



**Australian Medical Association
Northern Territory**

Doctor shortage starts to bite, serious threat to people in remote areas and tourism in the Top End

Doctors overseeing the transfer of critically ill patients from remote top end areas have become desperate and asked the AMA to go public on the fact that on many occasions in the past couple of months and at all times from next week, there will be no doctor rostered to accompany critically ill patients for retrieval by air from either Katherine or Gove. That will leave only one fully equipped retrieval service, from Darwin.

Dr Peter Beaumont, Australian Medical Association Northern Territory President said that it is not acceptable to have so many people in the Northern Territory with such a serious risk. "If you have a burst appendix on Elcho island and a critically injured Tourist from a fall in Kakadu, one of them may perish and the coordinating doctor will have the dreadful decision to make as to whom it is likely to be." he said.

This is yet another instance of serious chasms forming in the Top End health system and, perhaps an example of what is to come.

"We call on the government to take the health of Territorians and our visitors more seriously and do whatever is necessary to ensure we do not have these dangerous gaps in our system." Dr Beaumont said.

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