



Rachel Stephen-Smith MLA

Minister for Health

Minister for Mental Health

Minister for Finance

Minister for the Public Service

Member for Kurrajong

Mr Tom Duncan
Clerk
ACT legislative Assembly
Tom.Duncan@parliament.act.gov.au

Our ref: GBC2025/0000256

Dear Mr Duncan *Ton*

Government Response to Petition 017-25 and E-Petition 005-25: Closure of Burrangiri Aged Care Respite Centre in Rivett, ACT.

I welcome the opportunity to respond to Petition 017-25 and E-Petition 005-25 regarding the previously planned closure of Burrangiri Aged Care Respite Facility in Rivett.

I recognise the concerns raised by the community in these petitions and representations made to Members of the Legislative Assembly regarding the future availability of respite and other community-based services in the ACT.

I also recognise the Assembly's significant interest in this matter and draw your attention to Assembly resolutions on 5 March and 8 May 2025 as well as a resolution on 10 April 2025 under Standing Order 213A to produce documents.

I addressed these resolutions in the Assembly on 14 May 2025 in which I announced that on hearing the concerns of the community on the availability of respite in the ACT, and following the receipt of advice from the Government Solicitor's Office, the ACT Health Directorate (ACTHD) would consider a single select tender process for The Salvation Army (TSA) to deliver aged care respite services at Burrangiri for a further two years.

I can now further advise that the tender process is underway, following ACT Government procurement rules. The continuation of services at Burrangiri for a further two years will allow the ACT Government to work with the Commonwealth on more sustainable solutions for respite in the ACT without decreasing the availability of respite beds.

The decision to close the Burrangiri facility followed carefully considered advice from ACTHD that the 35-year-old facility would need significant refurbishment to extend its useful life and bring it up to

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modern standards. ACTHD has advised that continued use of Burrangiri as a respite care facility into the longer term would require a significant scope of work. To undertake these works the facility will need to be vacated and this remains the case.

The Commonwealth Government has made a \$10 million commitment to deliver purpose-built respite care in the ACT in either an existing or new facility. This significant commitment has changed what options are available on the future of respite services in the ACT, including Burrangiri.

Aged care respite remains a Commonwealth responsibility and national aged care reforms are seeing significant new investment in the ACT which will result in more residential aged care beds opening by the end of 2025. The ACT Government will continue to call on the Commonwealth to work with the aged care sector to facilitate additional capacity for respite in existing and new residential aged care in the short, medium and long term.

The ACT Government acknowledges the work of TSA and the Burrangiri staff and thanks them for their work to deliver quality respite care. We are grateful for TSA's assistance in reaching a positive outcome for the community and look forward to working with the Commonwealth to continue to offer respite to the Canberra community.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Rachel Stephen-Smith', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Rachel Stephen-Smith MLA
20 June 2025