



Consultation Paper

Coombs Health Hub

Canberra Health Services

Remember - Seek advice about consultation requirements with staff and unions from the **People & Culture Branch** prior to commencing your consultation process.

512 49610 - Employee Relations Hotline, People & Culture Branch

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1. Introduction

Canberra Health Services (CHS) is focussed on the delivery of high quality, effective, person-centred care. It provides acute, sub-acute, primary and community-based health services to the ACT - a catchment of approximately 400,000 people. It also services the surrounding Southern NSW region which includes the Bega Valley, Bombala, Cooma-Monaro, Eurobodalla, Goulburn, Mulwaree, Palerang, Queanbeyan, Snowy River, Upper Lachlan Shire and the Yass Valley.

CHS administers a range of publicly funded health facilities, programs and services including but not limited to:

- **The Canberra Hospital (CH):** a modern 600-bed tertiary hospital providing trauma services and most major medical and surgical sub-specialty services.
- **University of Canberra Hospital Specialist Centre for Rehabilitation, Recovery and Research:** a dedicated and purpose-built rehabilitation facility, with 140 inpatient beds, 75-day places and additional outpatient services.
- **Mental Health, Justice Health, Alcohol and Drug Services:** providing a range of health services from prevention and treatment through to recovery and maintenance at a number of locations and in varied environments for people suffering from mental health issues.
- **Dhulwa Secure Mental Health Unit:** a purpose designed and built facility providing clinical programs and treatment options for people suffering from acute mental health issues.
- **Six community health centres:** providing a range of general and specialist health services to people of all ages.
- **Five Walk-in Centres:** providing free treatment for minor illness and injury.
- A range of **community-based** health services including early childhood services, youth and women’s health, dental health, mental health, alcohol and drug services and medical imaging (opening late 2022).

CHS is a partner in teaching with the Australian National University, the University of Canberra and the Australian Catholic University.

The CHS [Strategic Plan](#) sets out the path forward as an organisation for the next three years and outlines how CHS will deliver against the vision of ‘creating exceptional health care together’ for consumers, their families, and carers. The CHS [Partnering with Consumers Framework](#) provides clear principles for a shared understanding of approach and what is required from all team members for effective partnerships with consumers and carers in line with the organisations values. The principles have been developed in collaboration with consumer and carer organisations and underpin this Framework.

The [current organisational chart](#), the recent [Annual Report](#) and the ACT Government [Budget Papers](#) provide more detail about CHS.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to outline the proposed commencement of services at the Coombs Health Hub. Feedback is sought from stakeholders to assist in progressing the commencement of safe, effective, quality services from this new community based location.

3. Background

The ACT Government has committed to creating five health hubs in community locations as part of the Labour Election Commitments. Funding has been allocated to establish the first of these sites in Coombs, within the Molonglo region. Additional funding has also been provided for the feasibility and design of the four additional new Health Hubs, located in geographical areas identified as needing cost-effective primary health care services. CHS will work with local communities in the Inner South, Tuggeranong, West Belconnen and North Gungahlin to establish health hubs in those regions. The services will be safe and welcoming spaces and accommodate the needs of the community, including people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Additional consultation will occur regarding the additional sites.

The Coombs Health Hub and additional future Health Hubs support the following three priorities outlined in the [CHS Clinical Services Plan](#):

- Optimising services in line with community need
- Early intervention and proactive care; and
- Integration across the care continuum and with adjacent sectors.

The Health Hubs will also contribute to the [Territory-wide Health Services Plan](#) the key areas of focus, being:

- Supporting seamless transitions of care across the service system as patients and carers move through primary, community, acute, outpatient and residential health care settings
- Formalising arrangements across the service system for how and where services are delivered through work to define the ACT's role as a local, territory and regional service provider
- Laying the foundations for a stronger, more sustainable health system to support current and future demand through strengthening core ACT Government-funded clinical support services
- Recognising that whilst there will be growth across the service system related to population growth and ageing, there are several key areas of service demand and reform that need particular attention to ensure equitable access to care and respond to the emerging and growing needs of the community.

4. Objective

The Coombs Health Hub will provide a community based location, closer to home, from which select CHS services with a focus on women's, children, and family health services can be provided. The focus of the Coombs Health Hub is to provide holistic, person centred care that is delivered at the right time by the right person with opportunities for co-ordinated service provision. Services will focus on shared models of care that extend to a broader team of multidisciplinary professionals, including GPs, Specialists, community care providers and Non-Government Organisations (NGOs).

5. The Coombs Health Hub

The Coombs Health Hub project has been delayed following consultation and conceptualisation in 2020 and has had to refocus following a change in ownership of the identified site. It is currently in the set-up phase with service Go-Live to commence in late April 2022. The Health Hub will operate from the Molonglo Valley Medical Centre, 110 Woodberry Avenue Coombs ACT.

Ideally located between the Charles Weston Public School and the Coombs local shopping centre, the Molonglo Valley Medical Centre is a strong destination point for children and family health services that are expected to be in demand for the growing Molonglo Valley region now, and into the future.

CHS has entered a leasing agreement with Palm Healthcare to sub-lease and provide co-located services from their facility.

The Coombs Health Hub will initially operate from 08:30hrs until 17:00hrs, providing appointments across different clinic days. Whilst the initial concept for the Health Hubs was proposed as a walk-in model, this has not been deemed appropriate for the Coombs services. Over time services may develop 'drop in' services and at commencement will operate a booked appointment model to ensure that the person is able to access the service they need, with minimal wait times in clinics.

A phased commencement of services will begin from late April 2022 with the re-location of a small range of CHS services (outlined below). Work is underway to identify additional services to be offered from Coombs which will meet the objectives of the Integrated Care Program with a focus on women, children and families. It is intended to offer a broader range of services including those offered by CHS, general practitioners, specialists, community care providers and NGOs.

6. Commencing Services

6.1 Initial services

At commencement CHS will begin to relocate (within existing resources, and under existing governance arrangements) the following services:

- Antenatal services
- Women's Health Counselling services
- Children's asthma services.

CHS Antenatal services

Antenatal care includes providing support, information and advice to women during pregnancy, undertaking regular clinical assessments, and screening for a range of infections and the promotion of a healthy lifestyle. Midwife led antenatal services will be offered on specific clinic days (actual days to be confirmed) as an appointment-based service between Monday to Friday from 8:30am to 5:00pm.

Midwives from CHS will be rostered to provide clinic based services from Coombs.

Women's Health Counselling services

The Women's Health Service offers free nursing, medical, nutrition and counselling services to vulnerable women in the ACT and region. Supporting women in the ACT region for over 30 years, the service is for women and provided by women. Short, medium and long-term counselling is offered to women who have been affected by abuse or neglect in childhood or adulthood. This may include domestic violence (verbal, emotional, physical, sexual, financial) or sexual assault.

The service operates predominantly from the City Community Health Centre and will provide some outreach clinics at Coombs for women in the local area. All appointments are made directly with the service. Service will operate on specific clinic days (actual days to be confirmed) Monday to Friday from 8:30am to 5:00pm.

Children's Asthma Service

The Children's Asthma Education Service (CAES) provides children, young people and their families with initial and continuing support to manage their asthma. The service operates through self-referral appointments booked via CHS Central Health Intake and focuses on helping children, young people, youths and families to understand asthma, asthma first aid, how asthma medications work and when to use them. This service is a free service for people up to 18 years old.

The Coombs based service will operate on specific clinic days to be agreed within Monday to Friday from 8:30am to 5:00pm.

6.2 Expansion of services

CHS will continue to explore options for additional services to be offered at the Coombs Health Hub and potentially may include delivery of the following services (within existing resources, and under existing governance arrangements):

- Lactation Consultations
- Post-natal debriefs
- Gestational diabetes
- Maternity options.

There is further capacity for additional services to be offered from Coombs. We invite feedback in this consultation on any opportunities or ideas on services that could be offered with a focus on women, children and families.

7. Workflow

The Coombs Health Hub consists of the subletting of six consultation rooms and the sharing of waiting room, public amenities, reception, tearoom, kitchenette and staff only amenities. The sharing of facilities, spaces and functions enables service efficiencies as well as creating partnerships to facilitate better liaison and minimise service duplication.

Minor refurbishments are currently being implemented to ensure the facility meets CHS standards for safety.

All CHS staff will be part of their larger team and will be rostered to work at Coombs by agreement.

Back-up, management and governance will be provided by the overarching team/service.

At least one receptionist will be rostered to Coombs and will be part of the Women's, Youth and Children's administration team. Additional support and back up will be provided by the Walk-in-Centre Administration team.

Connectivity to act.gov will be available onsite. Where possible the service will be digitally based. There will be lockable storage for a small amount of active clinical files if required. ICT resources will ensure appropriate access for all staff. This will include on-site access to a dedicated CHS multi-function device.

There will be a small amount of lockable storage in each room for clinicians to store equipment and collateral material. There is insufficient storage for all requirements for all services to be permanently stored on site. Staff will need to take this into consideration in establishing the booking and scheduling rules.

Initially services will work as co-located services and over time more services will be introduced to operate in a more integrated manner. Templates are being developed to govern these services which may include NGOs, GPs, support and advocacy groups and peer led services.

Room bookings will be managed by the WYC Operations Manager (or delegate).

Appointments will be managed by individual services. Patients will be booked in through the ACTPAS system, or by special arrangement with the receptionist to ensure a welcoming person centred approach at the Hub. Appointments will be booked through the Central Health Intake, or by services themselves consistent with their current models.

There will be no cash on site. Any medications will be stored securely in approved storage mechanisms.

There will be an AED on site. Staff will have access to a CHS and WHS approved duress device. Site specific procedures and responses to duress activation and escalation of care requiring assistance will be in place and developed in collaboration with co-existing services, including an outline of expected actions and responsibilities.

There is car parking on site for staff and people attending the service. There is accessible parking, lift access and accessible toilets on site.

Community promotion of the opening will be undertaken, noting that access to specific services will remain through existing channels.

Monitoring will occur through existing service governance channels and through the Integrated Care Program which will specifically monitor:

- Activity
- Room utilisation
- Consumer feedback
- Provider feedback.

8. Rationale for Change

The Coombs Health Hub is being established as part of the initial phase of the Integrated Care Program, identified in the CHS Strategic Plan 2020-2023 as “a partner to improve people’s health” strategic priority. It describes a proactive connection and coordination of care in the community with a particular focus on particular health needs in the community, in particularly meeting the needs of individuals with multimorbidity and complex care needs. It supports the building of a sustainable health service with a focus on health improvement and disease prevention for the general population living in the ACT.

The Integrated Care Program objectives are to:

- provide care closer to home
- reduce fragmentation of care
- slow the rate of disease progression (in the context of the person's clinical condition) while maximising health and wellbeing within the community
- improve access and timeliness to quality integrated multidisciplinary care across the care continuum
- support patient and carer empowerment through self-management programs and approaches
- promote and encourage preventative behaviours (such as healthy eating and physical activity)
- actively engage GPs and Primary Health Providers as part of a multidisciplinary coordinated approach, and
- reduce the demands on the acute health care system.

These objectives are supported by the value-based health system to achieve the following:

- better population health outcomes
- improved patient and carer experience
- improved provider experience, and
- improved cost efficiencies.

9. Future Model

The Coombs Health Hub service provision will commence utilising existing CHS services. Future expansion of services within Coombs will be focused on meeting the objectives of an integrated service delivery with an emphasis on women, children and families at Coombs.

As part of the establishment of the four additional Health Hubs, significant stakeholder engagement activities will occur in mid-2022. Feedback from these activities will inform future service selection and delivery models for Coombs, as relevant.

10. Consultation Methodology

Feedback on the proposed Coombs Health Hub is welcomed and will also assist in the planning for additional Health Hubs in the community as part of the Integrated Care Program service scope and implementation.

In particular, responses to the following questions via the link – <https://forms.health.hubs>

- *Do you support the Integrated Care Program vision of care to provide holistic patient care that is integrated, closer to home and accessible across the Canberra community?*
- *Do you have any concerns about the Coombs Health Hub proposal so far, if so what are they?*
- *Are there other services that could be beneficially offered at the Coombs Health Hub?*
- *Do you have any other feedback you would like to be considered in relation to future Health Hub proposals?*

If you would like an opportunity to discuss your feedback, please also email CHSCOO@act.gov.au.

Action	Timeframe
Open consultation	18 March 2022
Closure of consultation	4 April 2022
Implementation	April 2022
Review	Ongoing monitoring

For further information on the Coombs Health Hub and Integrated Care Program – [Projects \(sharepoint.com\)](#).

11. References

Document	Author
<i>CHS Strategic Plan 2020 - 2023</i>	<i>CEO, Canberra Health Services</i>
<i>CHS Partnering with Consumers Framework 2020 - 2023</i>	<i>CEO, Canberra Health Services</i>
<i>CHS Clinical Services Plan 2021-2031</i>	<i>CEO, Canberra Health Services</i>
<i>ACTHD Territory-wide Health Services Plan 2022 - 2026</i>	<i>DG, ACT Health Directorate</i>