ALCOHOL ADMISSIONS SWAMP HOSPITALS

Shadow Minister for Health, Nicole Manison, today said the axing of the Banned Drinking Register has led to an increase in alcohol related presentations and admissions to Territory hospitals.

"Despite the claims to the contrary of the Health Minister, Robyn Lambley, data shows that the axing of the Banned Drinker Register has resulted in a spike in alcohol related presentation to Territory hospitals," Ms Manison said.

"The CLP Government's failed alcohol policy has no mechanism to stop a problem drinker accessing alcohol at the point of sale; effectively meaning a problem drinker can access as much alcohol as they wish.

"This then leads to these problem drinkers presenting to the hospital for treatment taking up beds and services."

Ms Manison said the Health data on alcohol related Emergency Department presentations and hospital admissions in the Territory shows a jump in admissions since the Banned Drinker Register was scrapped.

"Territory wide the alcohol related presentations and admissions in April 2012 totalled 226 and had more than doubled by April 2013, to an unprecedented 514.

"This discredits the Health Minister’s claims that the Banned Drinker Register was not working."

Ms Mansion said that short-term patient accommodation such as the Medi Hotel was also being used by the CLP Government’s Alcohol Mandatory Treatment and not available to be used by patients travelling to Darwin for medical treatment and this is putting Royal Darwin Hospital under more pressure.

"The clogging of the Medi Hotel by the CLP Government's Alcohol Mandatory Treatment is causing added stress to the services at Royal Darwin Hospital as out of town patients are left with no option but to stay on wards."

Labor Candidate for Blain, Geoff Bahnert, said the failure of the CLP Government to deliver the planned Palmerston hospital in this term of
government would also exacerbate ongoing pressure at Royal Darwin Hospital.

"The CLP Government has delayed the building of the Palmerston Hospital to the detriment of Palmerston residents and RDH," Mr Bahnert said.

“The CLP Government doesn’t care about health services for Territorians.”

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