



**Wudinna Hospital Review Released
9 November 2005**

The release of the clinical review into the Mid West Health Service Wudinna Hospital has verified some of the concerns that were raised by community members, Mrs. Liz Penfold, the Member for Flinders and the Shadow Minister for Health Mr. Dean Brown about the Wudinna hospital more than 12 months ago.

“This abridged 5 page report affirms that clinical practices needed addressing for the safety of the patients at the Wudinna Hospital however many other issues have not been addressed because of the limitations of the terms of reference and confining the review to clinical issues,” Member for Flinders Liz Penfold said.

Although the report states that, ‘the situation was not serious enough to be placing lives at risk.’, it qualifies this in the next sentence that states, ‘The team did not have the opportunity to review associated documentation in depth, but there was information available to suggest appropriate clinical systems were in place, but not necessarily being followed.’

The report goes on to state that ‘It was imperative that urgent attention was given to this matter to ensure that further deterioration did not occur.’

“The full report giving details of the issues will never be available to the public to make their own assessments because of confidentiality however I think that the 12 recommendations give some idea of the need for issues to be addressed.

The Review Preamble states that the Board of Directors of the Mid West Health Service requested a review however this was only after Dr. Du Toit repeatedly asked for a review to be undertaken to urgently address concerns, concerns that were reiterated by community members.” Mrs. Penfold said.

The then Minister accused those who were concerned of scaremongering.

Mrs Penfold said. “I am amazed that the review states that, ‘the former GP understood that he had sole responsibility for the standards of care delivered at the Wudinna Hospital.’ As if this was not the case. When his contract, ‘Admitting Privileges and Service Agreement’, specifically states and I quote, ‘If you are a medical practitioner in whose name a patient is admitted at the Mid-West Health you are responsible for that patients care 24 hours a day.’

The review goes on to state that, ‘This perception is inconsistent with contemporary health unit management practice, where the responsibility for standards lies with employed health unit managers in consultation with attending medical practitioners or their representatives.’

“This statement I would contend says more about the bureaucracy and the unacceptable pressure that was put on Doctor du Toit and doctors before him, than the doctors themselves. Despite this review specifically singling out one doctor the Wudinna issue was about more than one doctor and more than one staff member and over a much greater period of time than indicated by this report.”

Similar pressures have been put on Doctors and specialists in Mt Gambier and Gawler and I believe show that this is a Government who do not care enough for the regional communities and for their Doctors and nurses

and the job that they have to do to provide the people with an acceptable service.

“I sincerely hope that the ‘situations’ that were ‘then currently untenable that needed to be rectified as soon as practicable’ have been rectified in the months since the review. I await the outcome of those issues that ‘were referred through the appropriate channels to the Department of Health’ by the review team. And also the outcome of the issues that remain with the Commissioner for Equal Opportunity and the auditor.” ENDS