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Hon Troy Buswell BEc MLA

State Budget 2013-14: The efficient delivery of quality services - More money for health, education, police

Thursday, 8 August 2013

- **Health spending up \$309m to \$7.2b in 2013-14**
- **Education spending up \$260m to \$4.4b in 2013-14**
- **Average spend per student will rise to \$15,621, an increase in costs per student of \$513**
- **\$38m over four years for 155 school health staff across the State**

The Liberal National Government has boosted funding for law and order, health and education, committing \$14.2billion for frontline services in 2013-14.

Treasurer Troy Buswell said the 2013-14 State Budget delivered an unprecedented investment in key frontline areas.

Mr Buswell said the commitment to frontline services meant \$1 out of every \$2 would be spent on key frontline areas.

The Treasurer said health spending would increase \$309million to \$7.2billion; education funding would rise \$260million to \$4.4billion; and investment in law and order increased to \$2.6billion across WA Police, Department of Corrective Services and the Department of the Attorney General.

“This State Budget is being delivered with unprecedented demand on key service areas, with the Western Australian population increasing by about 75,000 last year,” he said.

“While the State Government has to look at a more efficient way to deliver some of our services, we are responding to unprecedented demand by funding increases in education, health and law and order.”

Health

Mr Buswell said the boost to health funding would enable an additional 86,000 patients to be treated in hospitals across the State.

“This funding injection provides for expense growth of 7 per cent to accommodate expected growth in hospital activity,” he said.

“This investment represents an increase of an estimated 16,000 patients to stay and be treated in a hospital, 25,000 patients to be treated in emergency departments and 45,000 outpatient treatments.”

The record investment in the health system would continue with additional recurrent expenditure of \$2.5billion allocated for health services over the next four years.

The Treasurer said the Government would also invest significant funds in school entry health assessment for pre-primary school children and care for palliative patients.

“The State Budget provides \$38million of new funding over the next four years for an additional 155 school health staff across the State, including 10 speech pathologists,” he said.

“We’ll also spend \$19.5million to strengthen palliative care services and \$158.8million over three years has been allocated to fund agreed wage increases for nurses and midwives.”

New and reprioritised funds of \$30million over four years are allocated to health and medical research.

The regions will also benefit from a significant investment through the Liberal National Government’s Royalties for Regions program over the next four years, with new regional health initiatives including:

- \$161million for the North West Health Initiative, to improve health and aged care facilities in towns across the North-West
- \$8million to develop and deliver an emergency telehealth service to support the Goldfields region

- \$6million to provide training, equipment and employment for 42 part-time Aboriginal health workers across 80 Aboriginal communities to deliver much-needed ear health services
- \$3.5million for renal dialysis services for communities in the Wheatbelt
- \$400,000 to provide better co-ordinated healthcare for children and families in the Fitzroy Valley.

In line with a Government commitment, \$4million would be allocated over four years from within the Health budget to help eradicate mosquitoes in high-risk residential areas to protect families and residents from mosquito-borne diseases.

Education

The State Budget will provide an extra \$260million in 2013-14 to meet growing demand in WA schools - an additional \$1.2billion over the next four years.

Mr Buswell said WA schools had experienced record growth in student numbers over the past two years.

“Semester one this year saw an extra 8,146 students enter the public school system,” he said.

“This year alone, funding to primary and secondary education will increase to \$4.4billion which equates to an average of \$15,621 spent per student, reflecting an increase in costs of \$513 per student.”

WA’s successful Independent Public School initiative will be extended with an extra \$18.2million provided over four years to allow more schools to benefit from greater flexibility and autonomy.

“On top of this, the Government is making an additional \$114million available over four years to the private schooling sector through the Low Interest Loan Scheme to help satisfy the high demand for capital works projects in non-government schools,” the Treasurer said.

Students will reap the benefits of a \$581.8million education investment in new primary and high schools, new child and parent centres and new classrooms and upgrades, across the State.

“We are also funding an additional six child and parent centres over the next four years at a cost of \$19.1million, taking the Government’s total commitment to 16 centres at an estimated cost of \$48million,” Mr Buswell said.

These centres will offer integrated health, early education and parenting services and programs. The first five centres will be fully operational for the start of the 2014 school year, a further five for 2015 and the remaining six for 2016.

Law and order

Under the 2013-14 State Budget, funding for law and order increases to \$2.6billion across WA Police, Department of Corrective Services and the Department of the Attorney General. Frontline policing is boosted through a \$56.4million increase in spending this year as the Government embarks on delivering its election promise to recruit an extra 550 police and police auxiliary officers over the next four years.

Community Services

This year an additional \$20million will be provided to not-for-profit disability service providers as part of a \$604million commitment to build the capacity of the community sector.

“On top of this, from December, 67,000 West Australians will have access to free ACROD parking permits, thanks to a four-year \$3.7million commitment to cover ACROD fees,” the Treasurer said.

“The Liberal National Government will continue to improve access to efficient and quality services for all West Australians by investing in our local and regional communities to ensure we are building stronger and safer societies.”

Fact File

- **In a commitment to build stronger and safer societies, the Liberal National Government will invest:**
 - **\$230m for secondary schools needing extra accommodation for year 7 students to transition from primary to secondary schooling**
 - **\$158.8m for wage increases over three years for nurses and midwives**
 - **\$114m available over four years to the private schooling sector under the Low Interest Loan Scheme**
 - **Liberal National Government will spend an average of \$15,621 per student this year, an increase of \$513 per student from last year**
 - **\$66m for the replacement of medical equipment to ensure patients are receiving the best care possible when they visit a hospital in WA**

- \$31.8m in 2013-14 towards improving the health outcomes of indigenous people through the 'Closing the Gap' program
 - \$60m for Health Information and Communication Technology upgrades and innovation across priority projects
 - \$85.5m in 2013-14 to secure the regional skills and training sector
 - \$400,000 over four years to establish more community gardens and allow families, pensioners and children to engage with their community
 - \$4.4m to fund the My Way program over four years
 - \$2.5m for the KidSport program, enabling more children to play team sports and engage with local communities
 - \$3m towards Cadets WA, adding six units over four years to the almost 200 cadet units across the State
 - \$140,000 to implement the KidsCulture pilot program in Albany and the City of Stirling to enable eligible 5 to 18-year-olds to participate in community arts and cultural activities
 - \$1.58m over four years to support a pilot Grandcarers grants scheme
 - \$1.5m across three years for the ScreenWest Production Attraction Program to attract Australian and international screen productions to WA
- WA Budget statements are available at <http://ourstatebudget.wa.gov.au>

Treasurer's office - 6552 6400