



**Rape victims forced to stay
in same clothes for up to 24 hours
14 January 2007**

Eyre Peninsula rape victims are being forced to travel on commercial flights to Adelaide for initial medical examinations because the Rann Government has failed to provide appropriate victim support services for regional South Australia, Shadow Health Minister Vickie Chapman said today.

Ms Chapman said victims were then subjected to the further torment of having to wear the clothes they were assaulted in for up to 24 hours to preserve evidence.

“When a rape victim notifies local police of an alleged sexual assault they must remain in the same clothes and must not shower or wash as they have to fly on a commercial flight from Port Lincoln to Adelaide to be medically examined.

“It is outrageous that the Rann Government hasn’t put in place a more appropriate service for country victims of sexual assault.”

Member for Flinders, Liz Penfold said she was disgusted that the Rann Government had not taken immediate action.

“I have written to Health Minister Hill about this issue, but he has not yet given me a response,” Mrs Penfold said.

“Currently, there are no GPs who can medically examine rape victims after an attack. They have very busy private practices to run and there is a concern, not only about the examination times, but the potential to be involved in lengthy court cases.

“During the past two years I understand about 12 rapes have been reported, and to the best of my knowledge no prosecutions have been initiated in that time either.

“Only a small proportion of victims report rape, and of those that do, most drop the complaint when confronted with the current method of collecting evidence!

“It appears that rapists are getting away with their heinous crimes because the Rann Government has failed to address the need for doctors who are able to carry out the particular medical examinations in the event of a rape in Port Lincoln.

“Rape is an extremely distressing experience and putting victims through further ordeals is unjust.

“Minister Hill must take immediate action preferably to enable victims to be airlifted to the 24 hour a day, 7 day a week professional service provided at Yarrow Place in Adelaide by air ambulance or police plane.

“The longer the Rann Government delays taking action, the longer rape victims will be denied justice.”

