



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

Petition

Registration No:	21
Title:	Baby clinic at Palmerston Community Care Centre
Presented on:	4 May 2006
Presented by:	Dr Lim
Referred To:	Minister for Health (Toyne)
Response due:	11 October 2006
Response received:	11 October 2006
Response presented:	17 October 2006

Petition

A Petition to the Legislative Assembly of the Northern Territory Baby Clinic at Palmerston Community Care Centre

We the undersigned, respectfully showeth our concerns for the severe reduction of Baby Clinic services at the Palmerston Community Care Centre, with the nearest Care Centre at Casuarina or Nightcliff already struggling to cope with their client numbers without any additional clients from Palmerston.

Your petitioners do humbly observe that the reduction of services to one day at the Centre prevents the provision of adequate baby clinic services for the residents of Palmerston and surrounding communities. We need the baby clinic to remain available for our residents.

Your petitioners humbly pray the Legislative Assembly of the Northern Territory take the necessary steps to make the Northern Territory Government retain the services of the Palmerston Drop-In Baby Clinic with adequate staffing between 0830 and 1230 and between 1330 and 1530 on four days of the week, except Public Holidays.

Response

Petition No. 21 requests the retention of services of the Palmerston drop-in clinic with adequate staffing between 8.30 and 12.30hrs and between 13.30 and 15.30hrs on four days of the week, except public holidays.

The "Well-Baby Clinics" at the Palmerston Community Care Centre were changed from 9 May 2006 to improve access to immunisations and 'well baby' checks. The changes ere communicated to the public through advertisements in the local print media at the end of April and early May.

There is not an appointment system for mothers and their babies on Mondays, Wednesday mornings, Thursdays and Fridays, with drop-in clinic being maintained all day Tuesday.

The new system means that mothers can be sure that their baby will be seen as needed, while maintaining the flexibility of a drop-in service on Tuesdays. This has allowed the Centre to increase the provision of postnatal home visiting.

The new service does not represent a reduction in either overall service provision or staffing, but instead ensures better quality child and family health services to families in Palmerston.

Since these changes have been made, the Government has announced an increase in Health and Community Services in the Palmerston region. Additional services to be provided over the next year include:

- Better child and maternal health services
- Better support for discharged hospital patients
- New breast screening service
- Better chronic disease management
- Better community services

These services have already begun with the commencement of a new Maternal and Child Health nurse at the Community Care Centre from 5 October 2006. Amongst other things, this nurse will:

- Provide education and assessment on the social, emotional and physical development of the child;
- Provide immunisations;
- Provide health education and information on family and child health;
- Support families who are experiencing difficulties and refer them to appropriate services;
- Provide advice on services that may be useful for parents.