16 June 2017

New treatment targets cancer closely

Radiation oncology services have commenced at the $1.8 billion Sunshine Coast University Hospital (SCUH).

SCUH’s Adem Crosby Centre provides comprehensive oncology, clinical haematology and for the first time in our region, radiation oncology services will be delivered publicly from the centre.

Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service (SCHHS) Chief Executive Kevin Hegarty said these services had never been offered in a public hospital in the SCHHS area, with patients previously being treated by a private provider.

This service will ensure the provision of a single oncology service directly controlled by the SCHHS and will remove the interface required between medical oncology (operated by the hospital and health service) and a private provider.

“So, this is a great milestone not only for SCUH but for this region,” Mr Hegarty said.

“We anticipate 45 to 50 patients per week will receive radiation therapy treatments at SCUH. That’s a significant number of people now able to get the treatment they need in the same facility.

“This treatment is delivered using linear accelerators which help improve the patient experience by delivering shorter, more efficient treatments.”

Dr Francis Gibbons, Director of Radiation Oncology Medical Physics, said radiation therapy was a safe treatment that used an accurate targeted dose of radiation to eliminate cancer cells, shrink tumours, and/or relieve pain associated with a patient’s diagnosis.

“The treatment is tailor-made to each individual patient. This means a significant amount of planning goes into developing the course of treatment to ensure the best outcome for the patient as possible.

“The treatment involves the use of highly specialised equipment and complex computer systems which need to be operated with precise accuracy to ensure the best possible outcomes for patients.

Outpatient radiotherapy planning clinics began on 5 June, with radiation therapy starting on 12 June.
The Adem Crosby Centre is home to about 30 staff including medical specialists in radiation oncology, radiation therapists, radiation oncology medical physicists, oncology nurses and allied health staff.

ENDS

Media opportunity:

When: 9am Tuesday, 20 June 2017
Where: Sunshine Coast University Hospital, 6 Doherty St, Birtinya
Parking: best parking is in P1. (I will meet you at the main entrance of the hospital.)

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