Sue Carter  
Shadow Minister for Health & Community Services,  
Senior Territorians, and Arts & Museums  

Palmerston clinic hit by severe nurse shortage  

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The delivery of proper health services in Palmerston is being compromised by the Labor Government's failure to resolve a severe nurse shortage at the Palmerston Health Clinic, CLP Shadow Health Minister Sue Carter said today.

Ms Carter said nurse staff levels at the Palmerston Health clinic were down to 57% of what they should be.

“This has put unacceptable pressure on the clinic, its staff and is compromising the delivery of proper health services to the people of Palmerston and the surrounding rural areas,” Ms Carter said.

Ms Carter accused the Chief Minister of walking away from an election commitment of better health services for the rural area and Palmerston.

“When the Martin Government came to office it immediately downsized the medical support for families and the rural area by scrapping Palmerston's 24-hour medical service,” Ms Carter said.

“Since then it has continued to be less than pro-active in its attention to medical services in Palmerston and the current nurse shortage is indicative of that.

“I visited the Palmerston clinic several months ago and there was a sign on the door advising patients that due to staff shortages the clinic may close some of its rooms during February, March.

“It is now mid-May and staffing numbers are at an all time low and the sign is still there.

“Palmerston is the fastest growing community in Australia and it is not unrealistic for a township of this size, with a large neighbouring rural population, to have an expectation of proper medical services.

“The nurse shortage should not be allowed to persist.

“The shortage flies in the face of Health Minister Toyne's confidence in announcing last week that Labor had created 68 new nurse positions. The Palmerston shortage re-enforces my concerns that very few of these new positions have actually been filled.”

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