



## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

### Petition

Registration No:	5
Title:	Independent Review of RDH and Acute Care Services
Presented on:	29 October 2008
Presented by:	Mr Styles
Referred to:	Health (Burns)
Date referred:	29 October 2008
Response due:	29 April 2009
Response received:	4 February 2009
Response presented:	10 February 2009

#### Petition

**TO THE HONOURABLE THE SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY:**

WE THE UNDERSIGNED RESPECTFULLY SHOWETH that we are angry and upset by the avoidable death of 64 year old Margaret Winter at the Royal Darwin Hospital in 2006. We are alarmed by Northern Territory coroner Greg Cavanagh's findings that indicate that the conditions in the Royal Darwin Hospital were dangerous due to inadequate staffing.

YOUR PETITIONERS THEREFORE HUMBLY PRAY that the Northern Territory Government immediately commission an Independent Review to assess the adequacy of the resources, policy's, procedures and systems at the Royal Darwin Hospital and Acute Care Services to deliver safe health care to all Territorian's. As a matter of urgency the review should investigate the staffing levels of nurses and doctors to assess whether patients are at risk due to low staffing levels.

We request that the Independent review be made public in its entirety and that the recommendations be implemented immediately.

AND YOUR PETITIONERS, AS IN DUTY BOUND, WILL EVER PRAY.

#### Response

The Petition requests the immediate commissioning of an independent review to assess the adequacy of resources, policies and procedures and systems at the Royal Darwin Hospital and Acute Care Services. The Petitioners further request an investigation of current staffing levels of nurses and doctors to assess whether patients are at risk due to low numbers and public reporting on the outcomes.

An organisation wide survey of the Royal Darwin Hospital was conducted from 3 to 7 November 2008 by a team of expert surveyors from the Australian Council on Healthcare Standards (ACHS) and a report is pending.

In response to public concerns following the handing down of the Coroner's findings in the Winter case, I immediately commissioned a Governance Review of Royal Darwin Hospital. The ACHS Chief Executive is coordinating this Review and I am expecting a report to be made available to me by the end of February 2009.

Four independent experts will review and make recommendations on any matter relating to governance at the Royal Darwin Hospital including the current policy framework, practices supporting clinical governance and the structural relationships between corporate and clinical governance within the Hospital and between the Hospital and the Department of Health and Families.