



ACT
Government

Foundational Supports including Thriving Kids Roadmap



This Roadmap will be iterative and updated every 6 months in line with reporting to the Assembly



What are Foundational Supports?



Foundational Supports

- The NDIS Review recommended establishment of general and targeted Foundational Supports outside the NDIS
- National Cabinet Agreement of 2023 to build government-funded support services for people with disabilities, their families, and carers who are not eligible for the NDIS
- \$10 Billion committed for all Foundational Supports cohort (co-funded by Commonwealth/States and Territories)
- \$4 Billion to Thriving Kids (ACT-delivered services is approximately \$12.68 million per annum, totalling \$63.4 million over 5 years)
- Other Foundational Supports cohorts have not been agreed, but are coming given recently announced NDIS changes
- Access changes to the NDIS are coming that will make Foundational Supports more critical, States and Territories advocating to Commonwealth for certainty on future Foundational Supports cohorts and timing

Informing Foundational Supports in the ACT

In 2025-26, the ACT Government engaged the ACT Disability Directed Caucus and the ACT National Disability Services to supplement its work in mapping the service system and to consult broadly on an ACT approach to Thriving Kids.

Disability Persons Organisation (DPO) Foundational Supports Scoping Project

Led by ACT Down Syndrome & Intellectual Disability Association & Women with Disabilities ACT



Aim: To map general foundational support (GFS) services for people with disability in the ACT to identify service navigation and access barriers and opportunities for enhanced service delivery.

Community input on the prioritisation and sequencing of ACT disability reforms

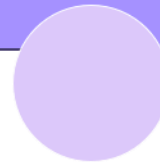
Led by Advocacy for Inclusion



Aim: To develop a prioritisation framework and rationale to guide DRC sequencing and implementation in the ACT based on community expectations.

Getting the full picture – Canberrans and the NDIS Changes

Led by Advocacy for Inclusion



Aim: To collate insights and stories about the real-world impacts of NDIS changes proposed under the new NDIS Bill (*Securing the NDIS for Future Generations Bill 2026*) on the lives and supports of people with disability in the ACT.

Strategic Guidance for the development of an end-to-end ACT Foundational Supports Service System for children in the ACT

Led by National Disability Services - ACT branch



Aim: To seek advice and insights from non-government organisations and service providers in the ACT on opportunities to strengthen an early intervention service system for children aged 0-8 in the ACT.

The ACT Government has an ongoing partnership with the University of Canberra to better understand the gaps and needs for workforce participation



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Implementing Thriving Kids 2026 - 2031



What is Thriving Kids?

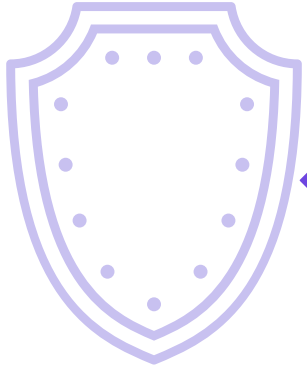


Thriving Kids

- Thriving Kids is the proposed Foundational Supports response for children aged 0-8 years with developmental delays/autism who have low to moderate support needs. Expecting ~1600 per annum to be in scope
- Thriving Kids will help give children the best start in life by ensuring those with additional developmental needs receive quality supports earlier in their developmental journey.
- Thriving Kids is intended to work **with** and **alongside** existing 'mainstream' services, such as health services – GPs, nurses, health clinics, Early Childhood Education and Care settings and schools.
- Services will be child and family centred, informed by evidence, delivered in children's everyday environments, focus on achieving real outcomes for children and their families and have a different intensity that meets children and families where they are at.
- Thriving Kids delivery is a shared responsibility: the Commonwealth provides national leadership and funding, while the ACT delivers services and supports to children and families.

Thriving Kids

Commonwealth and ACT Government responsibilities



Commonwealth Responsibilities

Leadership and Governance – national program design and implementation, coordination with jurisdictions, national service framework, NDIS policy and legislative reform

National Infrastructure – Digital Information Hub and Service finder, Medicare Thriving Kids, Autism Helpline, National Referral pathways

Workforce and Capability – Training and resources, Primary Care Capability Framework, ECI Framework promotion, Educator micro-credentials

Information and Navigation – national awareness campaigns, telephone and online advice services, consistent information nationally

Funding - \$2 Billion over 5 years, \$1.4 Billion to states and territories, Supports service delivery

Monitoring and Evaluation – national outcomes framework, evaluation and continuous improvement, future Foundational Supports review



ACT Government Responsibilities

* Child health and development checks

* Information and navigation supports for families

* Family programs including child development

* Targeted supports including:

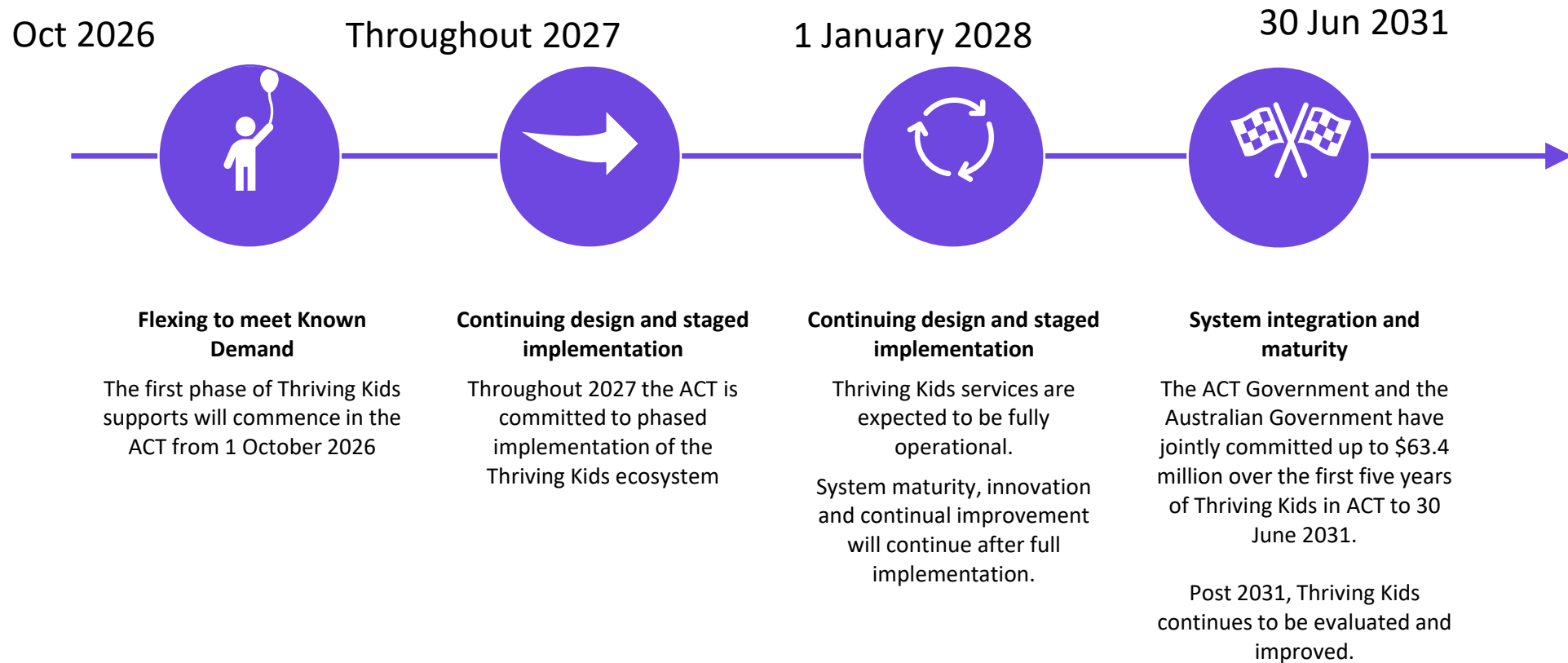
- Allied health services, low-cost assistive technology, confidence building supports

* Workforce capability and readiness initiatives

Thriving Kids delivery is a shared responsibility ACT Government will continue with national negotiations on:

- Definition of low, moderate and high support needs
- Clear and simple pathways between mainstream services, Thriving Kids and the NDIS, so families can move between supports more easily
- How NDIS early childhood providers and Thriving Kids services will work together

Thriving Kids will be implemented over several years



Thriving Kids is the first tranche of Foundational Supports
Current supports will not be affected while Thriving Kids is being fully developed and operational

2026 – Expanding services to meet known demand

(Phase 1 of ACT Implementation Plan)

Strategic
Priorities

PLANNING AND
FUNDING

COMMUNICATIONS

SERVICE
DELIVERY

WORKFORCE
PLANNING

REPORTING
AND
EVALUATION



Key Focus
Areas

Finalise implementation approach and \$64.3million funding commitment

Website established, provider engagement and family information resources developed

Intake and Navigation established, enhanced services operational, launch from 1 October 2026

Workforce strategy, tertiary partnerships and recruitment activities commence

Monitoring and evaluation capability established

Long-Term
Outcomes

Readiness for ACT rollout

Improved awareness

Increased access to supports

Workforce capacity grows

Monitoring and evaluation capability established

During 2027 and 2028 we will....

Strategic Priorities

NAVIGATION



DESIGNED SERVICES



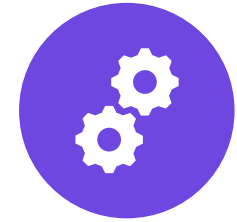
SERVICES



EARLY IDENTIFICATION



ENABLING FUNCTIONS



Key Focus Areas

No wrong door model,
navigators, case
management

Commissioned services,
priority cohorts, therapy
and autism supports

Therapeutic, parenting,
assistive technology and
peer supports

Developmental checks,
assessment and
outreach

ICT, workforce readiness,
accommodation, data
and reporting systems

Long-Term Outcomes

Families can access
the right support at
the right time
through
coordinated
navigation and
referral pathways

Targeted, evidence-
based services are
operational and
responsive to the
need of children
and families

Children and
families have
increased access to
timely, targeted
supports and
services

Children with
emerging needs are
identified earlier
and connected to
appropriate
support sooner.

Sustainable
workforce,
digital and
operational
capabilities
support effective
service delivery.



What will happen in 2028 and beyond...

Strategic Priorities

NDIS
ALIGNMENT



FULL
SERVICES
ACHIEVED



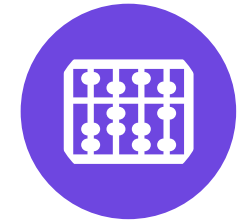
DATA
SYSTEMS
MATURED



CROSS-
SECTOR
INTEGRATION



EVIDENCE &
MONITORING



Key Focus Areas

Align ACT delivery with
national reforms

Continue expansion of
commissioned and targeted
supports

Data improvement,
evaluation and participation
in national review

Stronger partnerships across
health, education and
community sectors

Evaluation, analytics and
outcomes measurement

Long-Term Outcomes

Seamless
interaction
between NDIS and
Foundational
Supports

Comprehensive
service and model
operating across
the ACT

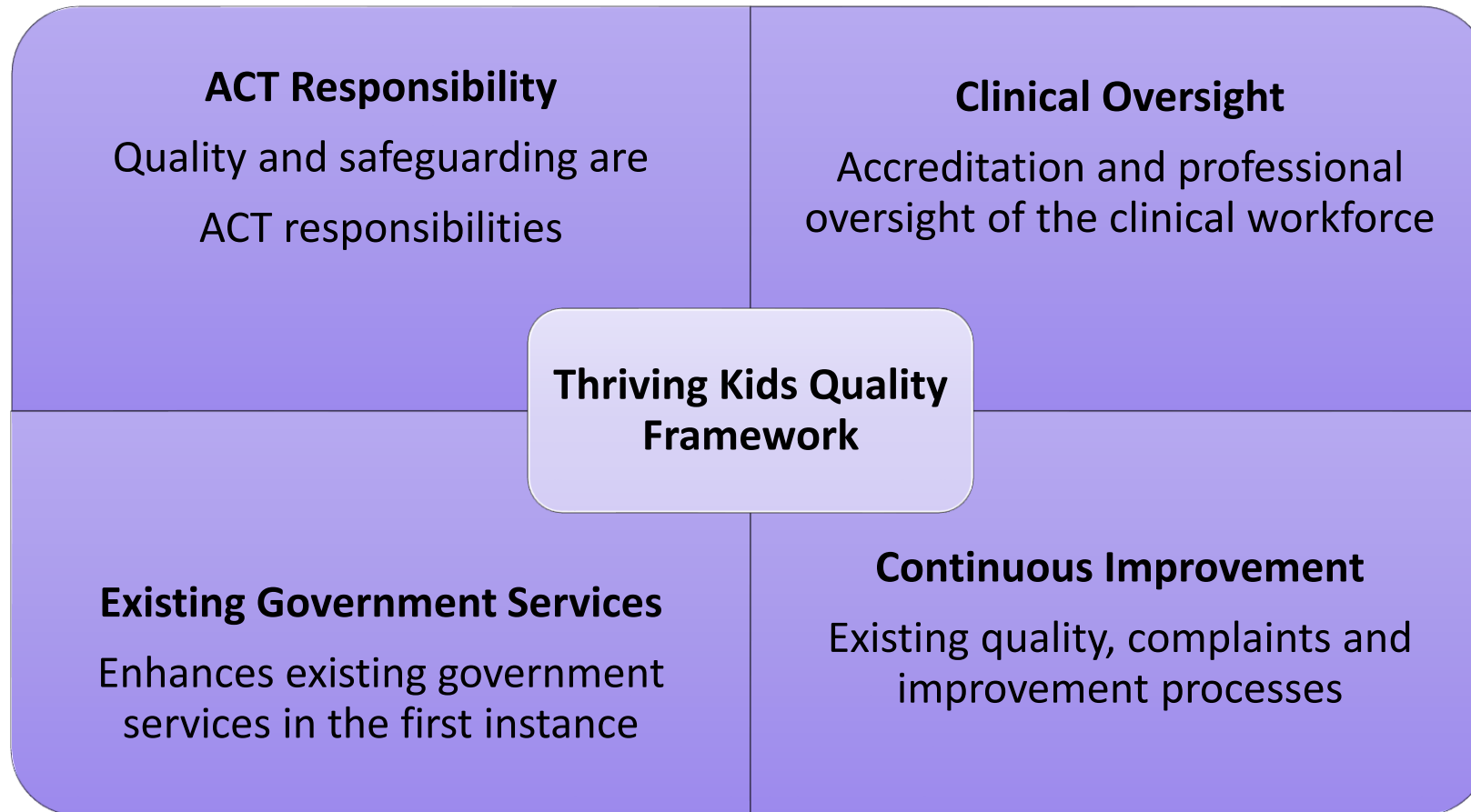
Data-driven
decision making
and service
improvement

Coordinated
support for children
aged 0 - 8

Mature
evidence-based
system
supporting policy
and investment
decisions

Safeguards

Thriving Kids: Quality and Safeguarding Approach



Quality assurance differs from the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission model

Thriving Kids will leverage and strengthen existing ACT Government quality systems, supported by accredited clinical professionals and established assurance mechanisms.

Thriving Kids Workforce Strategy

Vision and Overview



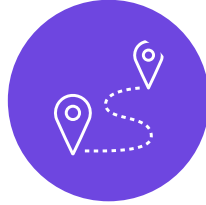
National Approach

- * Builds workforce capacity across key sectors to deliver Thriving Kids supports.
- * Provides a nationally consistent support model for children aged 8 years and under with developmental delay and/or autism.
- * Improves access to supports in everyday settings such as childcare, schools and community services. * Strengthens workforce capability through national planning, training and workforce development initiatives.



Commonwealth

- * Lead national workforce planning and development for Thriving Kids.
- * Support workforce growth, training and capacity building.
- * Partner with states and territories to address workforce shortages and service capacity challenges.
- * Ensure sufficient allied health and child development workforce capability across Australia.



State and Territory Responsibilities

- * Deliver frontline Thriving Kids services, including parenting support, information and navigation services, and targeted allied health and early intervention supports.
- * Design and deliver services that align with the national model while meeting local needs
- * Employ, commission and manage service providers



ACT Workforce Strategy

- * Develop an ACT-specific workforce strategy that complements Commonwealth initiatives
- * Focus on workforce attraction and retention, student pathways, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce development, clinical governance, professional support and sustainability.
- * Plan workforce needs across government, non-government and broader disability service sectors



Proposed ACT Clinical Educator Role

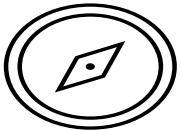
- * Strengthen future workforce supply through partnerships with tertiary institutions and student placements.
- * Coordinate workforce education, university engagement, professional learning and training pathways
- * Promote interdisciplinary collaboration and shared learning to support a skilled and sustainable workforce from October 2026

Funding

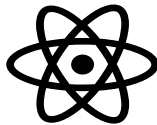
Funding Requirements – Indicative investment over five years

Financial Year	Commonwealth Contribution	ACT Contribution	Total Investment
2026 - 27	\$5.22m	\$7.03m	\$12.25m
2027 - 28	\$5.22m	\$7.25m	\$12.47m
2028 - 29	\$5.22m	\$7.46m	\$12.68m
2029 - 30	\$5.22m	\$7.67m	\$12.89m
2030 - 31	\$5.22m	\$7.89m	\$13.11m
Total (5 years)	\$26.10m	\$37.30m	\$63.40m+

Primary Investment Areas



Service Delivery



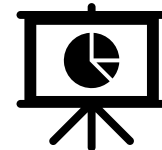
Navigation and Intake



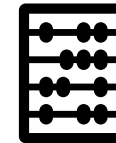
Community Supports



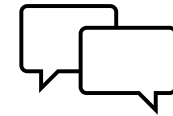
Workforce Initiatives



ICT and Data Systems



Evaluation and Reporting



Communications and Engagement



ACT
Government

Next Steps



Thriving Kids – the next 6 months



Decisions taken by ACT Government

- Service models and approach to Phase 1 implementation will be agreed
- Consideration of Phase 2, which will respond to demand and further enhance ACT services.



Services to the community

- Existing government services realigned toward the Thriving Kids national model
- Enhancement of services, including navigation, peer and parent supports.



Consultation

- Service components will be consulted on
- Commence targeted service design with priority cohorts



System Enablers

- Work on data, reporting and evaluation

General Foundational Supports - Pilot Projects

\$1.45 Million investment in 2026-27 ACT Budget to support **sector sustainability, advocacy and increased service demand resulting from NDIS reforms.**



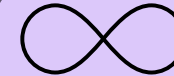
Vision and Hearing Services

Sustainability funding for key organisations supporting vision and hearing-impaired



Individual Advocacy

Advocacy programs to support Canberrans affected by NDIS changes



Autism and Neurodiversity

Support organisations experiencing increased demand from children aged 9+ impacted by NDIS reforms