



NCOSS Analysis:

NSW Budget 2018-19



About NCOSS

The NSW Council of Social Service (NCOSS) works with and for people experiencing poverty and disadvantage to see positive change in our communities. When rates of poverty and inequality are low, everyone in NSW benefits. With 80 years of knowledge and experience informing our vision, NCOSS is uniquely placed to bring together civil society to work with government and business to ensure communities in NSW are strong for everyone. As the peak body for health and community services in NSW we support the sector to deliver innovative services that grow and evolve as needs and circumstances evolve.

Published June 2018.

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Hits and misses: Budget overview

What does this budget mean for people and communities in NSW?

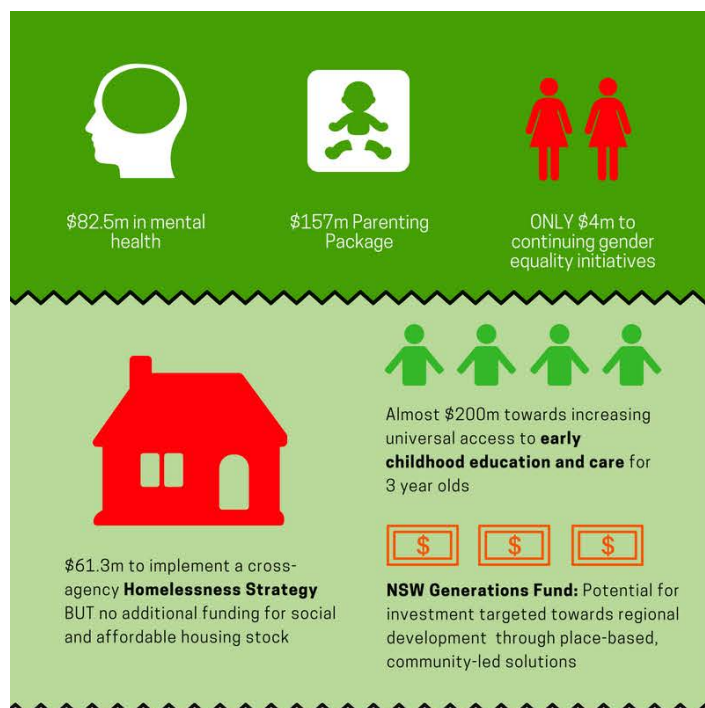
Over the last few years we have toured the state hearing directly from metro, regional, rural and remote communities about their priorities, challenges and aspirations. When we speak directly to people living below the poverty line and to leaders and services grounded in communities, we hear about the changes they want to see, the solutions they see working, and the support they need from the NSW Government.

Last year we pulled together what we heard into our 2018-19 Pre-Budget Submission [No Poverty: A Roadmap for a Fair NSW](#) which provided a roadmap for a fair NSW and on behalf of communities across the state called for the NSW Government to:

- Give all children and young people the best start in life
- Create homes for our most vulnerable
- Make energy affordable
- Boost support for people with mental health issues
- Build a fair justice system for Aboriginal communities
- Financially empower women throughout their life cycle
- Give a voice to all people with disability

We know that giving vulnerable families opportunities to thrive is front and centre for communities across the state. We therefore welcome the focus on children and families in the 2018-19 NSW Budget.

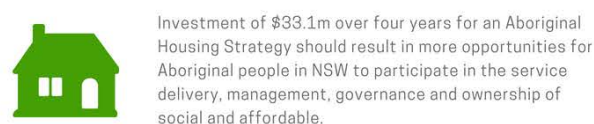
High quality early childhood education and care (ECEC) is vital to breaking the cycle of poverty and we were pleased to see this Budget commit almost \$200 million towards increasing universal access to early childhood education and care for



ABORIGINAL INVESTMENT



SOCIAL HOUSING STRATEGY



REGIONAL & REMOTE NSW



children at the crucial age of 3 years old. The \$42 million in capital grants funding will also mean more spaces for children in community preschools and opportunities for existing facilities to scale up. However, NSW still spends significantly less per child on ECEC services than any other state or territory, and was the only state in 2016 to fall short (at 85%) of the national target of 95% children enrolled in preschool for more than 600 hours in the year before full-time school. Therefore it is difficult to see how universal access will be achieved.

We know that good health and wellbeing is vital to a good life, particularly intervening early to identify vulnerabilities and provide support. We welcome the additional \$82.5 million in mental health, \$42 million of which will be invested in much needed community based services and supports, and the \$157 million Parenting Package that includes \$4.3 million to expand the NSW postnatal visiting program. NCOSS has long advocated to expand nurse-led home visits, recognising the mounting evidence that targeted support for new mothers in the first 1000 days has a lasting impact on a child's health and wellbeing.

However, what we also know is that a stable base and safe, secure and affordable housing is key to people being able to thrive in life, provide for their families and access education, employment and good health. The \$4.7 million to pilot the Geelong Project in NSW is a positive step towards preventing young people falling into homelessness by keeping them connected to community and living at home. Similarly, we were also pleased to see the \$33 million investment in the Aboriginal Social Housing Strategy and \$10 million for social impact investment in Aboriginal economic development opportunities.

However, we were surprised and disappointed to see that the 2018-19 Budget does not include any additional funding for social and affordable housing stock. Right across the state communities

consistently tell us that more social and affordable housing is a top priority. The \$61 million announcement to fund a whole of government homelessness strategy is welcome. However without additional social and affordable housing stock, this Budget misses the mark in addressing homelessness in NSW.

With a focus on children and families, this budget needed to recognise that a one size fits all approach does not always achieve equal outcomes as not everyone starts on the same footing and many in our communities experience multiple and intersecting forms of disadvantage.

We know that our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people face intersecting and systemic disadvantage and need tailored solutions shaped by and for them. Aside from the welcome \$2.7 million to expand the Koori Court in Surry Hills, this Budget does not indicate that the NSW Government is serious about reducing the high imprisonment rates of young Aboriginal people. We know that systemic barriers mean Aboriginal young people are 15 times more likely to go to prison than non-Aboriginal young people. These figures demand significant investment in culturally appropriate legal services, diversionary and post release programs.

We know that women and girls experience poverty and disadvantage at greater levels than men and boys, and that they need strong, targeted and sustained solutions that directly affect their lives in order to be empowered and thrive. There needs to be significant investment to economically empower women across their lifecycle and progress gender equality in NSW. The \$4 million in this Budget committed to gender equality initiatives does not reflect a serious commitment to tackling gender equality and provide equal opportunities and outcomes for women. It does not offer practical solutions, supports for vulnerable women or investment in mechanism that will meaningfully economically empower women and girls.

We know people in regional and remote NSW face significant challenges accessing services, education and employment. Despite the commitment of \$2.2 million to establish five additional Family Care Centre Hubs in Queanbeyan, Coffs Harbour, Dubbo, Taree and Broken Hill for vulnerable families, we were disappointed to see a greater regional focus on infrastructure than people in this Budget. Investment in infrastructure is also largely limited to continued funding for existing initiatives. For example, while we are pleased to see \$87 million committed to Community Transport and Home and Community Care services, this is not new money or a significant increase from the funding allocation last year, and we know that regional communities need far more support for community transport to fill service gaps.

In this context we were interested to see introduction of the NSW Generations Fund to direct investment returns towards the My Community Dividend program. With \$27.5 million allocated for this year, there is significant potential for this to be targeted towards regional development through place-based, community-developed and community-led solutions to tackle the social challenges they face.

As we move towards the next State Election with a \$3.9 billion surplus, NCOSS hopes to see strong commitments to delivering targeted solutions and investment for vulnerable people and families where they are needed most.

Give all children and young people the best start in life

All children deserve the best start in life. However, too many of our children and young people experience poverty, violence, poor health and disadvantage. We know whole of family, whole of community approaches that provide early, targeted support deliver the best and most effective outcomes. We need to build and support safe, resilient families and communities so children can grow and thrive.

Early childhood education and care

NCOSS recommendation

Establish a \$250 million Early Childhood Education Investment Fund to ensure vulnerable children access the full benefits of quality early education.

Budget commitment

\$474.3 million overall funding has been announced for early childhood education and care. This includes a \$197.8 million program to:

- Provide universal access to two years of community preschool for all three year-olds from 2019.
- Support the creation of 4,800 new community preschool places in growth areas through \$42.1 million in capital grants funding.
- Continue Start Strong funding for preschool education in community preschools and long day care services, for children in the year before school and children living with disadvantage. From 2019, the Start Strong program will be funded in line with demand population growth.

Overall funding will also be allocated to:

- Introducing the Start Strong Pathways Program which targets the early learning needs of disadvantaged and vulnerable children too young for preschool and supports pathways into early childhood education.
- Continue funding for the Rural and Remote Early Childhood Teaching Scholarship programs which support early childhood educators in preschools and long day services to upgrade their diploma qualifications to a four-year degree.
- Ongoing support for the Sector Development Program which provides training, support and resources to build sector capacity in alignment with government priorities.
- Continued funding to enhance participation and educational outcomes in early childhood education for children with a disability.

Analysis

We know that high quality early childhood education and care is vital in breaking the cycle of poverty and enhancing a child's developmental outcomes, particularly for children in the two years before full-time school. NCOSS is therefore pleased to see almost \$200 million investment go towards increasing access to early childhood education and care, and the NSW Government's focus on providing universal access for 3 year olds for two years. The \$42 million in capital grants funding will also mean more spaces for children in community preschools and opportunities for existing facilities to scale up.

However, with only a slight increase of 6.6% (\$29.8 million) from 2017/18 in overall funding, it is difficult to see how universal access to community preschools will be achieved. We know that we need to be spending at least \$600 per child on early childhood education and care services to bring NSW in line with the rest of the country and achieve universal access. Without a significant injection of new funding, the NSW Government will continue to spend less per child than most other states and territories, meaning less access, higher fees, and less opportunities for children early on in life.

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With over \$6.5 billion announced for school infrastructure and maintenance, and \$1.3 billion for private schools, NCOSS would like to see greater investment and focus on vital supports for vulnerable children and their families in the early years.

NCOSS is also encouraged to see funding allocated to introducing the Start Strong Pathways Program. As this program rolls out we will be working with our members to assess whether it is meeting the needs of vulnerable children and families. NCOSS has long advocated for supporting ECEC services to connect vulnerable children and their families to early childhood wrap around supports, community, health and other vital services.



Childhood obesity

NCOSS recommendation

Invest an additional \$39 million over three years in childhood obesity prevention with a focus on equitable access and opportunities in regional and remote NSW.

Budget commitment

\$1.6 billion overall funding has been committed to building healthy, resilient communities, an increase of \$95.4 million from last year. This includes \$24 million for strategies to reduce childhood obesity.

\$303.6 million has also been allocated over four years to continue the Active Kids Rebate Program.

Analysis

A healthy life for our children and young people is essential to them achieving their full potential. But we know children from low-income and disadvantaged backgrounds, and those living in regional and remote areas, are at much greater risk of being overweight or obese.

This Budget shows a significant increase in funding for childhood obesity prevention measures from the \$3 million committed in 2017/18. We need to ensure this increased investment is targeted to reflect childhood obesity as one of the key health issues facing our children that will have significant flow-on impacts on their health and wellbeing outcomes across their life.

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NCOSS also notes that the NSW Government will be looking to provide opportunities for translational research grants for sustained nurse-led home visiting programs to incorporate childhood obesity prevention measures, based on outcomes from the 2007 Healthy Beginnings randomised controlled trial. This is a particularly positive step in the context of this Budget also committing \$4.3 million to provide 35 nurses for increased post-natal home visits and more opportunities for vulnerable families to receive the early support they need.

It is encouraging to see that funding for the Active Kids Rebate Program has been increased to \$303.6 million over four years. NCOSS understands that the next phase of the program will look to increase engagement in areas of low participation, including for children in low socioeconomic areas and regional NSW. Given the higher rates of overweight and obesity in regional and remote NSW, and the additional barriers to access for children in low incomes households, we need to see equity measures incorporated into this program.

Domestic and family violence

NCOSS recommendation

Invest \$3.5 million to fund the delivery of child-centred, trauma informed services targeting children and young people who are victims or have experienced domestic and family violence.

Budget commitment

- A slight increase to \$4.1 million for the Advocate for Children and Young People to improve safety, welfare and wellbeing of all children and young people in NSW.
- An increase to \$41.3 million for the Office of the Children's Guardian to continue promoting and regulating child-safe organisations and services.
- \$59.1 million over four years for an additional 100 workers in the child protection system, including 78 more caseworks, 10 casework support workers and 12 casework managers.
- \$1.8 million for NGO-led community-based interventions addressing domestic and family violence.

Analysis

All children should feel safe and empowered, yet they are too often the unseen or unheard victims of domestic and family violence. As a state, our response is patchy at best and does not address the significant long-lasting impact of trauma on children across their life.

We need targeted investment for existing and additional measures to deliver child-centred, trauma informed services for children and young people experiencing or at risk of domestic and family violence. At a minimum, the NSW Government should be allocating funding to deliver a service of this type in both metropolitan Sydney and regional NSW, as well as an Aboriginal community-controlled service.

NCOSS notes that \$44.1 million over three years has also been allocated for the continuation of domestic violence reoffending initiatives, including Supervision of High Risk Offenders and EQUIPS behaviour change program. While we are supportive of investment to reduce reoffending behaviours, we need to see far more investment in trauma informed services for victims.

As a state, our response is patchy at best and does not address the significant long-lasting impact of trauma on children across their life.

Similarly, while the Budget commitment of \$59 million for an additional 100 child protection workers will partly address a significantly overburdened system, we need far more investment and focus on prevention and early intervention measures and services that cater for children's unique experience of domestic and family violence. NCOSS will be particularly interested to see further detail in the \$1.8 million announced for NGO-led community-based interventions this year.

Create homes for our most vulnerable

We all need a place to call home. Without a safe, secure home, people cannot work towards a better life for themselves and their families.

NCOSS recommendation

Invest an additional \$97 million over four years to create homes that meet the needs of people experiencing or at risk of homelessness:

- \$45 million over four years toward developing at least five youth foyer models across NSW
- \$22 million in new housing models for older women
- \$30 million over four years towards a Housing First Response to people experiencing homelessness

Budget commitment

The NSW Government committed \$61.3 million to implement a cross-agency Homelessness Strategy which will deliver the following new initiatives:

- \$20 million for homelessness social impact investment
- \$6.9 million for co-located homeless and health services
- \$4.7 million for universal risk screening and supports to respond early to young people at risk (Geelong Project)

The funding will also extend the following programs:

- \$6.2 million to expand Staying Home Leaving Violence program to five new sites
- \$3.8 million for assertive outreach to proactively support rough sleepers
- \$10.6 million for sustaining tenancies support, by addressing complex needs such as mental health and drug and alcohol issues
- \$9.1 million for additional transitional accommodation

The NSW Government has additionally committed \$33.1 million in new funding over four years for an Aboriginal Housing Strategy.

Analysis

Having access to safe and affordable housing is a number one priority for many NCOSS members across metropolitan and regional NSW. In greater Sydney there are currently less than 1% of private rentals that are affordable for people on low incomes. As of June 2016 there were 60,000 people in NSW on the social housing waiting list, with waiting periods between 2 and 10 years. Among those struggling to maintain a roof over their head are young people who cannot afford rental costs on Youth Allowance, and older women, who are one of the fastest growing cohorts of people at risk of homelessness.

The Government must make a serious investment in housing infrastructure and support services if it is going to address the housing and homelessness crisis we are experiencing in NSW. The Government's \$61.3 million

investment into a whole of government homelessness strategy over four years is welcome. However without serious investment in social and affordable housing stock, we are unlikely to see a reduction in the record number of people experiencing homelessness.

Our 2018-19 Pre-Budget Submission called on Government to commit \$30 million towards a Housing First response to address homelessness. We also recommended investment in infrastructure to build five new youth foyers and affordable housing co-designed with older women in at least three different locations. A Housing First response entails assertive outreach to rough sleepers combined with immediate access to long-term, sustainable accommodation and support services. This Budget is a missed opportunity to implement a much-needed Housing First model through additional funding.

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The NSW Government's \$61.3 million investment into a homelessness strategy includes \$4.7 million to pilot the Geelong Project in NSW. We welcome this allocation because we know that intervening early to keep young people in school and connected to their community significantly reduces their chance of experiencing homelessness.

We have advocated for a \$3 million commitment to build the capacity of Aboriginal organisations to actively partner in the future production of social and affordable housing. The expansion of the Aboriginal housing sector will result in more opportunities for Aboriginal people in NSW to participate in the service delivery, management, governance and ownership of social and affordable. We are therefore pleased to welcome a financial commitment of \$33.1 million over four years for an Aboriginal Housing Strategy.



Make energy more affordable

Energy use underpins all aspects of our daily lives. While high energy prices affect households across NSW, the stark reality for people living below the poverty line is that rising bills are impacting their health, wellbeing and quality of life.

NCOSS recommendation

Invest an additional \$39 million in 2018/19 to reform energy rebates and deliver a single, expanded Low Income Household Energy Rebate equivalent to 17.5% of eligible household's electricity bills.

Budget commitment

The Budget saw the announcement of pilots of "One Click Energy Switch", enabling Service NSW to proactively search for the best energy deal for vulnerable consumers. This was part of the \$19 million committed to a Cost of Living Service allowing customers access to their rebates and refunds.

An energy affordability package announced in September 2017 included 20% increases to rebates for vulnerable households and discounts to equipment upgrades for concession cardholders and small businesses.

Analysis

We welcome the announcement of the "One Click Energy Switch" pilots. Across NSW, we hear that the complexity of comparing rates or switching providers often means that vulnerable people are paying much more for their electricity than they need to. Service NSW provides a centralised face to face point of contact, assisting people through the complexity of the current system, ensuring they get the best deal possible for these vital services. We particularly welcome the fact that two of the pilots are in regional areas, where we know communities are doing it particularly tough and there are challenges of digital inclusion and connectivity to access online supports.

However, this does not tackle the key issue of energy affordability and the fact that families on low incomes are struggling to cover their costs. We know from our [2017 Cost of Living survey](#) that in order to pay their energy bills, 19% of children living in low-income households are going without food, and 33% of low-income households are going without medical treatment.

The energy affordability package announced in September 2017 largely represents an extension of existing measures, doing nothing to address the structural inequities of the current system. For example, the increase to rebates corresponds to the retail price increase of July 2017. This is a missed opportunity for meaningful reform in energy pricing to make a real difference for people and their families.

We welcome the announcement of the "One Click Energy Switch" pilots...We particularly welcome the fact that two of the pilots are in regional areas



As we argued in our Cost of Living report, structural change to the rebate system is needed to create outcomes for people experiencing disadvantage. We recommended that:

- the Low Income Household Energy Rebate transition to a percentage-based concession providing eligible households with a 17.5% rebate on their electricity bills;
- low income households with high bills receive additional assistance to evaluate usage and reduce costs;
- eligibility for the Low Income Household Energy Rebate be extended to holders of Commonwealth Low Income Health Care Cards;
- retailers be required to put all Low Income Household Energy Rebate recipients, hardship customers and customers on payment plans onto a 'best deal' or to develop special low-cost deals for this cohort.

Boost support for people with mental health issues

Good mental healthcare and wellbeing enables us to lead healthier lives, cope with the stresses of life more effectively and realise our full potential.

NCOSS recommendation

Invest \$25 million over four years to expand the mental health peer workforce and support people at specific 'pressure points' in the mental healthcare system.

Budget commitment

This Budget commits \$2 billion overall to mental health, an increase of \$82.5 million from last year. This includes:

- \$100 million recurrent investment per annum to implement the NSW Government's mental health reforms, including strengthening early intervention and specialist community mental health teams, enhance psychosocial supports, and transition long-stay patients into the community.
- \$42 million for additional community based mental health services and supports.
- \$1.1 million for increased specialist perinatal and infant mental health services, which will deliver mental health services to pregnant women and mothers with severe and complex mental illness.

The NSW Government has also committed an additional \$700 million to begin a state-wide Mental Health Infrastructure Program, that includes \$20 million in 2018-19 to improve therapeutic environments and commence planning for a number of key infrastructure projects.

Analysis

Getting the right mental health support at the right time is often out of reach for too many people living with poverty and disadvantage. Key barriers include the rising cost of healthcare, a shortage of mental health workers and the persistent stigma around mental health issues.

We therefore welcome the additional \$82.5 million committed to the mental health budget this year, particularly the \$42 million additional funding for community based mental health services and supports.

NCOSS was also pleased to see the NSW Government supporting the value of lived experience by announcing \$2.7 million to fund an additional 30 mental health peer workers across NSW for 2017/18 in November last year.

As part of the \$100 million in recurrent funding to deliver the NSW Government's mental health reforms, NCOSS understands that 265 full time equivalent mental health worker positions will be created in 2018/19 and that a portion of these will be allocated to new peer worker positions in line with our recommendation.

We know that the mental health peer workforce has in the past been under-supported and under-utilised in NSW, and that it needs strong and ongoing investment to grow and be sustained as a key part of the mental health workforce. We look forward to seeing further detail of this crucial investment in the coming months.

Build a fair justice system for Aboriginal communities

Our Aboriginal communities are vibrant and diverse, with strong connections to culture, community and country. Empowering these communities, and particularly Aboriginal youth, is key to addressing the challenges they continue to experience in health, education, employment and the justice system.

NCOSS recommendation

Invest \$44 million over four years to help Aboriginal communities reduce contact with the justice system:

- \$24.4 million over four years in community-based Aboriginal legal assistance services
- \$4 million over four years to reducing young Aboriginal people's contact with the criminal justice system
- \$15.6 million over four years in culturally appropriate post-release programs, focusing on continuity of support to re-establish connection to community and reduce re-offending.

Budget commitment

The NSW Government has allocated \$2.7 million to expand the Koori Court within the new Surry Hills Children's Court.

Analysis

Young Aboriginal people (10-17) make up less than 4% of the NSW population and yet make up to 51% of the NSW juvenile justice population. This Budget has failed to deliver the funding necessary to give Aboriginal children and young people a better start in life by investing in programs and services to reduce young Aboriginal peoples contact with the justice system.

This Budget has failed to deliver the funding necessary to give Aboriginal children and young people a better start in life...

We sought modest funding for diversionary programs for young Aboriginal people. \$40 million was committed in the budget for diversionary programs to be delivered by the Police Citizens Youth Club (PCYC). \$4.8 million was allocated to continue the Youth on Track program, \$9.2 million less than last year, indicating that this funding is to maintain existing programs only. While we support the PCYC and Youth on Track program, we firmly believe that diversionary programs must be targeted and culturally appropriate, and to achieve this it must be designed and implemented by Aboriginal people and services.

Similarly, while we welcome the \$3.2 million per year for our Community Legal Centres, there is no additional funding for the chronically underfunded Aboriginal Legal Services (ALS). ALS are specialists in providing culturally appropriate legal advice and referrals. It is vital that Aboriginal people, who are the fastest growing cohort of people entering the justice system, are provided with targeted and culturally appropriate supports and legal services.

The Government committed \$2.7 million over three years to expand the Koori Court to the new Surry Hills Children's Court. With Koori Courts demonstrating success in reducing recidivism rates, NCOSS gladly welcomes this announcement.

Financially empower women throughout their life cycle

Financial security and literacy empowers us to access life's essentials, opportunities, and freedom of choice. Particularly for women, financial insecurity places them at greater risk of crisis and is a critical factor in their ability to escape an abusive relationship.

NCOSS recommendation

Invest an additional \$7.8 million over three years in the delivery of the Financial Counselling Services Program and gender-specific material to better assist vulnerable women.

Budget commitment

This Budget commits \$4 million on continuing initiatives with a focus on economic opportunity:

- \$400,000 for the Investing in Women Grants program to promote gender equality in the workplace and financial security for women.
- The Council on Women's Economic Opportunity will provide external advice to Government on policies and programs that improve economic opportunities for women.
- Securing the 2019 NSW Women of the Year Awards program.
- Monitoring gender equality across key indicators in education and learning, safety and justice, work and financial security, leadership and health and wellbeing.

Analysis

We know that gender inequality is the root cause of violence against women; that it directly contributes to women's financial insecurity and poverty; and that it is the basis for older women's homelessness. We also know that in Australia the picture of poverty is highly feminised; that women and girls remain at greater risk of poverty and disadvantage across their life cycle than men and boys. A key to achieving gender equality is women's economic empowerment right across their lives.

Therefore it is pleasing to see the NSW Government acknowledge the importance of economic opportunity for women. However, this Budget commits only a slight increase in funding from last year for a continuation of existing initiatives, which do not directly affect women's lives, particularly our most vulnerable women. It falls drastically short of what is needed to advance gender equity and economic empowerment for women in our state.

We need to see significant, substantive investment in systemic change ... to ensure real progress of women economic empowerment

We need to see significant, substantive investment in systemic change in the four key priorities of our [New Year For Women Plan for Action](#) to ensure real progress of women economic empowerment and to break the cycle of disadvantage faced by many women and girls in NSW. We need investment in financial literacy, women's participation and outcomes in employment, housing that meets the diverse needs of women and a superannuation and retirement income system that works for



women and does not leave them at risk of poverty later in life.

As a starting measure, we know that access to financial counsellors plays a vital role in breaking the systemic cycle of financial disadvantage experienced by many women. Currently, the need for financial counselling is outstripping availability, with waiting times in some regions reaching between three to eight weeks. There is also no capacity to provide wrap around or outreach support to particularly vulnerable women.

Give a voice to all people with disability

We all want the opportunity to fulfil our potential. The National Disability Insurance Scheme is a huge and positive reform, giving people choice and control over their disability supports. People with disability also need information and active assistance from advocates outside the NDIS to help them take control of their lives and have a voice in shaping policy.

NCOSS recommendation

Invest \$13 million to maintain funding beyond June 2018 to organisations providing representation, advocacy and information to people with disability and their families.

Budget commitment

Announced in April this year, the Transitional Advocacy Funding Supplement will provide up to \$26 million in disability advocacy funding until 2020, with a key focus on activities and support inclusion of people with disability in their communities. The Ability Links program was also extended.

The Budget also announces \$4.7m increased funding per annum in the Health cluster to create three specialist hubs with expertise in intellectual disability health services.

Analysis

The *Disability Inclusion Act 2014* mandates that the NSW Government implements systems and processes that are accessible and inclusive to people with disability. Advocacy and information organisations have acted as crucial partners to the Government as it fulfils these responsibilities; these functions were never intended to be covered by any aspect of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

...we stress that the NSW Government has an ongoing responsibility to fund representation, advocacy and information for people with disability beyond 2020



As such, while we welcome the transitional funding for disability advocacy, we stress that the NSW Government has an ongoing responsibility to fund representation, advocacy and information for people with disability beyond 2020.

We are pleased to see the announcement of specialist hubs with expertise in the health needs of people with intellectual disability. To date, this expertise has been funded by the Department of Ageing and Disability Home Care (ADHC), which will close on 30 June 2018. As documented in our recently released report '[Way forward to an inclusive service system: Challenges for people with disability with closure of ADHC](#)', ADHC's closure creates a number of gaps across the service system.

These looming service gaps will require all NSW Government agencies to increase their responsiveness to people with disability. For example, this Budget saw the Department of Family and Community Services take over responsibility for the Community Justice Program, which provides wrap around support to people with disability in contact with the criminal justice system. Ongoing, sustained investment will be needed to enable this responsiveness, and ensure disability is considered a whole of Government responsibility.



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