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Call for investigation into baby’s death

Country Liberal Party Leader Denis Burke has called for an investigation into whether the Territory Government’s failure to provide a welfare worker for Tennant Creek contributed to the recent tragic death of a baby.

Mr Burke said the circumstance around the death of the baby warrant a full investigation into whether or not the Government’s failure to meet its responsibility of having a welfare worker based in the town played a part in the baby’s death.

“Health services are in crisis in Tennant Creek and it is currently without a qualified welfare worker,” Mr Burke said.

“Any serious welfare matters are referred to Alice Springs some 500 km away.

“Information given to me suggests that had a welfare worker been in Tennant Creek immediate intervention could have helped avoid the tragic circumstances that led to the death of this baby,” Mr Burke said.

“I’m told the baby had been receiving treatment at the Tennant Creek hospital for a serious illness when it was removed from the hospital.

“In circumstances such as this a welfare officer has the authority to retrieve any child in want of need and this is what would have happened if a Government welfare officer was not 500km away in Alice Springs.

‘Sadly this baby is now dead and it warrants an investigation into whether the Government’s complete failure to provide proper services to Tennant Creek had a part to play in it.

“This is all pretty much symptomatic of the diabolical state the Government has allowed services in Tennant Creek to deteriorate to.

“No resident general practitioner
No dentist,
No infant health nurse,
No women’s health nurse,
No welfare officers,
No domestic violence worker,
No occupational therapist,
No speech therapist,
No physiotherapist,
And soon no sexual assault counsellor.

“This is a horrific tale of neglect by the Labor Government. How many people have to die before the Chief Minister gives Tennant Creek and the Barkly the services it deserves?”