

TREASURER TOM KOUTSANTONIS

Thursday, 7 July 2016

Increased investment in SA's public health system continues

The State Government's record commitment to public health continues with a \$5.8 billion investment in the health system, up \$230 million from last financial year.

The 2016-17 State Budget includes a commitment of \$526.8 million over four years to help ease the shortfall in federal health funding caused by the 2014-15 Commonwealth cuts.

Despite the extra State investment, with activity levels in our hospitals increasing by 3 per cent in the past year, there is still a significant hole in our health budget.

The additional funding represents a strong investment in health infrastructure through the Transforming Health initiative, which will improve the safety, efficiency and effectiveness of the health system and ensure all South Australians have better access to the right care, at the right place, at the right time.

It allows for improvements to continue to be made under Transforming Health at Flinders Medical Centre, Modbury Hospital, Noarlunga Health Service, The Queen Elizabeth Hospital and Lyell McEwin Hospital.

An upgrade of the Neonatal Unit at Flinders Medical Centre will also commence and a second Cardiovascular Intervention Suite will open at Lyell McEwin Hospital.

The Budget also provides \$44.4 million for programs to achieve positive health outcomes for indigenous South Australians.

Continued investment in the South Australian Ambulance Service (SAAS) will see the construction of a Rescue, Retrieval and Aviation Services Base, the continuation of the stretcher replacement program and the construction of new ambulance stations at Northfield, Noarlunga and Seaford.

A number of key initiatives including the new Royal Adelaide Hospital and the implementation of an enterprise pathology information system will also be completed.

Background

The 2016-17 State Budget also includes:

- \$3.1 million per annum to make up the shortfall in revenue resulting from the Commonwealth Government's decision to limit or remove bulk-billing incentives for pathology and diagnostic services;
- \$8.7 million over four years to continue running community mental health rehab services in Whyalla, after the Turnbull Government cut federal funding;
- \$11.5 million to develop the Medstar Rescue, Retrieval and Aviation Services base at the Adelaide Airport that will ensure quicker response times to people who are critically ill or injured;
- An additional \$13 million has also been provided to SA Ambulance Service to ensure our paramedics and support staff can respond to growing community demand.

Quotes attributable to Treasurer Tom Koutsantonis

South Australians are getting older and increased activity in our hospitals is putting strain on service delivery in health.

Unfortunately, Federal funding has not kept pace with that change, and drastic cuts to funding by the Abbott Coalition Government have put immense pressure on our health system.

The ongoing nature of the Commonwealth/State health funding partnership is something I hope the new Government grapples with as one of its first priorities.

We were disappointed that during the election campaign, neither major party promised to overturn the 2014 health cuts.

This investment in health will ease that pressure as we transition to a modern, more efficient health system under Transforming Health.

Quotes attributable to Health Minister Jack Snelling

The State Government continues to invest record amounts of money to delivering first-class public health for all South Australians.

Unlike the Liberal Party, we recognise that with continued access to the best possible health services all South Australians can prosper in all areas of their lives - including work and education - and that makes for a healthy, economically viable State.

We're providing tens of millions of dollars to improve Aboriginal Health and stepping up in many areas where the Federal Government has stepped down.



2016-17 STATE BUDGET

We've committed \$671 million over five years to address the huge funding shortfall left behind by the devastating health cuts in the 2014/15 Federal Budget.

We continue to invest in major health infrastructure and are making improvements to our state's health system under Transforming Health.

This investment is evidence that the health needs of every South Australian are at the top of this Government's priorities.

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