

Liberals scrap funding to mental health services and facilities

ACT Health Minister Katy Gallagher has called on the Liberals to explain how they are going to fund the mental health system adequately after the shock announcement yesterday that they will only commit an extra \$950,000 pa to increase support to people with a mental illness.

The Liberal's token commitment to mental health services over the next four years totals only \$3.8 million over four years – or an increase of just \$950,000 every year.

“The release of this policy yesterday demonstrates just how inexperienced the Canberra Liberals are. If they think that \$950,000 per year will cover the increased demand for services over the next four years, they are kidding themselves”.

“Just keeping up with current demand is costing \$2 million per annum. That's just to tread water. It doesn't cover the cost of increasing services or funding new services such as the new adult in-patient facility.”

The Canberra Liberals policy today clearly shows that the Liberals if in Government will provide:

- × **NO** 40 Bed PSU
- × **NO** 15 Bed Secure Mental Health Unit
- × **NO** Emergency Mental Health Unit.
- × **NO** recurrent funding for the Young persons mental health unit they committed to building
- × **NO** recurrent commitment to the community mental health sector

“Over the past four years ACT Labor has funded over \$32 million in new front line services, and the average new annual recurrent funding commitment has been \$2 million every year - all on direct services and all to meet current demands.”

“Yesterday ACT Labor announced that if re-elected we will provide an additional \$53 million over the next four years – all to new service provision. The Liberals have only committed \$3.8 million over the same time. What they have announced today falls exactly \$49 million short.”

“They need to come clean on how they are going to meet the demand that is already here, let alone how they intend to meet the increase over the next four years” Ms Gallagher concluded.

Statement Ends

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