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HOSPITAL DECISION LEAVES A BAD TASTE

The Territory Opposition has attacked a decision by the Alice Springs Hospital to place the operation of the Red Cross canteen on a commercial footing.

“This foolish decision is bad for hospital staff, patients and visitors, and damaging to the Alice Springs community,” says Dr Richard Lim, Opposition Health spokesperson.

Today is the last day the Red Cross will provide the service at the hospital following Hospital Management demanding the Red Cross canteen pay commercial rent for operating the canteen.

From tomorrow the Hospital will take responsibility for running the canteen and presumably the food will be coming from the hospital kitchen.

“I can safely predict that the end result of forcing Red Cross out will be a lesser service with greatly reduced hours and higher prices at the Alice Springs Hospital canteen,” says Dr Lim.

“It is sheer madness to end a strong tradition and working relationship that has run smoothly since 1964, provided good quality and healthy food at a reasonable price for a good part of the day.

“Profits made by the canteen are split between Red Cross and the Alice Springs Hospital through a cost sharing arrangement that has worked perfectly well and provided the hospital with a revenue stream.

“The money Red Cross makes is poured back into the wider community through activities such as Meals on Wheels and Home Help for the people of Alice Springs.

“I wonder if the hospital management considered the benefits to general health care in the community provided by Meals on Wheels and Home Help when it decided to impose a commercial rent upon the Red Cross.

“This decision will weaken the fabric of the community of Alice Springs and should be reversed straightaway.”

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