The extra $2 million given to the Alice Springs Hospital over the next 12 months will not be enough to deal with the major problems the hospital is currently having to deal with CLP Shadow Healthy Minister Sue Carter said today.

“The problems the hospital is experiencing now, and the impact they are having on patients needs to be addressed now, and if the Government was serious about doing this it would have given Alice Springs Hospital far more than the $2 million it is going to get in the next 12 months,” Ms Carter said.

“It's good that the Government has finally acknowledged the need to do something about the Alice Springs Hospital, but when you look closely at the extent of the problems in the Alice Springs Hospital you find what Government has promised the hospital over the next 12 months is clearly not enough.

“The Alice Springs hospital has problems in many areas and the front end still needs fixing. The hospital has 20 junior doctors. There was a shortage when it had only 27 junior doctors last year.

“The AMA says there are 75 doctors working at the Alice Springs Hospital. The Minister says there are 96.

“If there are 96 doctors why are Doctors having to work 1 in 2 nights on call when the norm should be 1 in 5 nights on call.

“Today the Government is promising an expansion of service and level of care, but it's going to take four years for it to happen.

“It really comes down to what the Government's immediate priorities are.

“Solving the problems being experience by the Alice Springs Hospital should be fast tracked with the appropriate level of funding in the current Budget not dragged out over four years.

“The people of Alice Springs welcomed the fast tracking of the sealing of the Mereenie loop road, I am sure they would also welcome the fast tracking of improved health care at their hospital.

Ends