Carter wrong on assaults against nurses

Minister for Health and Community Services, Jane Aagaard, says Opposition Health and Community Services Shadow, Sue Carter, has botched her first public comment since taking over the Shadow role last week.

Mrs Aagaard said Sue Carter knows the CLP had no policy on assaults against nurses except to withdraw nurses from remote communities.

"The fact is, most assaults against nurses take place in hospitals and not in remote communities."

"Territory hospitals face the same problems as hospitals around Australia and world wide."

"Sadly nurses anywhere in the world are subject to assaults, not just in the Territory."

Mrs Aagaard said unlike the CLP who did nothing while in Government, the Martin Government has implemented a number of strategies to address the issue including:

- The introduction of an aggression management policy
- A comprehensive OH&S audit of all remote clinics
- Established protocols between Government and remote communities to address assaults against public servants
- The installation of duress alarms in category one clinics
- Reviewing cultural awareness programs
- Taking a whole of Government approach involving Police, Education, Community Development and Health senior executives
- The appointment of the first Hospital Police Officer at RDH

Mrs Aagaard said Royal Darwin Hospital is leading Australia in developing aggression management strategies providing training to around 800 staff.

"The CLP never bothered to record or release details of assaults on nurses."

"Our policies are working and the number of assaults is declining."

Mrs Aagaard said no public servant should be subjected to assaults and the Government is working hard to address the issue.