NORTHERN TERRITORY

The Australian Government’s 2013-14 Budget provides the Northern Territory with a record $270 million for its health system. This means improved health and hospital facilities, more frontline services, and improved care for patients, where and when they need it.

Record funding for hospitals

Funding for hospitals means more doctors, nurses and beds for patients — and better care. It also supports elective surgery and emergency department waiting times to help patients get treatment sooner. In this Budget, Northern Territory hospitals will receive $153 million — $24 million more than in 2007-08.

Since 2007, $22.2 million has been targeted to improve emergency departments and $27.9 million has been provided to reduce elective surgery waiting times. Patients are better able to get a hospital bed — with an additional 14 sub-acute beds to be delivered by the end of 2013-14. Since 2007-08 the Australian Government has provided $136.9 million for hospital infrastructure.

Australian Government funding to the Northern Territory for public hospitals, 2007-08 to 2016-17


Note: Australian Government funding for public hospital services includes Public Health funding allocations. Health and Hospitals Fund figures include payments to Northern Territory for other health services.
This includes:

- patient accommodation and the redevelopment of paediatric wards at Royal Darwin Hospital;
- a new emergency department at Alice Springs Hospital;
- services at Palmerston Hospital;
- redevelopment of the Gove Hospital Emergency Department; and
- the redevelopment of the emergency department at Tennant Creek Hospital.

A total of $130.2 million has been provided for the National Critical Care and Response Centre and the Menzies School of Medical Research has received $34.2 million.

The Australian Government allocated $10.8 million for short-term patient accommodation at Katherine and Gove. However, the NT Government decided not to proceed with the projects.

**Northern Territory - funding to Health and Hospitals Fund projects, GP Super Clinics and Regional Cancer Centres**

![Map of the Northern Territory showing locations of Health and Hospitals Fund Projects, GP Super Clinics, and Regional Cancer Centres]

**Improving frontline health care**

Primary care is the part of the health system which people in the Northern Territory use the most. Efficient and responsive hospital care is essential, especially for the many people who live in regional and remote areas. This Budget provides increased funding to support the Northern Territory Medicare Local, part of the Government’s national network of primary health care organisations that are playing a central role in improving the primary
health care system. Medicare Locals plan, coordinate and deliver health services for local communities such as after hours, mental health and immunisation, making it easier for people to access the health care they need.

Since 2007-08, the Australian Government has been improving primary care infrastructure in the Territory. $10 million has been provided for the Palmerston GP Super Clinic, which is completed and operational. Since 2007, the Australian Government has provided $9.3 million for a range of primary care services in the NT, including increased after-hours GP services. The Government is providing $713.5 million over 10 years from 2012-13 for the Stronger Futures in the Northern Territory – Health initiative, which will upgrade clinics and accommodation in remote areas.

**World Leading Cancer Care**

The Australian Government is building a world-class cancer care system to ensure that people get the best treatment available. In this Budget, a new national $226 million cancer care package, funded by the Australian Government over four years, will ensure that people in the Northern Territory get top quality cancer care and support across a range of cancers — including prostate, breast, lung, bowel and cervical cancers. Youth Cancer Networks are also being funded to support young people fighting cancer. Since 2007, the Australian Government has invested a record $21.5 million to provide better cancer facilities for people in the Northern Territory, including $19 million to improve access to radiation oncology at the Allan Walker Cancer Centre in the Royal Darwin Hospital and $2.5 million for digital mammography equipment in the Territory.

**More doctors**

More doctors are training to be GPs and specialists in the NT. In 2012, 76 GPs were in training, compared to 63 in 2007. More doctors means easier access for patients. There were 33 training positions in 2012, with three more beginning in 2013 – a total of 36 positions for doctors to train as specialists.
Dental

The Government is providing $2.8 million to the NT in 2013-14 to cut public dental waiting lists.

This is part of the Australian Government’s $4.6 billion investment in sweeping dental health reforms across the nation.

As part of the reforms, our ‘Grow Up Smiling’ initiative will deliver dental services for kids and teenagers from 1 January 2014. This will mean that for future generations it will be as easy to see a dentist as it is now to see a doctor.