CLOSURE OF NHULUNBUY ALCOHOL REHAB FACILITY A DISAPPOINTMENT

Member for Nhulunbuy, Lynne Walker, today said it is known that the CLP Government will be closing the facility used for voluntary and mandatory alcohol rehabilitation in Nhulunbuy.

“The residential facility in Nhulunbuy was purpose built in 2007 to provide treatment for those with alcohol and other drugs problems,” Ms Walker said.

“Community groups and traditional owners worked with the former Government to deliver and build the 24 bed facility as it would allow for abuse programs to be completed on country.

“Many of the program participants are Indigenous and benefit from close proximity to family and connection to country with opportunities to fulfil cultural obligations.

“From my understanding no consultation with the Nhulunbuy community or traditional owners has occurred.

“The closure of this hard fought for facility would be a disappointing outcome for the community of Nhulunbuy and surrounding region.”

Ms Walker said it has been revealed that the Department of Corrections would convert the facility to house the low-level prisoners currently housed at a corrections camp at the Garma site.

“Residents want to know what will happen to the members of their community that need treatment for alcohol and other drugs if this facility is removed,” Ms Walker said.

“Is the CLP Government proposing that those in need of treatment are sent to Darwin for treatment away from family? What sort of impact will this have on the success of the treatments?

“While there is a need for a corrections facility in Nhulunbuy, one should not be in place of the other.

Ms Walker said that in the wake of Rio Tinto’s decision last year to curtail their alumina refinery operations the residents of Nhulunbuy and the wider
region need assurances from the CLP Government that services will not disappear.

“Locals are concerned that the CLP Government will wind back the Government services in the region,” Ms Walker said.

“The closure of the alcohol and other drugs rehabilitation facility would be a step in that direction that no one in the region wants to see.”

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