

MEDIA RELEASE**14 June 2023****Management of Operation Reboot (Outpatients)**

ACT Auditor-General, Mr Michael Harris, today presented a report on the **Management of Operation Reboot (Outpatients)** to the Speaker for tabling in the ACT Legislative Assembly. Operation Reboot, which was announced in July 2020, aimed to provide additional support for the recovery of public health services impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. A component of Operation Reboot sought to deliver 14,000 additional specialist outpatient appointments. The audit considered the effectiveness of Canberra Health Services' management of the outpatient services component of Operation Reboot, including its planning, implementation and monitoring and reporting arrangements.

The audit found that planning for Reboot (Outpatients) was ineffective. The target of 14,000 was derived from pre-COVID-19 data analysis that did not account for the impact of the early public health response to the pandemic, which was ostensibly the purpose of Operation Reboot.

Canberra Health Services achieved 6,132 additional outpatient appointments for Reboot (Outpatients), which was only 43.8 percent of the 14,000 target. Significant effort was expended on engaging external providers, for very little return. Only 585 patients (9.5 percent of the additional appointments) were seen by external providers, compared with 5,547 patients (90.5 percent) seen by internal providers.

Mr Harris says 'the prioritisation of rapid rollout over forward planning compromised the effectiveness of the implementation of Reboot (Outpatients)'. Mr Harris also says 'Reboot (Outpatients) was primarily predicated on the provision of additional appointments as the mechanism to address the wait lists, rather than potentially more sustainable measures to improve efficiency'.

The report makes two recommendations for improvement, relating to planning for future emergency response scenarios and procurement practices.

Management of Operation Reboot (Outpatients) is available to download from the ACT Audit Office's website www.audit.act.gov.au. If you need assistance accessing the report please phone 6207 0833.