

### 4.3.5 MINISTER FOR COMMUNITY SERVICES, MINISTER FOR AGED SERVICES AND MINISTER FOR DISABILITY SERVICES

#### OVERVIEW

Agency	Forecast 1995-96	Estimate 1996-97	Variation
	\$m	\$m	%
<b>Department of Community Services (a)</b>			
Current Payments .....	423.2	460.7	8.8
Capital Payments .....	17.7	26.3	48.6
<b>Ageing and Disability Department</b>			
Current Payments .....	578.3	610.9	5.6
Capital Payments .....	15.8	10.3	(-) 34.8
<b>Community Services Commission</b>			
Current Payments .....	3.0	3.1	3.3
Capital Payments .....	0.1	0.1	...
<b>Department of Juvenile Justice</b>			
Current Payments .....	61.2	67.0	9.5
Capital Payments .....	2.0	11.5	475.0
<b>Home Care Service (a)</b>			
Current Payments .....	18.3	17.3	(-) 5.5
Capital Payments .....	2.3	2.0	(-) 13.0
<b>Total, Minister for Community Services, Minister for Aged Services and Minister for Disability Services .....</b>			
	<b>1,121.9</b>	<b>1,209.2</b>	<b>7.8</b>

(a) Payments shown for the Department of Community Services and the Home Care Service exclude those funded by the Ageing and Disability Department.

The increase in the level of payments for the Department of Community Services is due to various factors, including Budget enhancements totalling \$12.7 million in 1996-97 for child and family support services as well as the provision of an extra \$36.7 million to meet the cost of pensioner rebates for recently corporatised electricity distribution authorities. The level of payments also reflects the phasing out of drought relief assistance following an improvement in the outlook for rural communities.

The increase in payments for the Ageing and Disability Department is mainly due to additional funding for disability services, including improved services for children with a disability. Additional funding is also being provided for ageing initiatives.

Year to year variations in Capital Payments are due to completion of projects in some agencies and the commencement of new projects in other agencies. In the case of the Department of Juvenile Justice, new juvenile justice centres are to be constructed at Dubbo and in the northern area of the State. Centres at St Marys, Mount Penang, and metropolitan Sydney are to be upgraded.

## **DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY SERVICES**

### **Expenditure Trends and Recent Developments**

Responsibility for development of strategic policy, planning, funding, evaluation and monitoring programs for older people and people with disabilities was transferred at the beginning of 1995-96 from the Department of Community Services to the new Ageing and Disability Department.

The Department's operations now focus on the priority areas of assisting families and children and the provision of certain services to people with disabilities.

During 1995-96 the Department has assumed responsibility from the Department of Energy for administration of schemes relating to the provision of electricity rebates to pensioners and financially disadvantaged people.

The Department is continuing to implement its Information Technology Strategic Plan that will provide general office and network technology throughout the Department's service centres.

### **Strategic Directions**

The Department is working to ensure that the Government's commitment to improve standards for children in care (both foster care and residential care) are achieved. It is appointing more child protection specialists to further strengthen its role in relation to protection of children and provision of services for children and families.

Whilst maintaining overall responsibility for children placed in its care, the Department is continuing to implement recommendations of the Usher Report. The Government is introducing a dual service system whereby substitute care services will be delivered by both the Department and non-government organisations.

### **1996-97 Budget**

#### **Current Payments**

Key activities of the Department of Community Services include -

- **Child and Family Support**

A number of the Department's activities are focussed on the need to provide support and assistance to children, adolescents and families under stress or in crisis. A total of \$251.2 million will be made available for child and family support in 1996-97. After allowing for special factors in 1995-96 such as phasing out of drought relief assistance and the peaking of payments relating to reform of substitute care services, the 1996-97 estimate represents an increase of 5.5 per cent over 1995-96.

Included within this program are projects associated with the protection of children from abuse and neglect. A total of \$59.1 million is being provided for these projects which is an increase of 15.6 per cent over 1995-96 and 33 per cent over the funding provided by the previous Government in 1994-95.

The child protection allocation includes an additional \$9.6 million that is being provided over three years (\$3.5 million in 1996-97) for the Department's share of the cost of the special initiatives to prevent child abuse that were recently announced by the Premier.

In addition, the allocation includes an extra \$4 million in 1996-97 (\$6 million per annum thereafter) for the employment of 45 additional field staff to provide child protection services and to meet the cost of 51 new district officers to deal with substitute care matters.

Increased funding of \$3.2 million per annum is being provided for foster care payments to enable higher allowances to be paid to carers. These increased allowances are expected to ensure that there will be a wider range of people willing to take on the responsibility of caring for children who are placed under the care of the State.

Additional funding of \$2 million is being provided for early support to families so they can continue to safely care for their children.

The Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP) also plays a key role in assisting people who are in crisis, homeless, moving towards independent living or who are returning to their own families. This Commonwealth-State program provides assistance to community organisations that operate accommodation or other support services for these people in need. Total SAAP payments in 1996-97 are estimated at \$81.3 million.

Other projects and programs that assist children and families include -

- family and individual support (\$17.5 million);
  - the Child Sexual Assault Program (\$744,000); and
  - funding for family group homes (\$527,000).
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- **Children's Services**

Funding of \$90.9 million has been allocated to assist the community in the provision of child care services. Programs funded include pre-schools and day care centres (\$75.5 million), vacation care (\$3.4 million) and early childhood resource and support services (\$3.9 million).

- **Community Resources**

An amount of \$90.8 million is being provided for support services and concessions which assist in reducing the effects of social disadvantage of local groups and increase community self sufficiency.

Projects being funded in 1996-97 include \$16.6 million for community development such as the provision of neighbourhood houses and playgroups and community youth and adolescent support (\$12.2 million).

Also included in this program are payments of \$49.5 million relating to electricity rebates for pensioners and financially disadvantaged people. These rebates are made by the corporatised electricity distribution authorities but the cost is met by the Government.

- **Disability Services**

An amount of \$256 million is being made available to enable Community Services to assist, accommodate and support persons with a disability. This funding is mainly provided by the Ageing and Disability Department, with some additional resources being made available by Community Services. The services provided by the Department are part of the Government's overall strategy to assist people with a disability to maximise their independence and participation in the community.

### **Capital Payments**

The Department's 1996-97 Capital Program of \$26.3 million covers the following projects -

- capital grants of \$9 million to assist in the development of child care places. These State-funded grants provide for the establishment or expansion of child care centres which will then attract on-going subsidy support under the Commonwealth-State Expanded National Child Care Strategy;
- further funding of \$13.4 million for the Department's Information Technology Strategic Plan. This funding will meet the cost of installing general office and network technology throughout the Department's service centres;
- continued upgrading of residential accommodation, including removal of material containing asbestos before it becomes unstable and poses a risk to the Department's clients and employees. Funding has been allocated for a condition audit to be undertaken of the Department's properties; and
- an amount of \$2.6 million for minor projects including replacement of furniture and equipment and costs associated with design and preliminary planning.

## **AGEING AND DISABILITY DEPARTMENT**

The Ageing and Disability Department provides funding to other government and non-government agencies to enable services to be delivered to frail aged and disabled people. It does not directly deliver services to clients.

### **Expenditure Trends and Recent Developments**

The Department was created in 1995 through amalgamation of the Office on Ageing and Office on Disability (formerly units of the Social Policy Directorate) with the Ageing and Disability Directorate from the Department of Community Services.

Expenditure on services for aged and disabled people increased substantially in 1995-96 due to the implementation of new Government initiatives such as the provision of additional places in community based supported accommodation for people with disabilities.

## **Strategic Directions**

The Ageing and Disability Department is the Government's primary source of strategic advice on ageing and disability matters. Its key functions are strategic policy, planning, funding, evaluation and monitoring of programs for older people and people with disabilities.

The Department is focussing on initiatives that maximise the independence and community participation of aged people and people with disabilities in order to avoid premature or inappropriate admission to permanent residential care.

## **1996-97 Budget**

### **Current Payments**

Specific allocations include -

- **Supported Accommodation for People with a Disability**

An amount of \$183.5 million will be provided to the Department of Community Services in 1996-97 to assist, accommodate and support people with a disability through direct accommodation services. In addition, an amount of \$30 million will be spent in connection with the 383 places for people with disabilities that have been provided over the last year in both departmental and community based supported accommodation.

- **Commonwealth-State Disability Agreement**

The Commonwealth-State Disability Agreement (CSDA) aims to more clearly define the roles of the State and the Commonwealth in the delivery of services to people with disabilities. The CSDA has resulted in the development of standards that aim to establish what is expected of present and prospective service providers and encourage service quality improvement. Payments in 1996-97 are estimated at \$102 million.

- **Children's Services Package**

An amount of \$3.5 million will be allocated in 1996-97 to improve services to children with a disability. This funding will provide 1,020 placements for children requiring respite care, early intervention services, out of school hours care and therapy services.

- **Post School Options**

The Post School Options program provides a planned transition from school to the wider community for people with disabilities. Early identification of the needs of people with disability who are leaving school permits the development of individual transition plans that best suit the individual's needs and the needs of the family.

Funding of \$23.2 million is being allocated to this program in 1996-97.

- **Community Support**

Funding of \$8.3 million will be made available to community based services for people with a disability with a further \$1.2 million being made available for services to aged persons.

An amount of \$37 million will also be made available to the Department of Community Services in 1996-97 to provide direct care services to the ageing and persons with a disability.

- **Brain Injury Program**

An amount of \$1.5 million is being allocated to this program to allow for implementation of services under the Brain Injury Action Plan.

- **Home and Community Care Program**

The Home and Community Care Program (HACC), a Commonwealth-State program, is administered by the Ageing and Disability Department with assistance from the Departments of Community Services, Health, Housing and Transport. One of the main HACC service providers is the Home Care Service which is shown as a separate agency in the Budget Papers.

Total estimated expenditure on the HACC program in 1996-97 is \$240.3 million. This is an increase of \$7.3 million over the 1995-96 program. The NSW Government contribution will be \$96.5 million.

HACC provides funds for an extensive range of support services to assist frail aged people and people with disabilities to continue to live independently.

- **Guardianship Board**

The Guardianship Board provides guardianship and advocacy services on behalf of people with disabilities and the aged.

- **Joint Aged Care Policy**

Funding of \$1 million is being provided in 1996-97 as part of a \$4 million package to undertake a number of initiatives associated with the aged care policy developed jointly by the Minister for Aged Services and the Minister for Health. Key areas of focus will be development of the NSW Action Plan on Dementia, elder abuse, community education and demonstration projects relating to community care and transport projects.

## **Capital Payments**

Capital funding of \$8.2 million is being made available to allow purchase of houses to provide supported accommodation within the community for people with developmental and other disabilities. This funding will also allow for modification of group homes to ensure that they are accessible and safe.

Funding of \$2 million is also being provided in 1996-97 for capital costs associated with the improvement of services for children with a disability.

## **COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMISSION**

The Community Services Commission is a complaints and monitoring body that covers services provided by the Department of Community Services, the Department of Ageing and Disability, the Home Care Service and non-government services funded by the Minister.

The Commission was established in April 1994 by the Community Services (Complaints, Appeals and Monitoring) Act 1993. Also established were the Community Services Appeals Tribunal, the Community Services Review Council and the Community Visitors Scheme.

The Commission is currently undergoing a management review by the Premier's Department to examine future resource requirements.

Funding of \$3.1 million has been provided for the operation of the four bodies.

## **Expenditure Trends and Recent Developments**

A significant factor that will impact on the Commission's and Tribunal's operation is the new Community Services (Complaints, Appeals and Monitoring) Regulation 1996. The main features of the regulation include -

- defining the functions of Community Visitors to make the service more effective;
- defining an "applicable service provider";

- creating a more accessible tribunal for consumers and expanding the jurisdiction to cover non-government service providers; and
- making service providers more accountable for their decisions.

### **Capital Payments**

The Commission's capital allocation of \$18,000 allows for the purchase of minor plant and equipment.

## **DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE JUSTICE**

The Department of Juvenile Justice has the responsibility for effectively implementing court orders and providing appropriate services for juvenile offenders in detention and in the community.

### **Expenditure Trends and Recent Developments**

During 1995-96 the Department's structure was reviewed by the Service Performance and Operations Division of the Premier's Department. The resultant report recommended the reduction of resources in the Department's Central Support Office to allow the organisation to operate within budget and enhance the management and operations of field services.

The current restructure of the Department, involving the net loss of 32 central support office staff, will enable diversion of funds to client services which are to be administered in five newly established regional clusters.

Additional costs have occurred through the continuing increase in the average weekly number of juveniles in custody from 428 in 1993-94, to 466 in 1994-95, to 480 in 1995-96.

Expenditure of \$235,000 will be incurred in 1995-96 towards improving statewide psychological and psychiatric services for juvenile offenders in response to the report of the National Inquiry into the Human Rights of People with Mental Illness.

### **Strategic Directions**

In accord with Government policy to break the juvenile crime cycle and reduce recidivism, the Department will be working with and funding community agencies to enhance statewide support services for juvenile offenders after release from detention.

In the metropolitan area special post-release support services will be provided to reduce the over-representation of Indo-Chinese, Pacific Islander and Arabic speaking young people in custody.

An Aboriginal Mentor Scheme will be introduced statewide involving local Aboriginal people, to support young Aboriginal offenders and reduce their massive over-representation in custody.

## **1996-97 Budget**

### **Current Payments**

The increase in funding from \$61.2 million in 1995-96 to \$67 million in 1996-97 is primarily due to increased funding for maintenance backlog, additional juveniles in custody and redundancy payments. A sum of \$6.7 million has been allocated in 1996-97 for the continued implementation of major new initiatives in relation to crime prevention and community alternatives to court processing.

An amount of \$1.2 million is to be provided to the Department in 1996-97 for juvenile offender psychological and psychiatric services throughout New South Wales and to establish a specialist program for young violent offenders.

Following the restructure of the Department, \$1.5 million has been allocated in 1996-97 to fund expected redundancies. Due to the poor state of some custodial facilities, an additional \$1.5 million per annum has been allocated to the Department from 1996-97 for maintenance and repairs. This allocation has been made in conjunction with a significant upgrade of some of the Department's Juvenile Justice Centres.

### **Capital Payments**

The Department's 1996-97 capital program provides for the construction of new juvenile justice centres, upgrade and expansion of existing juvenile justice centres, asset replacement program, fitouts and minor computer upgrading.

The Department has developed a capital works strategic plan to address the standards of accommodation for juveniles who are held in detention and to provide sufficient capacity to accommodate the future projected numbers of such juveniles. A further aim of the strategic plan is to enable juveniles to be located as close to their families as practicable.

To this end, a new juvenile justice centre will be constructed to accommodate juvenile offenders from the northern areas of the State, and another centre will be constructed at Dubbo to cater for young people in custody from the western areas.

The Government will allocate funding in 1996-97 to enable the commencement of a number of the components of the capital strategic plan. Some of the funding for this capital strategy is to be generated from the sale of surplus land.

The major components of the 1996-97 capital program of \$11.5 million are -

- construction of new juvenile justice centres at Dubbo (estimated total cost \$7.9 million; \$1.5 million in 1996-97) and in the northern area (estimated total cost \$15.8 million; \$1.1 million in 1996-97);
- upgrade of juvenile justice centres at St Marys (estimated total cost \$3.3 million; \$1.3 million in 1996-97), Gosford (estimated total cost \$15.2 million; \$3.3 million in 1996-97) and metropolitan Sydney (estimated total cost \$18.6 million; \$1.9 million in 1996-97);

- office modifications related to the provision of new statewide specialist psychological and psychiatric services for young offenders (\$0.8 million); and
- minor miscellaneous works comprising fitouts, computer upgrading and an asset replacement program (\$1.5 million).

## **HOME CARE SERVICE**

The Home Care Service's objective is to provide high quality, cost effective household support services to people with disabilities, frail or at risk aged people and their carers. These services assist people in remaining in their own homes, where appropriate, rather than having to move into other forms of residential care.

### **Expenditure Trends and Recent Developments**

The Home Care Service is mainly funded through the Home and Community Care (HACC) program.

There have been significant increases in demand in recent years resulting from the ageing of the population generally and the movement into the community of people with disabilities who had previously been placed in residential institutions.

Home Care has therefore had to carefully target its services. This has resulted in more of its services being directed towards people with complex care needs.

### **Strategic Directions**

The Service is responding to the significant reviews and reforms currently in progress in regard to efficiency, effectiveness and targeting of HACC services. Ways of co-ordinating health and community services to specific customer groups is also being investigated.

### **1996-97 Budget**

#### **Current Payments**

Home Care will receive a basic allocation of \$107.4 million from the HACC program in 1996-97. This funding is provided through the Ageing and Disability Department. In addition to this base amount, Home Care will receive additional HACC funding for specific local projects which are being undertaken in conjunction with area offices of the Department of Community Services and the Department of Housing. In total, the Home Care Service expects to spend \$128 million in 1996-97.

The Service also manages the Hostel and Care program that provides assistance in project management and financing for housing and care options for older people. These payments are expected to amount to \$4.5 million in 1996-97.

**Capital Payments**

Home Care's \$2 million capital program provides for the purchase of computer equipment, miscellaneous plant and equipment as well as minor alterations to accommodation at various locations across New South Wales.