

# MEDIA RELEASE

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## WHAT ABOUT AN “OPEN DOOR” FOR PATIENTS?

Doctors at the Kangaroo Island Medical Clinic say the State Government is keen to rebrand the State an open door to everyone except country patients.

The doctors say they are astounded at the attitude of the Health Department that has built into the new country GP Agreements an incentive for them to cancel all their appointments with local patients if they work all night at the public hospital.

“Country Health SA’s Peter Chapman believes it is *“a very major initiative”* of the new GP Agreement that provides us with payments to shut the door on our patients.

“Understandably we are refusing to sign up to it.

“We would rather the Department continue to provide a relief locum service for one week a month as it has been doing for some years in recognition of our punishing schedule.

“The system as it stands now, works well.

“The Health Department has spent months trying to convince us that if we don’t pay for the locum service ourselves to help out at their public hospital, that it will staff the hospital with a whole new team of doctors.

“That will cost taxpayers hundreds of thousands of dollars more every year.

“I hope they have the new doctors ready, because CHSA have told us that the current GP Agreement runs out at the end of this month.

“To the best of our knowledge CHSA have no Doctors provisioned to service the local hospital on Kangaroo Island after March the 31st.

“I can understand why the Kangaroo Island community is upset.

“This week, the KI Football League that represents 700 KI residents wrote to the Local MP Michael Pengilly expressing their outrage at the attitude of Country Health and support for the KI Medical Clinic doctors,” Dr Raines said.

Doctors at the Kangaroo Island Medical Clinic say they are not prepared to put the lives of their patients at risk by working dangerously long hours required under the new GP agreement.

Dr Raines says doctors are seeking a continuation of the current arrangements, which involves providing 24-hour 7-day a week obstetric and anaesthetic services all year and round-the-clock emergency services for 40 weeks a year.

Kangaroo Island has a permanent population of about 4500 people and an annual tourist population of about 190,000 visitors.

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