CLP Shadow Health Minister Sue Carter says she believes she is on the verge of winning her campaign to reopen the Rehabilitation Ward at Royal Darwin Hospital.

Ms Carter said nurses working at the hospital have advised her that the ward will reopen in a couple of months.

“This is great result for the staff and patients who will now be able to enjoy the special amenity of this unit, which the CLP established some years ago,” Ms Carter said.

“It was a sad day in late 2002 when the Martin Labor Government shut this special unit. The patients were transferred to the general medical ward and the rehabilitation program was seriously disrupted. Many of the specialist staff left.

“I’m glad to see the Government has finally heeded my calls, and those from the community, to reopen the unit.

“I have spoken about this matter many times in Parliament. By reopening the unit eight medical beds will be freed-up, which means there should be fewer patients waiting in the Emergency Department for a proper ward bed.

“The only problems the Government now faces are how to find and pay for the extra staff – given their budget over-spend for this year of $50 million, this will be no easy task. The unit should never have been shut in the first place.”

Ends