



## **REDUCING HOSPITAL ADMISSIONS**

**28 JUNE 2004**

Member for Flinders Liz Penfold said the country has once again been victimised by receiving only 12% of program funding for one third of the population, while the metropolitan's two thirds gets 88%.

And studies done on Eyre Peninsula in preventative health issues have been ignored by the Labor State Government.

Mrs Penfold questioned the Minister for Health Lea Stevens regarding hospital admission prevention strategies and chronic disease management during Parliament this week.

"The Eyre Peninsula Division of General Practice undertook a comprehensive study on Eyre Peninsula, starting in 1996, to research and put into place just such preventative and management strategies.

"Yet here we have the Minister making a wordy announcement about the implementation of such strategies, and getting the Chief Executive, Department of Human Services, to speak about what is done in New Zealand and the United States as if the idea has never been explored or used before."

Mrs Penfold was incensed that the funding for the program will be split with only 12 per cent going to country South Australia and 88 per cent going to the metropolitan area.

She was angry that the one third of the population who live in rural and regional South Australia will be so blatantly disadvantaged.

"With our distances, our lack of support services, the Labor government's cuts to country hospitals and health, plus the needs of patients discharged early from metropolitan hospitals so that the beds can be used again, our needs are greater than the city yet we are again penalised through diminished funding," she said.

Mrs Penfold said that if the Minister was serious about preventing hospital admissions, the management of patients coping with chronic diseases and discharge from hospital, more specialists would be funded to visit rural and regional South Australia.

"More specialists visiting our region is the most cost effective and efficient method for this area of health delivery.

"The facilities particularly at the Port Lincoln Hospital since the upgrade are now among the best, that is no longer an impediment," she said.