

Investing in Territory healthcare

Fact sheet

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Budget 2024 provides \$2.2 billion to deliver safe and high quality health services to meet current and projected future needs of Territorians, including an additional \$300 million over 2023-24 and 2024-25 to support hospital and health services across the Territory. Key health investments include:

- \$1.4 billion for hospital services
- \$259 million for primary health care
- \$108 million for mental health



Health infrastructure

Budget 2024 includes \$238.8 million for upgrades to health infrastructure across the Territory, including:

- \$107 million to upgrade Royal Darwin Hospital. This investment will deliver additional clinical spaces, a new modular multipurpose facility and a mental health stabilisation assessment and referral area unit, expand the mental health inpatient unit, and upgrade the forensic mortuary, pathology and bereavement facility
- \$33.7 million to upgrade Alice Springs Hospital. This investment will deliver a new ambulatory care centre, hybrid operating theatre and emergency electrical upgrades
- \$33.2 million to upgrade central sterilisation services departments across Territory hospitals
- \$20 million to upgrade fire safety systems at Gove District Hospital
- \$20 million for the Gunbalanya health centre and morgue
- \$1.3 million for the Wadeye renal facility
- \$1.3 million for the Tennant Creek Hospital staff accommodation block.

Budget 2024 also includes \$20 million to construct a new health centre in Borroloola, which will include fit-for-purpose consulting rooms, emergency bays, dental facilities, x-ray facilities, hearing booth, renal facilities and a morgue. A further \$500,000 is provided for new medical equipment at the centre.

Operation Thrive

There are over 10,000 current and former serving veterans living in the Territory.

Budget 2024 provides \$2.6 million over three years for initiatives under the Northern Territory Defence Veterans Strategy – Operation Thrive action plan, which aims to make the Territory a more attractive and supportive environment for veterans and their families to live and work.

Operation Thrive delivers a range of projects to support veterans and their families with transition, employment and education opportunities, health and wellbeing services, and respect and recognition initiatives for veterans.

Other health investment

Budget 2024 continues to support health services across the Territory to ensure Territorians are able to access care and treatment if and when they need it, through:

- \$15.5 million as part of the banned drinker register for assessment, withdrawal and specialised alcohol treatment services to assist people with alcohol misuse issues and dependence
- \$8.1 million for the Royal Darwin Hospital positron emission tomography (PET) service, cyclotron and radiopharmacy facility and expanded chemotherapy and related services
- \$5 million to deliver the Sustained Nurse Home Visiting for Vulnerable Families program
- \$4.5 million to implement the bilateral agreement for mental health
- \$3 million to acquire new capital equipment to improve patient outcomes
- \$2.8 million to deliver health-related Early Childhood Development Plan initiatives
- \$2 million to support improved service delivery of the Public Guardian and Trustee.

Budget 2024 also includes \$1.5 million to commence planning and design works for the construction of a new emergency ambulance station in Greater Darwin. The new facility will provide a central hub for maintenance, supplies, staffing, control and management, and enhance the efficiency of emergency medical response services in the region.

Residential aged care

The Territory has Australia's fastest ageing population and the number of Territorians aged over 65 is projected to increase from around 20,000 in 2021 to around 35,000 in 2041. Budget 2024 includes \$12 million for land servicing and design of a new 120-bed residential aged care facility in the Palmerston Regional Health Precinct to meet demand.

The site is in close proximity to the Palmerston Regional Hospital and the land servicing works will also support developing the broader Holtze area.

Health benefits and rebates

The Territory Government provides a range of health benefits and rebates to assist families with health expenses, including:

- up to \$502 every two years for each eligible Territorian and their registered dependants for spectacles
- free dental services for children and eligible concession card holders
- free mouthguards for children participating in organised sports to protect their teeth
- financial assistance for travel and accommodation expenses for patients needing to travel long distances to see approved medical specialists
- free hearing services to urban and regional areas for Territorians suffering from hearing loss.

Photograph courtesy of the Department of the Chief Minister and Cabinet