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

New nursing numbers are Ministerial spin - tell Territorians how many of the 63 positions have actually been filled

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Shadow Minister for Health Sue Carter challenged the Minister for Health Mr Peter Toyne to produce a list of the new nursing positions he says he has created and more importantly those positions that have actually been permanently filled since the Martin Labor Government came to power nearly three years ago.

Ms Carter said claims by the Health Minister today boasting he has created 63 new nursing positions is a misrepresentation of the truth.

“It is a smoke and mirrors con job. The Minister would be more honest if he told Territorians how many positions have actually been filled permanently,” Ms Carter said.

“Having 63 positions available is far different from actually having 63 positions filled and quite clearly Minister Toyne is hiding the truth about how many of the promised 75 nurses have been employed.

“I wrote to the minister five weeks ago seeking exact details on the title of each new nursing position, where it is located in the Territory, whether it is permanent or contract and whether or not it is filled. So far, no response.

“This government has a track record of ‘creating’ positions, and then does a go-slow on advertising them and filling them.

“A couple of years ago they were going to create 25 extra child-health positions out bush and then did nothing for over a year to fund or fill these places.”

Ms Carter said the real measure of the Labor Party's promise is how many of those positions actually exist and are filled today.

“My expectation with these 25 extra nursing positions earmarked for Alice Springs is that the funding will be withheld until late this year, then advertising will occur for some of them, then if we are lucky we might see 10 positions filled by June 2005,” Ms Carter said.

“This Minister is all smoke and mirrors, and he should be ashamed of himself for trying to dupe Territorians - and our overworked nurses in particular.”

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