



**LACK OF STATE GOVERNMENT FUNDING EXTENDS CLOSURE OF OPERATING
THEATRES AT PORT LINCOLN HOSPITAL
24 February 2004**

Port Lincoln Health Services are considering closing operating theatres in April to achieve funding cuts, Member for Flinders Liz Penfold said.

“At the moment the waiting list for orthopaedic surgery is up to four years, and this will be further increased if the hospital has to cut operating lists to achieve the savings that are required to meet unreasonable budgets forced on them by the Labor Government,” she said.

Mrs Penfold said the Minister for Health Lea Stevens sidestepped the issue when questioned in parliament this week advising that there was a mid year review and “we are looking at there being no cutback in services”.

However she said we are aware that the expected deficit this year for the Port Lincoln Hospital is in the vicinity of \$360,000.

Wallaroo and Victor Harbor hospitals have already had to drastically cut services and now the Port Lincoln Health Service has been asked by the region to identify a further \$150,000 reduction which can only be achieved by cuts to specialist services and operating lists. The other nine hospitals on Eyre Peninsula are experiencing major budget pressures with the Mid West Cluster also expecting a significant deficit of possibly up to \$200,000.

Children and the elderly are particularly vulnerable to the cut back in specialist services, a move that has already been forced upon the hospital and health services.

“This is evident in speech and occupational therapy and physiotherapy,” Mrs Penfold said.

“I am aware of one elderly gentleman requiring physiotherapy being sent back from a city hospital to a regional hospital too soon, where to save costs, the physiotherapy position had not been filled,” she said.

“The federal government has lifted health funding to the states however the state government has not matched the increase, nor has it applied the increased funding in a socially just and equitable manner,” she said.

(Also see [Liz's question](#) regarding this issue)

**CONFIDENCE IN PORT LINCOLN HOSPITAL BOARD
14 February 2003**

Member for Flinders Liz Penfold said she has complete confidence in the Port Lincoln Hospital Board which is doing a fantastic job.

Mrs Penfold was responding to the negative comments made by Democrat Legislative Councillor Sandra Kanck.

"We have 10 excellent acute care hospitals on Eyre Peninsula, and I am delighted that the Health Minister Lea Stevens has made a commitment to keep them all as acute care", she said.

Mrs Penfold said the expectations of the Eyre Peninsula community regarding the Port Lincoln Hospital are particularly high since the redevelopment was completed. Residents and the smaller hospitals integrate with Port Lincoln to deliver more complete health care in the region.

"Unfortunately we are a long way from specialists in Adelaide. Bringing them here is expensive and increases the hospital's budget pressures".

Mrs Penfold said she would not comment on specific hospital board decisions.

"However, these bodies have set procedures to follow and I am sure that the Health Minister would not tolerate irregularities", she said.