MEDIA RELEASE

SICK AT HEART

November 30th, 2011

The Country Liberals share the frustration of the Australian Medical Association at the Labor Government’s failure to turn around the performance of Northern Territory hospitals.

Shadow Health Minister, Matt Conlan, said the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare data shows 58% of Emergency department arrivals were seen within the recommended median waiting time – considerably below the national rate of 70%.

As well, only 52% of emergency presentations to Territory hospitals were seen on time.

The data also shows the median waiting time for semi-urgent Emergency presentations was over an hour.

The figures are in line with those contained in Royal Darwin Hospital’s annual report which showed only 62% of Category 2 Emergency Department admissions were seen within the recommended 10 minute time frame.

“The minor improvements in both these data sets come off a very low base,” Mr Conlan said.

“Every year the Government announces record sums for the health budget and every year the statistics show Territory patients face waiting times way outside the national average.

Comments by Australian Medical Association Territory representative, Paul Bauert, on radio this morning show the frustration the medical fraternity has with the Government’s delivery of health services.

“While we do not support the ‘takeover’ of hospitals by Canberra, we do support measures that will significantly improve the delivery of acute care services across the Northern Territory.

“It is the intention of the Country Liberals to release a health policy in the New Year that we believe will help ease some of the current congestion and road blocks in our hospital system.”

Further comment: Matt Conlan 0408 805 338