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Sexual Diseases in Toddlers Means Child Abuse

According to Dr Richard Lim, Shadow Minister for Health and Community Services the Martin Labor Government continues to under-resource the service agency looking after child protection, while the Territory is being shamed by the recalcitrant behaviour of the Chief Minister in the midst of the debate over child sexual abuse raging across the nation.

“This week, we hear more evidence of child sexual abuse from a Northern Territory paediatrician when she complained about the incidence of sexually transmitted infections in young children, some as young as one or two years old.” Dr Lim said.

“Children do not get STIs from toilet seats!!!! When children are diagnosed with STIs, it means that there is person or several people infecting these children.

“The Martin Labor Government must put adequate resources in place to ensure that any child reported to have suffered harm be fully investigated as soon as the case is reported.

“Budget Books Number 3 in 2004-05, 2005-06 and 2006-07 anticipated the number of child harm reports to be around 1860, 2200 and 2500 respectively, but in the years 2004-05 and 2005-06, the estimates fell way short by around 200 cases each year.

“To make matters worse, the Martin Government only budgetted to investigate 50% of all cases reported.

“Of the cases investigated, some 460 to 470 individuals are admitted into care during each respective year.

“While the number of cases reported is rising rapidly, whether through greater community awareness or more child abuse, the number of children admitted into care has remained relatively static.

“I am calling on Government to investigate each case thoroughly to ensure that no child is left at risk in an environment of abuse and that any person found to be a perpetrator of such heinous act be pursued by the full force of the law.

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