

MINISTER FOR COMMUNITY SERVICES, MINISTER FOR AGEING, MINISTER FOR DISABILITY SERVICES AND MINISTER FOR WOMEN

OVERVIEW

<i>Agency</i>	<i>Budget 2000-01 \$m</i>	<i>Budget 2001-02 \$m</i>	<i>Variation %</i>
Department of Community Services			
Total Expenses	602.7	595.0	- 1.3 ^(a)
Asset Acquisitions	12.9	17.4	35.1
Community Services Commission			
Total Expenses	4.2	4.2	...
Asset Acquisitions
Office of the Children's Guardian			
Total Expenses	2.6	n.a.
Asset Acquisitions	n.a.
Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care			
Total Expenses	976.6	1,114.5	14.1
Asset Acquisitions	21.9	7.8	- 64.3
Home Care Service of New South Wales			
Total Expenses	140.7	160.5	14.0
Asset Acquisitions	10.1	9.6	- 5.0
Department for Women			
Total Expenses	5.2	5.3	1.7
Asset Acquisitions	0.6	0.1	- 77.4
Total, Minister for Community Services, Minister for Ageing, Minister for Disability Services, and Minister for Women ^(b)			
Total Expenses	1,611.8	1,761.2	9.3^(a)
Asset Acquisitions	45.5	34.9	- 23.3

(a) This variation reflects the transfer of the Pensioner Electricity Subsidy to the Ministry of Energy and Utilities from 1 July 2001. Excluding the impact of this transfer, Total Expenses increase by 8.4 percent on the 2000-01 Budget for the Department of Community Services, with a corresponding increase of 13 percent for the Minister's total portfolio.

(b) The Ministerial totals have been reduced to exclude recurrent payments made by the Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care to the Home Care Service of New South Wales.

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

The Department of Community Services' main role is in assisting children, families and communities within New South Wales. The activities of the Department include child protection, assisting families to protect and care for their children, providing accommodation and support services for children and young people who live away from their families or who are homeless or in crisis, regulating childcare, and coordinating services for people affected by disasters.

EXPENDITURE TRENDS AND RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

Allocations to the Department of Community Services have increased substantially in recent years. This has been in response to growing demand for the Department's services. In particular, reporting rates of child abuse and the numbers of children in care continued to increase in 2000-01, leading to further growth in demand for child protection services.

During 2000-01, work continued on improving the level and quality of services. The significant areas of activity included whole-of-government responses in child protection, the proclamation and implementation of the *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998*, reforming out-of-home care services, refocusing adoption services, collaborative work with community partners, enhanced children's services and support for families and people in need of accommodation.

The new *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998* signalled a shift from crisis care to a focus on prevention of child abuse and neglect. Improvements also focused on the responsiveness of the system in instances when abuse has occurred.

The Department's Helpline, a centralised statewide call centre, became operational from December 2000.

The Child and Family Services area experienced major increases in reports of concern about children and families. The number of reports increased from 72,800 in 1998-99 to an estimated 91,300 in 2000-01, with an estimated level of 115,400 reports in 2001-02.

The increase in demand for Child and Family Services is attributed to a number of factors including increases in child poverty, drug abuse and reports of family violence together with an increase in community awareness of child abuse and neglect, an increase in the number of mandatory reporters under the new Act, a widening of definitions within the new Act on what is reported and improved data analysis and reporting.

Estimates for the number of reports of abuse and neglect for 2001-02 and beyond are subject to uncertainty, as the cumulative effect of the new reporting requirements, the Helpline and the new Legislation will not be known for at least twelve months.

The number of children receiving substitute care services also increased, up from 12,200 in 1998-99 to an estimated level of 13,600 children in 2000-01, and an estimated level of 14,700 in 2001-02.

The Department is responsible for co-ordinating disaster welfare services. During 2000-01 there has been an increase in the frequency and severity of natural disasters, which has created a significant impact on the Department's resources.

Overarching the activities of the Department has been the transformation of the organisation into a contemporary service, which is flexible and responsive to changing client needs, and which has improved levels of clinical and professional supervision.

The transformation process commenced in February 2000. To date, the Department has reduced its administrative areas from sixteen to eight, and increased the number of frontline staff and their clinical supervision. The Department consulted with staff and their union representatives on the transformation, and improvements will continue through 2001-02.

On 11 April 2001, the Government announced the creation of the Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care. The new agency now incorporates the Disability Services Program formerly maintained by the Department of Community Services.

In addition to the transfer of disability services:

- ◆ the Office of the Children's Guardian became a separate entity on 2 January 2001 whilst remaining under the Minister's portfolio. Recurrent funding of \$2.4 million for the Office of the Children's Guardian transferred from the Department at that date; and
- ◆ the administration of the Pensioner Electricity Subsidy Scheme, excluding that portion of the Scheme related to electricity subsidies for people on life support appliances, transfers to the Ministry of Energy and Utilities on 1 July 2001.

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

In 2001-02, the focus will be to improve the consistency of services and increase the capacity of staff through learning and development, whilst achieving the Government's commitments towards the delivery of child and family services.

Child and Family Support Services

Within the Child and Family Support services, a number of initiatives and developments will take place, including:

- ◆ the continuing proclamation and implementation of the *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998* as it relates to the Children's Court Clinic, Out-of-Home Care, Children's Services and Child Employment;
- ◆ continued development of the new Client Database to assist the Department with client services;
- ◆ early intervention and prevention through the Families First Initiative; and
- ◆ ongoing review and reform of Out-of-Home Care Services including improving the quality and capacity of services.

Community Partners

The Department provides funding and support to its *Community Partners* – community agencies, volunteers, local communities and local government agencies. The focus will continue to be on:

- ◆ supporting homeless people;
- ◆ reforming adoption services;
- ◆ strengthening partnerships;
- ◆ developing communities;
- ◆ improving disaster welfare resources; and
- ◆ implementing a purchasing framework for all funded programs.

These activities will be supported by the new *Community Partners System* that will assist the Department with its administration of funded services.

2001-02 BUDGET

Total Expenses

Total 2001-02 expenses for the Department are estimated at \$595 million. This is an increase of \$45.9 million on the 2000-01 Budget, after taking account of the transfer of the Pensioner Electricity Subsidy to the Ministry of Energy and Utilities from 1 July 2001. The increase in expenditure reflects the net impact of initiatives in the following programs.

Child and Family Support

Total expenses of \$424.9 million will provide for supporting children, adolescents and families under stress or in crisis as well as the Families First program (an early intervention and prevention support program). This represents an increase of \$35.6 million on the 2000-01 Budget.

Funding under this program consists of:

- ◆ \$121.2 million towards the protection of children from abuse and neglect, an increase of 9.7 percent on last year. This includes:
 - an additional \$4 million for sixty additional child protection caseworkers to meet increasing demand levels and achieve a reduction in caseload levels; and
 - an additional \$1 million for the Department's Cabramatta initiatives which are designed to meet the needs of street-frequenting drug-affected persons in Cabramatta (includes a Cabramatta Street Team, family counselling and support services and a mobile child care service).
- ◆ \$100.6 million under the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program – a joint Commonwealth-State Program providing assistance to people who are in crisis or homeless people moving towards independent living or returning to their own families;
- ◆ \$165.5 million towards the provision of out-of-home care and foster care – including an additional \$5.7 million for foster care growth in 2001-02 and \$28.8 million over four years; and
- ◆ \$37.6 million to provide support and help to children and families during the year, including direct payments of \$34.8 million under the family and individual support program.

Children's Services

Total expenses of \$105.1 million have been allocated to assist the community in the provision of childcare and related services. This will include flexible and innovative childcare for rural families, seasonal workers and farming, Aboriginal and remote communities.

Specific programs include:

- ◆ Pre-schools and day care centres (\$85.9 million);
- ◆ Vacation care (\$2.4 million); and
- ◆ Early childhood resource and support services (\$4.3 million).

Community Resources

A total of \$64.9 million is being provided for support services and concessions to assist in reducing the effects of social disadvantage of individuals and families and to enhance community capacity.

Funding of \$20 million is also provided for community development projects, \$16.6 million for youth support services and \$4.3 million for financial assistance to vulnerable families, including the Spectacles Program.

In addition, \$13.7 million is provided in concessions, including \$7.9 million towards electricity vouchers for financially disadvantaged people, and \$4 million for the Charitable Goods Transport Subsidy, an increase of \$2 million on last year.

Asset Acquisitions

The Department's 2001-02 Asset Acquisition program of \$17.4 million will fund the following major projects:

- ◆ \$644,000 towards the final stage of the Service 2000 projects which include the Client Information System, the Community Partners System and the Helpline;
- ◆ \$1.1 million for the Enterprise Information Infrastructure project which will remediate the Department's core data for more efficient and effective usage;
- ◆ \$12.6 million for the system design, specification and implementation of a Financial Management System;

- ◆ \$200,000 for essential refurbishment and capital maintenance; and
- ◆ \$2.9 million for minor works projects, including replacement of furniture and equipment.

COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMISSION

The Community Services Commission is an independent government body operating under the *Community Services (Complaints, Reviews and Monitoring) Act 1993*. It investigates and mediates complaints concerning unreasonable conduct by Government and non-Government community service providers in New South Wales as well as monitoring service quality. The Commission also coordinates the Community Visitor Scheme to aid in the independent monitoring of residential facilities for children, young people and people with disabilities.

EXPENDITURE TRENDS AND RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

Enhancement funding of \$200,000 was provided in 2000-01 for the Community Visitors scheme to enable more visits to services where children, young people and people with a disability are in care.

In November 2000, the Commission published the report of its major inquiry into the practice and provision of substitute care in New South Wales, and its recommendations for the reform of the care system.

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

Consistent with the Government's social justice strategy and the provision of the *Community Services (Complaints, Reviews and Monitoring) Act 1993*, the Commission's strategic goals are to:

- ◆ promote and encourage high quality community services;
- ◆ promote and protect the interests, needs and rights of consumers of community services, especially those most vulnerable; and
- ◆ foster community attitudes which are informed and vigilant about consumer rights and needs.

In performing its work in 2001-02, the Commission will also place a greater emphasis on alternative dispute resolution, community access activities and service improvement initiatives, in line with its internal restructure of functions.

2001-02 BUDGET

Total Expenses

The Commission's total expenses budget for 2001-02 is \$4.2 million. This includes funding for:

- ◆ the ongoing functioning of the Disability Death Review Team; and
- ◆ an increase in the number of day visits from around 1,500 in 2000-01 to 1,650 in 2001-02 under the Community Visitors Scheme.

Asset Acquisitions

The Commission's asset acquisitions program of \$18,000 in 2001-02 provides for the purchase of computers and minor office equipment.

OFFICE OF THE CHILDREN'S GUARDIAN

The Office of the Children's Guardian is a new agency established in 2000-01 under the *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998* .

The responsibilities of the Children's Guardian include:

- ◆ exercising the parental responsibilities of the Minister for a child or young person for the benefit of the child or young person;
- ◆ promoting the best interests of all children and young persons in out-of-home care and ensuring that their rights are safeguarded; and
- ◆ examining case plans, accrediting designated agencies and monitoring their responsibilities under the Act and the regulations.

EXPENDITURE TRENDS AND RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

The Office began operations on 2 January 2001. During 2001, the Office established its new premises, recruited staff and acquired the IT infrastructure necessary for the operations of the Office. Total expenses in 2000-01 are estimated at \$0.9 million.

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

During its first full year of operation, the Office's main priority will be to examine all care plans and reviews of children and young people in out-of-home care.

Other priorities in 2001-02 will be to:

- ◆ establish a statutory accreditation scheme for designated agencies providing out-of-home care to children and young people;
- ◆ publish guidelines for reviews of children and young people in out-of-home care under an order of the Children's Court;
- ◆ publish intake procedures and procedures relating to assessments and inter-agency co-ordination for children and young people placed in voluntary out-of-home care;
- ◆ establish the Office's website; and
- ◆ release a three-year strategic plan.

2001-02 BUDGET

Total Expenses

The Office's total expenses for 2001-02, its first full year of operation, are forecast to be \$2.6 million.

Asset Acquisitions

The total capital allocation for 2001-02 is \$40,000, which will be used for minor enhancements to the Office's information management systems and the purchase of minor plant and equipment.

DEPARTMENT OF AGEING, DISABILITY AND HOME CARE

The Department was established on 11 April 2001 to promote and provide programs and direct community-based support for people with disabilities, older people and their families and to enable them to live independently in their communities.

The newly created Department brings together the former Ageing and Disability Department, Disability Services from the Department of Community Services and the Home Care Service of New South Wales, a statutory authority that now reports to the Director-General of the Department.

EXPENDITURE TRENDS AND RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

The total expenditure for the new Department in 2000-01 is estimated at \$1,037.6 million. The Ageing, Home and Community Care and Disability Program (formerly the Ageing and Disability Program within the Ageing and Disability Department) has an estimated total expenditure of \$594 million for 2000-01, an increase of \$120.1 million over 1999-2000.

Total expenses include additional funding of:

- ◆ \$44.9 million provided in the 2000-01 Budget for supported accommodation, local support coordination, relocation of residents from large disability residential facilities and other flexible disability support services;
- ◆ \$16.8 million through the amended Commonwealth-State Bilateral Agreement under the Commonwealth-State Disability Agreement; and
- ◆ \$21.5 million in the Home and Community Care Program.

Disability Services (formerly in the Department of Community Services and now a directorate of the Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care) has an estimated expenditure of \$443.6 million for 2000-01, representing an increase of \$19.7 million over 1999-2000. This increase has been applied to:

- ◆ strengthening the delivery of Disability services through competency based training for staff;
- ◆ ongoing employment of senior practitioners to support quality care;
- ◆ support for individuals in crisis;
- ◆ increase in Workers Compensation premiums; and
- ◆ operation of large residential facilities.

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

The Department will continue to consolidate the *Living in Community* strategy announced at the time of the last Budget. The Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care will work collaboratively with non-Government and Government services to achieve the optimum use of available resources to assist the maximum possible number of individuals and their families to gain an adequate combination of informal and formal supports.

In particular, the Department will focus on:

- ◆ applying resources to individuals who have priority needs, as assessed by the Department;
- ◆ establishing more appropriate prevention programs which support individuals to enable them to remain in their communities;
- ◆ improving outcomes for individuals and their families from the significant investment the Government has made in non-Government and Government services over the past six years;
- ◆ improving collaboration between non-Government and Government services;
- ◆ supporting community-based solutions to the needs of individuals and their families; and
- ◆ improving provision of support services to children and their families.

Integration of Disability Services formerly administered by the Department of Community Services will also be a focus of the new Department. Work will continue on the following initiatives:

- ◆ improving the skill levels and capabilities of staff;
- ◆ creating greater diversity in the range of service models;
- ◆ completion of the current Group Homes Expression of Interest process; and,
- ◆ working with clients, families and staff to implement stage one of the Devolution Plan for large residences so that clients in congregate care environments can access community-based accommodation and support services that meet their individual needs.

2001-02 BUDGET

Total Expenses

The Department's total expenses budget in 2001-02 of \$1,114.5 million will be administered under two major programs: the Ageing, Home and Community Care and Disability Program; and the Disability Services Program. This includes \$171.5 million (Commonwealth contribution \$164.1 million) to fund a range of programs under the Commonwealth/State Disability Agreement (CSDA). For budget reporting purposes, the total expenditure has been allocated across these two programs. The funder-provider relationship will be maintained and refined to ensure equity of treatment of services between the non-Government and Government service providers in the two programs by the Strategic Policy, Planning and Funding Directorate.

Ageing, Home and Community Care and Disability Program

Total expenditure for the Ageing, Home and Community Care and Disability Program in 2001-02 is estimated at \$700.2 million. The program comprises the following areas:

Disability Services – Non Government and other Providers

Total 2001-02 expenditure on Disability Services is estimated at \$390.7 million. This includes \$171.5 million to fund a range of programs under the Commonwealth/State Disability Agreement (CSDA) and \$12 million in capital grants that will provide supported accommodation, devolution seed funding, and equipment for people with disabilities.

The Budget provides an additional \$30.1 million in recurrent expenditure to meet commitments for Disability Services announced prior to this Budget for increased prevention and support, respite and in-home support services. The Budget also provides \$10.5 million in one-off funding for assistance through the Service Access System to people at risk, accommodation and support services as well as additional seed and recurrent funding for stage one of the relocation of people from large residential facilities.

The Department will provide \$9.5 million to the Office of Community Housing in 2001-02 to administer the capital component of the relocation of high needs residents from boarding houses.

Home and Community Care

The Home and Community Care (HACC) program is a joint Commonwealth-State program which has operated since 1986. The program provides funds for an extensive range of support services to assist frail older people, and people with disabilities, to continue to live independently and to minimise premature or inappropriate admission to permanent residential care.

The Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care will administer the program with assistance from the Departments of Health, Housing and Transport. One of the main service providers is the Home Care Service of New South Wales, which is shown separately as an agency in the 2001-02 Budget Papers.

Total estimated expenditure on the HACC program in 2001-02, including funding allocated direct to the Department of Health, will be \$317.9 million. This represents an increase of \$26.2 million or 9 percent over last year. The New South Wales Government contribution will be \$127.4 million.

Growth in HACC funding will enable services to be maintained as well as expanded in areas such as home help and personal care, home maintenance, food services, community respite care, community paramedical services, community nursing, education and information and coordination and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) services.

Ageing

In addition to funding provided under the HACC Program for services to older people, funding of \$4.9 million is being provided in 2001-02 for a number of initiatives associated with the Department's Ageing Program. This includes new funding of \$2.7 million (\$11.0 million over four years) to fund a Dementia Action plan that will promote dementia awareness, expand dementia advisory services and establish behaviour support services.

Other new funding of \$0.6 million (\$1.7 million over three years) will be provided in 2001-02 to improve access by older people to information technology through training and the development of a website that will provide information about Government and other services.

Disability Council

The Disability Council is a statutory authority that provides advice to the New South Wales Government on issues affecting people with disabilities, their families and carers. The budget for the Council is included within the budget for the Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care and is administered on a day-to-day basis by the Executive Officer of the Council.

Guardianship Tribunal

The Guardianship Tribunal is an autonomous body dealing with applications for guardianship and financial management orders. It also undertakes related investigative and educative roles. The budget for the Tribunal is included within the budget for the Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care.

Disability Services Program

Disability Services Program (formerly with the Department of Community Services) focuses on Government provision of community and accommodation support services to maximise the independence and community participation of people with disabilities.

Total expenditure for 2001-02 is estimated at \$414.3 million, an increase of \$9.2 million over 2000-01.

This expenditure excludes any impact of the Group Home Expression of Interest process and of the Devolution Plan in respect to large residences.

Asset Acquisitions

The Department's approved capital program of \$7.8 million for 2001-02 includes funding for the second part of an E_Business project to enable the community, service providers, Departmental personnel and other Human Services agencies to access the information and systems necessary to significantly improve the delivery of services to the ageing and disability sectors. The capital program also provides for asset acquisitions associated with the upgrading of computer facilities and the purchase of minor equipment.

HOME CARE SERVICE OF NEW SOUTH WALES

The Home Care Service provides high quality, cost-effective household support services to frail and aged people, younger people with disabilities and their carers. Assistance is provided to maintain the independence of these individuals in a community setting thus avoiding or delaying their admission into institutional care. The majority of the funding for the Service is provided through the Home and Community Care (HACC) program, which is a joint Commonwealth/State program.

EXPENDITURE TRENDS AND RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

Expenditure has increased steadily over recent years as the Home Care Service has successfully bid for new funding for community programs, especially in rural New South Wales. Expenditure has risen from \$132.3 million in 1997-98 to an expected \$160.5 million in 2001-02.

During 2000-01, the Home Care Service succeeded in gaining additional business from the new Veterans' Home Care Program estimated to be in the order of \$11.8 million.

Demand for Home Care services continues to be high throughout New South Wales. The Service's ability to respond to this demand has been enhanced in recent years by progressively improving Occupational Health and Safety performance, resulting in a corresponding reduction in workers' compensation premiums. This has allowed the Home Care Service to direct more resources to face-to-face service provision.

In 2000-01, the Home Care Service is expecting to deliver an additional 484,000 hours of service (14.3 percent) over the prior year. A further \$2.5 million will be released for direct service provision in 2001-02. This is mainly as a result of the continuing improvements in Occupational Health and Safety performance.

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

In 2001-02, the Home Care Service will focus on:

- ◆ reducing administrative costs through improvements in Occupational Health and Safety performance and other business processes;
- ◆ securing new business opportunities in the field of home-based community care;
- ◆ investing in the skills and competence of staff to ensure the delivery of high quality services; and
- ◆ contributing to the development and operation of the new Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care.

Total Expenses

The Home Care Service's total expenses for 2000-01 are estimated at \$143.1 million. Expenses are expected to increase to \$160.5 million for 2001-02. The bulk of the \$17.4 million increase is attributable to increases in staff costs (\$13.1 million) due to wage rises and the delivery of an additional 419,000 hours of service.

The Home Care Service's revenue for 2000-01 is estimated at \$146.1 million, increasing to \$163.6 million in 2001-02. Of this increase, \$13.3 million will come as a result of new business.

Asset Acquisitions

The Service's asset acquisition program includes \$2.7 million for the replacement of plant and equipment.

In addition, an amount of \$6.9 million is provided to support the second year of implementation of the Assessment and Rostering Service Management System.

DEPARTMENT FOR WOMEN

The Department for Women was established in April 1995 to significantly improve opportunities for women in New South Wales. The Department's purpose is to act as a key agent in improving the economic and social well-being of the women of New South Wales.

EXPENDITURE TRENDS AND RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

The Department has undergone several changes in recent years, including the expansion of the Women's Information and Referral Service, the development of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Career Development and Employment Strategy and the establishment of a Premier's Council for Women Policy Unit.

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

The Department for Women provides advice, leadership and direction in shaping whole-of-government policy, programs and services for women in line with the objectives of the Department and the Premier's Council for Women. This work is complemented by the Department's role in the provision of information services, development of the Women's Gateway and administration of the Women's Grants Program.

2001-02 BUDGET

Total Expenses

The Department has estimated total expenses of \$5.3 million in 2001-02, which includes funding of \$1 million for the Women's Grants Program. The Department will continue to implement the whole-of-government framework in the areas that impact on women. The emphasis will be on working with the Premier's Council for Women, other agencies and the community to support the Government's social justice objectives.

Asset Acquisitions

The total capital allocation in 2001-02 is \$0.13 million, which will be used for the ongoing upgrade of general office equipment.