Terry Mills
Leader of the Opposition

Media Release

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HEALTHY SCRUTINY NEEDED

The Health Minister, Kon Vatskalis, is on notice after his foolish decision to release 4 important reports into the health system on the one day.

“The Health Minister will be judged by how effectively he deals, and is seen to deal, with the deep problems identified in the reports,” says Terry Mills, Leader of the Opposition.

“Full parliamentary disclosure on the progress of implementing the recommendations will be critical to the Health Minister’s long term credibility.

“Yesterday the Minister made no mention of the fact that children have gone missing from the Paediatrics ward at RDH after the installation of security cameras.

This morning Carolyn Richards, the Health and Community Services Complaints Commissioner, blew the whistle on the Minister:

*But I know for a fact that in September last year two children went missing from that ward and one was an eight year old and he went missing at 14:00 hours. Senior staff weren’t notified until 19:00 hours and the police were then called in and brought the child back at 21:00 hours*

“Yesterday the Minister was deceitfully implying that all the security issues had been solved.

“Nor have 75% of the recommendations on security issues been implemented as the Minister is claiming; the figure is far closer to 50%. Some of those recommendations date from 2002.

“The Minister must put in place a timetable for the full implementation of the security recommendations and report to Parliament about the progress being made.

“The performance of the Territory’s hospitals in achieving the NHPPD benchmarks should also be provided in regular parliamentary reports.
“Public scrutiny is a powerful incentive for the Government of the day to ensure a sufficient number of nurses to provide proper care for patients.

“The Minister must also commit to the 3 year timeline for the implementation of the 26 recommendations in the Australian Council on Healthcare Standards report on governance arrangements at RDH.

“Regular parliamentary updates monitoring and evaluating the implementation of those recommendations must also be made.

“The Minister has a critical role in resolving the confusion that is crippling the delivery of health services in the Territory and must be seen to be delivering the necessary leadership.

“Full parliamentary disclosure regarding progress on the recommendations of the report by Ray Norman into the handling of complaints must also be made.

“The centrally collated complaints must also be tabled in the parliament.

“The Henderson Government has made a mess of the health system by refusing to take responsibility for the stuff ups and failures.

“The new Health Minister has the opportunity to change that"

**Further comment: Terry Mills 0418 833 594**