

Freedom of Information Request – [REDACTED]

Documents – Schedule 17 – CM Talkback, QTBs and QTONs

Folio	Date	Document	Status	Reason for Exemption
1a-2	November 2013	Chief Minister QTB	Full release	
3a-4	November 2013	Minister for Women – QTB	Full release	
5-7	November 2013	Minister for Women – QTB	Full release	
8-9	November 2013	Minister for Women – QTB	Full release	
10-11	October 2013	Minister for Women – QTB	Full release	
12-13	18/10/2013	Chief Minister's Talkback – CSD 22 – Improving services for Women	Full release	
14-15	November 2013	Chief Minister's Talkback – CSD 22 – Improving services for Women	Full release	
16	24/10/2013	QTON-13/53	Full release	
17	12/11/2013	QTON-13/71	Full release	
18	12/11/2013	QTON-13/70	Full release	
19-21	7/2/2014	Chief Minister's Talkback – CSD 15 – Improving Services for Women	Full release	

Chief Ministers Talkback Brief

CSD 15: Improving Services for Women in the ACT

7 February 2014

Minister responsible:	Directorate:	Contact Officer:
Joy Burch	Community Services	Nic Manikis 62050522

KEY POINTS

- Last year, we identified a need to change the Womens Information and Referral Centre (WiRC) model that has been in place since the establishment of the Centre 35 years ago.
 - WiRC had served the community well but the way that women access services has changed and we need to reflect that.
 - It is important to note that no services have stopped as a result of these changes. Our aim was to make sure more women have better access to services by providing them in a greater range of locations.
 - Our research shows that by far the largest forms of engagement involving WiRC were by phone or email and this can be carried out from any location.
 - Throughout December 2013 and January 2014 the services housed in WiRC moved to the Theo Notaras Multicultural Centre in the North Building. The Centre currently houses a number of community groups and the ACT Office for Women.
 - The new service is now called *Women's Information (Wi)*.
 - The changes have both reduced duplication in services and provided better outreach so that women have better access to our programs and services.
 - We have been talking to the community sector about this change since it was announced and are continuing this dialogue.
-

Chief Ministers Talkback Brief

CSD 15: Improving Services for Women in the ACT

- These changes will also see savings in administrative costs and an opportunity to reinvest a portion of these savings into the community sector.
- The broader Office for Women will remain and continue to deliver strategic advice.
- The *What's on for Women* calendar has been published as normal now titled Women's Information ACT.

Domestic Violence Support Group

- *Women's Information* at Theo Notaras House will conduct 'It's time to talk', a Domestic Violence Support Group. This group consists of an eight week psycho-educational program supporting women to move on from the cycle of violence, to increase their self-esteem and to be able to build respectful relationships in their future, thus aiming to prevent the inter-generational transmission of the cycle of family violence. This will be offered as both an outreach partnership as well as an internal support group.
- *Women's Information* will also work in partnership with a number of organisations to deliver the group from other locations including Tuggeranong Child and Family Centre.
- This course will continue to be offered in a number of locations such as the Child and Family Centres and other organisations.

Court Ordered courses at Women's Information

- While no formal information is held on the numbers of staff accessing services at the Centre under an ACT court mandate, we estimate that it is around five a year.
 - Our understanding is that courts may direct people to attend particular types of courses not necessarily specifying a location or provider. I reiterate our commitment to keeping the range of courses available under the new model.
-

Chief Ministers Talkback Brief

CSD 15: Improving Services for Women in the ACT

- Similarly, the Care and Protection Service offers support and referral to community resources and this may include courses available through the Women's Information and Referral Centre.
 - These courses will continue to be run in 2014 depending on demand.
 - The courses are advertised in the publication 'Women's Information ACT Jan-Jun 2014' – available on the website www.women.act.gov.au.
-

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Women's Information provides an information and referral service for women.

Currently WI services include:

Women's Return to Work Grants - Provides women returning to work after childcare responsibilities to the paid workforce with financial, information and resources to reach this goal.

Personal development courses for women - Topics include assertiveness and self esteem, understanding stress and anger, and effective communication skills. Other courses are conducted according to demand and emerging needs. Cost involved.

Support Groups

"It is time to TALK" - Domestic Violence Support Group
Return to Work career sessions.

Women's Information - Includes information on courses, workshops and support programs in the ACT. It is Available online. Hardcopies available by contacting Women's Information on (02) 6205 1075.

In 2012–13, WIRC staff responded to 12,375 contacts, including 5,693 by telephone, 3,477 by fax, post or email, 1,698 drop-in visits, 380 instances of internet and library use, 398 face-to-face scheduled appointments, and 729 course, support group and/or information session attendees.

MINISTER FOR WOMEN
AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY QUESTION

Annual Report Hearing

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, AGEING, COMMUNITY & SOCIAL
SERVICES**

12 November 2013

Question Taken Without Notice
Response by Minister/Executive

[Hearing Transcript: Health 12-11-13, P8-9 PROOF]

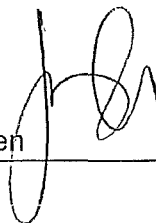
MS LAWDER asked: How many women access the Women's Information and Referral Centre services during this reporting period as a result of an ACT court mandate?

MINISTER BURCH: I would like to inform the Committee -

This information is not kept by the Women's Information and Referral Centre. If the Court wishes to find out the circumstances of an individual by means of subpoena, the Women's Information and Referral Centre can check course records to verify an individual's attendance.

Approved for circulation to the Member and incorporation into Hansard.

Joy Burch MLA
Minister for Women

 26.11.13

Date:.....

MINISTER FOR WOMEN
AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY QUESTION

Annual Report Hearing

STANDING COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, AGEING, COMMUNITY & SOCIAL SERVICES

12 November 2013

Question Taken Without Notice
Response by Minister/Executive

[Hearing Transcript: Health 12-11-13, P10-11 PROOF]

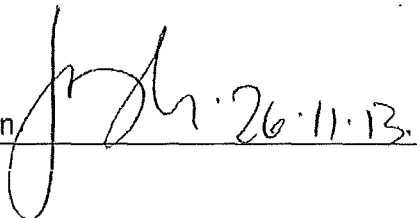
MRS JONES asked: In relation to the Women's Information and Referral Centre, on what date was notice given to vacate the building and on what date was the decision taken to close the centre?

MINISTER BURCH: I would like to inform the Committee -

A decision to not extend the lease was made on 2 October 2013. A Notice of intention to vacate the centre was provided to the owner of the building on 16 October 2013.

Approved for circulation to the Member and incorporation into Hansard.

Joy Burch MLA
Minister for Women

 26.11.13. Date:.....

MINISTER FOR WOMEN**AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY QUESTION****Date 24 October 2013****Question Without Notice - Taken On Notice
Response by Minister**

During Question Time on 24 October 2013, as the Minister for Women, I took a series of questions from Mrs Jones in relation to the Women's Information and Referral Centre.

With regard to the Getting Back to Work Program.

- 1) Will that program be delivered through a Family and Child Centre?
 - a) Has it been in the past?
 - b) Will the program be delivered by someone else?
 - c) Will the program not be provided?

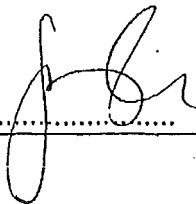
In response to the Member's questions, I can inform the Assembly that the program will not be provided through a Child and Family Centre.

- a) No It has not been provided through a Child and Family Centre in the past.
- b) No.
- c) Yes the program will continue to be provided through the Office for Women.

Approved for circulation to the Member and incorporation into Hansard.

Joy Burch MLA
Minister for Women

Date:.....

 29.10.

Received 31
20.10.13

Chief Ministers Talkback Brief

CSD 22: Improving Services for Women in the ACT

15 November 2013

Minister responsible:	Directorate:	Contact Officer:
Joy Burch	Community Services	Nic Manikis 62050522

KEY POINTS

- There is an emerging need to change the Womens Information and Referral Centre (WiRC) model that has been in place since the establishment of the Centre 35 years ago. We need to ensure that women have support they need when and where they need it.
 - This change is about reducing duplication in services while providing better outreach so that women have improved access to our programs and services. This will be achieved in part by moving from a model where WiRC and its programs were based in one location to one where these services are based in the community.
 - The suite of offerings we have in this area remains strong and their effectiveness will be enhanced through the increased outreach under the new model. This is being achieved while remaining true to the ACT Government's aim of fiscal responsibility.
 - These changes will also see savings in administrative costs and a portion of these savings will be reinvested into the community sector.
 - Online services means that women are sourcing information in other ways (either as a self service or through assistance services such as libraries, Canberra Connect, Citizen's Advice).
 - There will not be any job losses through this change. The process of moving to the new approach will involve consultations with staff affected by this change. The broader Office for Women will remain and continue to deliver strategic advice.
-

Chief Ministers Talkback Brief

CSD 22: Improving Services for Women in the ACT

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Women's Information and Referral Centre provides an information and referral service.

Current WiRC services include:

- online directory of women's services and a calendar of what's on for *Women in the ACT*. See Women ACT website at www.women.act.gov.au;
- The ACT Women's Return to Work Grants Program provides women returning to the paid workforce with financial assistance of up to \$1,000 personal and professional development courses, information sessions and support groups;
- Internet access and training through the Broadband for Seniors Program;
- partnerships to deliver support programs; and
- a lending library.

WIRC commenced delivering financial literacy training sessions targeting women on low to moderate incomes, over the age of 60 years; and living in crisis accommodation and government housing

In 2012–13, WIRC staff responded to 12,375 contacts, including 5,693 by telephone, 3,477 by fax, post or email, 1,698 drop-in visits, 380 instances of internet and library use, 398 face-to-face scheduled appointments, and 729 course, support group and/or information session attendees.

Chief Ministers Talkback Brief

CSD 22: Improving Services for Women in the ACT

18 October 2013

Minister responsible:	Directorate:	Contact Officer:
Joy Burch	Community Services	Nic Manikis 62050522

KEY POINTS

- There is an emerging need to change the Womens Information and Referral Centre (WiRC) model that has been in place since the establishment of the Centre 35 years ago. We need to ensure that women have support they need when and where they need it.
 - This change is about reducing duplication in services while providing better outreach so that women have improved access to our programs and services. This will be achieved in part by moving from a model where WiRC and its programs were based in one location to one where these services are based in the community.
 - The suite of offerings we have in this area remains strong and their effectiveness will be enhanced through the increased outreach under the new model. This is being achieved while remaining true to the ACT Government's aim of fiscal responsibility.
 - These changes will also see savings in administrative costs and a portion of these savings will be reinvested into the community sector.
 - Online services means that women are sourcing information in other ways (either as a self service or through assistance services such as libraries, Canberra Connect, Citizen's Advice).
 - There will not be any job losses through this change. The process of moving to the new approach will involve consultations with staff affected by this change. The broader Office for Women will remain and continue to deliver strategic advice.
-

Chief Ministers Talkback Brief

CSD 22: Improving Services for Women in the ACT

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Women's Information and Referral Centre provides an information and referral service.

Current WiRC services include:

- online directory of women's services and a calendar of what's on for *Women in the ACT*. See Women ACT website at www.women.act.gov.au;
- The ACT Women's Return to Work Grants Program provides women returning to the paid workforce with financial assistance of up to \$1,000 personal and professional development courses, information sessions and support groups;
- Internet access and training through the Broadband for Seniors Program;
- partnerships to deliver support programs; and
- a lending library.

WiRC commenced delivering financial literacy training sessions targeting women on low to moderate incomes, over the age of 60 years; and living in crisis accommodation and government housing

Our research shows that in 2012-13 there were a total of 12,376 various forms of interaction with staff at the WiRC and of these 8,759, or more than 70%, were via telephone or email.

Some 398 of these interactions were face-to-face visits and our aim is to increase these by moving our services into an increased range of areas.

ISSUE: Women's Information and Referral Centre

- There is an emerging need to change the Womens Information and Referral Centre (WiRC) model that has been in place since the establishment of the Centre 35 years ago. We need to ensure that women have support they need when and where they need it.
- This change is about reducing duplication in services while providing better outreach so that women have better access to our programs and services. This will be achieved in part by moving from a model where WiRC and its programs were based in one location to one where these services are based in the community.
- The suite of offerings we have in this area remains strong and their effectiveness will be enhanced through the increased outreach under the new model. This is being achieved while remaining true to the ACT Government's aim of fiscal responsibility.
- These changes will also see savings in administrative costs and an opportunity to reinvest a portion of these savings into the community sector.
- On Friday 18 October 2013, the Community Services Directorate consulted with representatives from the ACT Women's Sector including the Women's Centre for Health Matters, Domestic Violence Crisis Service; Rape Crisis Centre; Inanna; Women's Legal Centre; Multicultural Women's Advocacy to engage the community in developing a new model for service delivery.
- On Tuesday 22 October 2013, I will seek advice from my Women's Council on their thoughts.
- I look forward to hearing the ideas and comments about the new service model ensuring the information is accessible and assists women and girls in our community to achieve their goals.
- Online services means that women are sourcing information in other ways (either as a self service or through assistance services such as libraries, Canberra Connect, Citizen's Advice).

- The process of moving to the new approach will involve consultations with staff affected by this change. The broader Office for Women will remain and continue to deliver strategic advice.

BACKGROUND

- Women's Information and Referral Centre provides an information and referral service.
- The lease cost of the WIRC office is \$76,000 per annum. The cost of salaries for the five staff is \$325,000.
- Current WIRC services include:
 - online directory of women's services and a calendar of "What's on for Women" in the ACT. See Women ACT website at www.women.act.gov.au;
 - The ACT Women's Return to Work Grants Program provides women returning to the paid workforce with financial assistance of up to \$1,000;
 - personal and professional development courses;
 - information sessions and support groups;
 - internet access and training through the Broadband for Seniors Program;
 - partnerships to deliver support programs; and
 - a lending library.
- The intention is that all these services will continue. How they will be delivered into the future remains subject to consultation with staff and the sector before a final service model is settled.
- In 2012–13, WIRC staff responded to 12,375 contacts, including 5,693 by telephone, 3,477 by fax, post or email, 1,698 drop-in visits, 380 instances of internet and library use, 398 face-to-face scheduled appointments, and 729 course, support group and/or information session attendees.

CONTACT OFFICER:	Nic Manikis
TELEPHONE:	6205 0522
AGENCY:	CSD – Policy and Organisational Services

ISSUE: Improving Women's services previously provided by WiRC

- The Women's Electoral Lobby has alleged that the ACT Government has a broad agenda for 'dispensing with women's services'
- This government is committed to improving women's services. These changes are about modernising the service and improving outreach so that women across the ACT have better access to programs and services. The changes are also designed to reduce duplication in the provision of services.
- The ACT Government continues to work with a range of women's community sector organisations around what the new Women's service model will look like. Space is already being made available at the Theo Notaras Multicultural Centre to ensure a city presence for Women's services is maintained. This new space will be more secure than the previous WiRC location and will also accommodate the ACT office for Women, as well as community groups such as Multicultural Women's advocacy.
- The service delivery model for the new location is being carefully planned, while there is a public foyer at the Theo Notaras Multicultural Centre, there are secure and confidential meeting spaces available for women's services.
- Planning for extending the Women's service model out to regional hubs such as the Child and Family Centres is continuing and this approach aims to improve the availability of women's services to those in outer suburban areas as well as target groups including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, and older women from culturally diverse backgrounds.

Domestic Violence Support Group

- The Women's Information and Referral Centre conducts 'It's time to talk', a Domestic Violence Support Group. This group consists of an eight week psycho-educational program supporting women to move on from the cycle of violence, to increase their self-esteem and to be able to build respectful relationships in their future, thus aiming to prevent the inter-generational transmission of the cycle of family violence.

- WIRC has also worked in partnership with a number of organisations to deliver the group from other locations including Tuggeranong Child and Family Centre, Northside Community Service, Gunyah Women's Housing and Karralika
 - This course will continue to be offered in a number of locations such as the Child and Family Centres and with other organisations.
-

CONTACT OFFICER: Nic Manikis
TELEPHONE: 6205 0522
AGENCY: CSD – Policy and Organisational Services

ISSUE: Women's Information and Referral Centre

- There is an emerging need to change the Womens Information and Referral Centre (WiRC) model that has been in place since the establishment of the Centre 35 years ago. We need to ensure that women have support they need when and where they need it.
- This change is about reducing duplication in services while providing better outreach so that women have better access to our programs and services. This will be achieved in part by moving from a model where WiRC and its programs were based in one location to one where these services are based in the community.
- The suite of offerings we have in this area remains strong and their effectiveness will be enhanced through the increased outreach under the new model. This is being achieved while remaining true to the ACT Government's aim of fiscal responsibility.
- These changes will also see savings in administrative costs and an opportunity to reinvest a portion of these savings into the community sector.
- On Friday 18 October 2013, the Community Sevices Directorate consulted with representatives from the ACT Women's Sector including the Women's Centre for Health Matters, Domestic Violence Crisis Service; Rape Crisis Centre; Inanna; Women's Legal Centre; Multicultural Women's Advocacy to engage the community in developing a new model for service delivery.
- On Tuesday 22 October 2013, Minister Burch met with her Women's Council to discuss the new service model with a view to integrating their ideas and comments about the new service model, ensuring the information is accessible and assists women and girls in our community to achieve their goals.
- Online services means that women are sourcing information in other ways (either as a self service or through assistance services such as libraries, Canberra Connect, Citizen's Advice).
- The process of moving to the new approach will involve consultations with staff affected by this change. The broader Office for Women will remain and continue to deliver strategic advice.

- 6
- Throughout December 2013 and January 2014 some of the service footprint for WiRC will move to the Theo Notaras Multicultural Centre in the North Building and to other locations in North and South Canberra. The Centre currently houses a number of community groups such as Multicultural Woman's Advocacy and will eventually also house the ACT Office for Women.
-

Domestic Violence Support Group

- The Women's Information and Referral Centre conducts 'It's time to talk', a Domestic Violence Support Group. This group consists of an eight week psycho-educational program supporting women to move on from the cycle of violence, to increase their self-esteem and to be able to build respectful relationships in their future, thus aiming to prevent the inter-generational transmission of the cycle of family violence.
 - WIRC has also worked in partnership with a number of organisations to deliver the group from other locations including Tuggeranong Child and Family Centre, Northside Community Service, Gunyah Women's Housing and Karralika
 - This course will continue to be offered in a number of locations such as the Child and Family Centres and with other organisations.
-

Court Ordered courses at WIRC

- While no formal information is held on the numbers of staff accessing services at the Centre under an ACT court mandate, we estimate that it is around five a year.
- Our understanding is that courts may direct people to attend particular types of courses not necessarily specify a location or provider. I reiterate our commitment to keeping the range of courses available under the new model.
- Similarly, the Care and Protection Service offers support and referral to community resources and this may include courses available through the Women's Information and Referral Centre.
- These courses will continue to be run in 2014 depending on demand.

- 5
- The courses will be advertised in the publication 'What's on in Canberra Jan-Jul 2014' - this will be available early in the New Year. We are still awaiting on input from some service providers for that calendar.

BACKGROUND

- Women's Information and Referral Centre provides an information and referral service.
- The lease cost of the WIRC office is \$76,000 per annum. The cost of salaries for the five staff is \$325,000.
- Current WiRC services include:
 - online directory of women's services and a calendar of "What's on for Women" in the ACT. See Women ACT website at www.women.act.gov.au;
 - The ACT Women's Return to Work Grants Program provides women returning to the paid workforce with financial assistance of up to \$1,000;
 - personal and professional development courses;
 - information sessions and support groups;
 - internet access and training through the Broadband for Seniors Program;
 - partnerships to deliver support programs; and
 - a lending library.
- The intention is that all these services will continue. How they will be delivered into the future remains subject to consultation with staff and the sector before a final service model is settled.
- In 2012–13, WIRC staff responded to 12,375 contacts, including 5,693 by telephone, 3,477 by fax, post or email, 1,698 drop-in visits, 380 instances of internet and library use, 398 face-to-face scheduled appointments, and 729 course, support group and/or information session attendees.

CONTACT OFFICER:	Nic Manikis
TELEPHONE:	6205 0522
AGENCY:	CSD – Policy and Organisational Services

ISSUE: Women's Information and Referral Centre

- There is an emerging need to change the Womens Information and Referral Centre (WiRC) model that has been in place since the establishment of the Centre 35 years ago. We need to ensure that women have support they need when and where they need it.
- This change is about reducing duplication in services while providing better outreach so that women have better access to our programs and services. This will be achieved in part by moving from a model where WiRC and its programs were based in one location to one where these services are based in the community.
- The suite of offerings we have in this area remains strong and their effectiveness will be enhanced through the increased outreach under the new model. This is being achieved while remaining true to the ACT Government's aim of fiscal responsibility.
- These changes will also see savings in administrative costs and an opportunity to reinvest a portion of these savings into the community sector.
- On Friday 18 October 2013, the Community Sevices Directorate consulted with representatives from the ACT Women's Sector including the Women's Centre for Health Matters, Domestic Violence Crisis Service; Rape Crisis Centre; Inanna; Women's Legal Centre; Multicultural Women's Advocacy to engage the community in developing a new model for service delivery.
- On Tuesday 22 October 2013, Minister Burch met with her Women's Council to discuss the new service model with a view to integrating their ideas and comments about the new service model, ensuring the information is accessible and assists women and girls in our community to achieve their goals.
- Online services means that women are sourcing information in other ways (either as a self service or through assistance services such as libraries, Canberra Connect, Citizen's Advice).
- The process of moving to the new approach will involve consultations with staff affected by this change. The broader Office for Women will remain and continue to deliver strategic advice.

- 49
- Throughout December 2013 and January 2014 some of the service footprint for WiRC will move to the Theo Notaras Multicultural Centre in the North Building and to other locations in North and South Canberra. The Centre currently houses a number of community groups such as Multicultural Woman's Advocacy and will eventually also house the ACT Office for Women.
-

Domestic Violence Support Group

- The Women's Information and Referral Centre conducts 'It's time to talk', a Domestic Violence Support Group. This group consists of an eight week psycho-educational program supporting women to move on from the cycle of violence, to increase their self-esteem and to be able to build respectful relationships in their future, thus aiming to prevent the inter-generational transmission of the cycle of family violence.
 - WIRC has also worked in partnership with a number of organisations to deliver the group from other locations including Tuggeranong Child and Family Centre, Northside Community Service, Gunyah Women's Housing and Karralika
 - This course will continue to be offered in a number of locations such as the Child and Family Centres and with other organisations.
-

Court Ordered courses at WIRC

- While no formal information is held on the numbers of staff accessing services at the Centre under an ACT court mandate, we estimate that it is around five a year.
- Our understanding is that courts may direct people to attend particular types of courses not necessarily specify a location or provider. I reiterate our commitment to keeping the range of courses available under the new model.
- Similarly, the Care and Protection Service offers support and referral to community resources and this may include courses available through the Women's Information and Referral Centre.
- These courses will continue to be run in 2014 depending on demand.

- The courses will be advertised in the publication 'What's on in Canberra Jan-Jul 2014' - this will be available early in the New Year. We are still awaiting on input from some service providers for that calendar.

BACKGROUND

- Women's Information and Referral Centre provides an information and referral service.
- The lease cost of the WIRC office is \$76,000 per annum. The cost of salaries for the five staff is \$325,000.
- Current WiRC services include:
 - online directory of women's services and a calendar of "What's on for Women" in the ACT. See Women ACT website at www.women.act.gov.au;
 - The ACT Women's Return to Work Grants Program provides women returning to the paid workforce with financial assistance of up to \$1,000;
 - personal and professional development courses;
 - information sessions and support groups;
 - internet access and training through the Broadband for Seniors Program;
 - partnerships to deliver support programs; and
 - a lending library.
- The intention is that all these services will continue. How they will be delivered into the future remains subject to consultation with staff and the sector before a final service model is settled.
- In 2012–13, WIRC staff responded to 12,375 contacts, including 5,693 by telephone, 3,477 by fax, post or email, 1,698 drop-in visits, 380 instances of internet and library use, 398 face-to-face scheduled appointments, and 729 course, support group and/or information session attendees.

CONTACT OFFICER: Nic Manikis
 TELEPHONE: 6205 0522
 AGENCY: CSD – Policy and Organisational Services

ISSUE: Women's Information and Referral Centre

- There is an emerging need to change the Womens Information and Referral Centre (WiRC) model that has been in place since the establishment of the Centre 35 years ago. We need to ensure that women have support they need when and where they need it.
- This change is about reducing duplication in services while providing better outreach so that women have better access to our programs and services. This will be achieved in part by moving from a model where WiRC and its programs were based in one location to one where these services are based in the community.
- The suite of offerings we have in this area remains strong and their effectiveness will be enhanced through the increased outreach under the new model. This is being achieved while remaining true to the ACT Government's aim of fiscal responsibility.
- These changes will also see savings in administrative costs and an opportunity to reinvest a portion of these savings into the community sector.
- On Friday 18 October 2013, the Community Sevices Directorate consulted with representatives from the ACT Women's Sector including the Women's Centre for Health Matters, Domestic Violence Crisis Service; Rape Crisis Centre; Inanna; Women's Legal Centre; Multicultural Women's Advocacy to engage the community in developing a new model for service delivery.
- On Tuesday 22 October 2013, Minister Burch met with her Women's Council to discuss the new service model with a view to integrating their ideas and comments about the new service model, ensuring the information is accessible and assists women and girls in our community to achieve their goals.
- Online services means that women are sourcing information in other ways (either as a self service or through assistance services such as libraries, Canberra Connect, Citizen's Advice).

- The process of moving to the new approach will involve consultations with staff affected by this change. The broader Office for Women will remain and continue to deliver strategic advice.
 - Throughout December 2013 and January 2014 some of the service footprint for WiRC will move to the Theo Notaras Multicultural Centre in the North Building and to other locations in North and South Canberra. The Centre currently houses a number of community groups such as Multicultural Woman's Advocacy and will eventually also house the ACT Office for Women.
-

Court Ordered courses at WIRC

- While no formal information is held on the numbers of staff accessing services at the Centre under an ACT court mandate, we estimate that it is around five a year.
 - Our understanding is that courts may direct people to attend particular types of courses not necessarily specify a location or provider. I reiterate our commitment to keeping the range of courses available under the new model.
 - Similarly, the Care and Protection Service offers support and referral to community resources and this may include courses available through the Women's Information and Referral Centre.
 - These courses will continue to be run in 2014 depending on demand.
 - The courses will be advertised in the publication 'What's on in Canberra Jan-Jul 2014' - this will be available early in the New Year. We are still awaiting on input from some service providers for that calendar.
-

BACKGROUND

- Women's Information and Referral Centre provides an information and referral service.
- The lease cost of the WIRC office is \$76,000 per annum. The cost of salaries for the five staff is \$325,000.

- Current WiRC services include:
 - online directory of women's services and a calendar of "What's on for Women" in the ACT. See Women ACT website at www.women.act.gov.au;
 - The ACT Women's Return to Work Grants Program provides women returning to the paid workforce with financial assistance of up to \$1,000;
 - personal and professional development courses;
 - information sessions and support groups;
 - internet access and training through the Broadband for Seniors Program;
 - partnerships to deliver support programs; and
 - a lending library.
- The intention is that all these services will continue. How they will be delivered into the future remains subject to consultation with staff and the sector before a final service model is settled.
- In 2012–13, WIRC staff responded to 12,375 contacts, including 5,693 by telephone, 3,477 by fax, post or email, 1,698 drop-in visits, 380 instances of internet and library use, 398 face-to-face scheduled appointments, and 729 course, support group and/or information session attendees.

CONTACT OFFICER: Nic Manikis
TELEPHONE: 6205 0522
AGENCY: CSD – Policy and Organisational Services