5 November 2018

Precision targeting for cancer

In November 1895 Wilhelm Roentgen discovered x-rays.

Each year around the anniversary of this momentous discovery we celebrate Radiographers and Radiation Therapists Week (5-11 November).

The week allows us to acknowledge the importance of medical radiation science has on our lives today.

Director of Radiation Therapy, Adem Crosby Centre Sunshine Coast University Hospital, David Willis, said the roles of radiography and radiation therapy were broad and evolving swiftly.

“Our areas of expertise are rapidly advancing; new technologies and better practices are resulting in constant improvements to safety, accuracy and efficiency,” Mr Willis said.

“The advancements are numerous, for example imaging tests are often used instead of exploratory surgery and the ability for early diagnosis using radiology has skyrocketed in recent years. It is the key to effectively targeting a cancer as doctors can see exactly where it is and what it is doing.

“Radiographers and radiation therapists work together with other health care professionals as part of a multidisciplinary team. At the Adem Crosby Centre we are proud to be part of the broader cancer care team. We also work closely with our colleagues in Medical Imaging”, he said.

The Adem Crosby Centre is home to the Sunshine Coast’s first public radiation oncology department. In the past 12 months alone, they have delivered more than 750 courses of treatment, or roughly 13,000 individual treatment sessions.

Mr Willis said: “Importantly, about 12 per cent of the patients we’ve cared for have needed chemotherapy on the same day as their radiation therapy. Having both treatments in the same building makes a huge difference for Sunshine Coast residents”.

This year’s theme for Radiographers and Radiation Therapists Week is “precision and compassion”. To align with this the radiation team from the Adem Crosby Centre participated in an archery event hosted by Australian Olympian and Sunshine Coast local, Ryan Tyack (bronze medallist at the Rio Olympic Games).
Mr Willis said: “The event is a fun introduction to archery, doubling as a fund raiser for Team Adem. We also see a strong symbolic link between the precision and dedication of an Olympic archer and the work we do in targeting cancer”.

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