11th April 2005

HEALTH MINISTER’S DESPERATE ELECTION PLEDGE
IGNORES STAFF VOTE OF NO CONFIDENCE IN HOSPITAL MANAGEMENT

Country Liberal Party Shadow Minister for Health, Jodeen Carney, said that Peter Toyne’s announcement about further recruiting of staff at the Alice Springs Hospital shows that a Territory election is just around the corner.

“His announcement is a re-hash of an announcement made on 18th January about recruitment. Today’s announcement won’t deliver any staff for months, if at all. It’s just a desperate attempt to look as though he’s doing something”, Ms Carney said.

“The Minister should be honest about the industrial action undertaken by nurses. While they voted to lift bans on overtime recently, they also voted to continue their vote of no confidence in executive management at the Hospital.

“The Minister is alarmingly silent. Instead of issuing media releases trying to buy people’s votes, he should be dealing with the problems staff have with management. Who does Dr Toyne believe: the nurses or management?

“In relation to staffing numbers, when nurses undertook industrial action, it looked as though the Minister was finally going to start to listen, even though he continued to say that staffing levels were on track.

“Today he said on radio that this extra money will bring the staffing levels ‘up to an adequate level’. Clearly, they have been less than adequate, so now it’s a back flip.

“The Minister has had many different positions about staffing numbers: it’s hard to keep up with him.”

Ends