Matt Conlan
Shadow Health Minister
Media Release

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A SILLY KON

The Health Minister, Kon Vatskalis, needs to take a Bex and have a good lie down before issuing ludicrous media releases, says the Territory Opposition.

“The suggestion that I’m campaigning against the long promised, long overdue Oncology Unit is just silly,” says Shadow Health Minister, Matt Conlan.

“What I am campaigning for is residents of Central Australia to be able to continue to access treatment in Adelaide if that is their preference.

“My reasoning is simple – people undergoing treatment for cancer are far better off if supported by friends and family.

“Many residents of Central Australia have strong connections to Adelaide.

“Given that the costs, to the Territory taxpayer, of travelling for treatment in Darwin or Adelaide are about the same, they should have the choice.

“In effect the Minister is saying he’ll force residents of Central Australia to undergo treatment in Darwin, even if they have friends and family in Adelaide.

“The Minister seeks to gloss over his cold blooded approach by stating - <i>When the radiation oncology unit is operational new patients will have the choice of using the public health facility in Darwin or choosing private health treatment interstate.</i>

“What the Minister doesn’t mention is cancer sufferers with private healthcare will have to pay for airfares, accommodation, transport and general living costs.

“So public patients with cancer have no choice and private patients with cancer can have treatment interstate provided they are able to afford thousands of dollars of additional costs.

“The Minister for Health should develop a little compassion for people battling cancer.”

Further comment: Matt Conlan 0408 805 338