respects Indigenous rights will ensure that culturally appropriate services, including housing, health, and community support are made available in the ACT.