

Palmerston (NT)

- At the Darwin GP Super Clinic public consultation held in Darwin on 4 May 2011 a Departmental Officer (Ms Anne Thorpe) said that, while it was necessary to understand what integrated, multidisciplinary, team based approaches to care means, that “is half the picture...none of this works if a Super Clinic is not relevant to its local situation and I know that that’s tough and we’ve got clinics that are, ~~you know~~, struggling with the [issue] that the patients walking in the door are not the patients that have the chronic disease that we think they should be focused on. So what are they going to do about that?” Ms Thorpe went on to describe the use of population health data and a process by which the clinic looks at strategies for developing services targeted at attracting patients with chronic disease(s) to the clinic, particularly those people who are poor at self-managing chronic disease.
- A journalist from the NT News, who was in the audience but had been denied the opportunity to interview Ms Thorpe, asked during the question and answer session “Anne, you mentioned earlier that some clinics are struggling. Is Palmerston one of these, and if so, why would Darwin be any different? Some Territorians, what would make them want to go to a Super Clinic as opposed to more traditional health places like a General Practitioner?”
- Ms Thorpe’s answer clarified her use of the term “struggling” to explain that it meant that “integration is tough and integration across privately provided and publicly provided services is a tough thing that people will develop over time and that any of the clinical people in the room will know how difficult that is. You actually have to learn what other clinical services provide, what focus they have, where their interests lie, and you build that clinical trust to be part of a team with them. So when I say ‘that’s a struggle for some clinics’ that’s actually what I am talking about.” Ms Thorpe went on to discuss the changes required by the GP Super Clinic model.
- On 6 May 2011, the NT News published an article headed “No bulk billing for new clinic” which included quotes from Ms Thorpe. A review of the audio recording for the session identified some of the quotes but noted that they had been used in the article out of context.