



EYRE PENINSULA HOSPITALS TO BE MAINTAINED

7 August 2002

Member for Flinders Liz Penfold is delighted that the State Minister for Health has given an assurance that acute services in the ten hospitals on Eyre Peninsula will be maintained. Mrs Penfold said the matter has been of extreme concern owing to the Labor Government's cuts in the health budget and its predilection for closing country hospitals when last in office.

The issue was brought up by the Hon Dean Brown, Shadow Minister for Health, during Estimates Committee questioning of the Budget. Mr Brown specifically asked, "Can the Minister give an assurance for the Member for Flinders about acute services for the 10 hospitals on Eyre Peninsula?"

The Minister, the Hon Lea Stevens, replied, "There is no intention to make any changes in that regard. I am happy to say that on record."

The Human Services Executive Director Country, Ms Ramsey, said the hospitals in the Eyre Region outside Port Lincoln and Ceduna are minimum funded hospitals.

She said there is no intention to change any of that, nor could she foresee the likelihood of any particular changes.

"The smaller locations, as the Member would be aware, predominantly provide aged care and a sort of triage accident and emergency service. In locations such as Ceduna and Port Lincoln there is, in fact, increased activity," she said.

Ms Ramsey said she would not anticipate any changes although she had not discussed the matter with the Minister. However, when pressed by Mr Brown, Ms Stevens gave the assurance that there would be no changes.

A further question asking when a second public dentist would be appointed to Port Lincoln was taken on notice and will be answered at a later date.