

**Rachel Stephen-Smith MLA**

Minister for Health

Minister for Mental Health

Minister for Finance

Minister for the Public Service

Member for Kurrajong

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**RESPONSE TO QUESTION ON NOTICE**

**Questions on Notice Paper No 5**

**11 APRIL 2025**

**Question No. 350**

**MR RATTENBURY MLA:** To ask the Minister for Health

1. What options is the Minister for Health implementing to ensure that there will be a continued level of capacity for respite service in the ACT, given the Minister's decision to end the contract with the Salvation Army to operate Burrangiri Respite Centre.
2. What number of bed nights will be made available under the options the Minister is considering.

**RACHEL STEPHEN-SMITH MLA** - The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

1. The ACT Government recognises that accessing quality respite care is important for older Canberrans and their families and it is why we are committed to improving health outcomes and community-based services for older people.

As discussed on numerous occasions, alternative models of service delivery have been explored, including purchasing residential aged care respite in existing or new aged care facilities. Given the Commonwealth's responsibility for the aged care system, the ACT Government has been exploring the opportunity to access part of the \$10 million election commitment from Federal Labor to address the potential short-term gap in residential respite.

2. As previously advised, I wrote to the Federal Minister for Health, the Hon Mark Butler MP, on 5 May 2025 seeking to partner with the Commonwealth to deliver equivalent respite capacity of 15 dedicated beds as soon as practicable, aiming for there to be no or minimal break in service from 1 July 2025. ACT Government officials have been engaging with the aged care sector to understand its intentions regarding respite availability. There are 29 residential aged care facilities that can receive Commonwealth funding for respite places, with at least an additional three new facilities scheduled to open in 2025-26.



Approved for circulation to the Member and incorporation into Hansard.



Rachel Stephen-Smith MLA  
Minister for Health

Date: 13/5/25

This response required 5hrs 5mins to complete, at an approximate cost of \$487.80.