



MEDIA RELEASE

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Newly opened Blacktown Hospital hosts first Targeting Cancer campaign GP education evening

The newly opened Blacktown Hospital will host doctors from around western Sydney at the Targeting Cancer campaign GP Oncology Education Evening on Wednesday 25th May 2016.

The education evenings are held within the radiation therapy department of a hospital for GPs within the local area to attend. It provides them with a face-to-face opportunity to learn about cancer treatments, in particular radiation therapy, from health care professionals in a centre close to them.

GPs play a vital role in the management and referrals of cancer patients to ensure cancer patients are receiving the best care possible and all their treatment options.

Radiation therapy is a highly effective treatment that could benefit one in two patients diagnosed with cancer and is involved in around 40% of cancer cures. In vast numbers of incurable patients it can ease pain and other symptoms to improve their quality of life.

Unfortunately, radiation therapy is under-utilised in Australia with only one in three patients receiving treatment, when one in two might actually benefit - meaning thousands of patients are missing out.

Clinical lead of the Targeting Cancer campaign and senior radiation oncologist, Associate Professor Sandra Turner said Blacktown Hospital was the perfect place to host one of the education sessions.

"The opening of the radiation oncology clinic at Blacktown hospital in April means that for the first time, cancer patients will be able to have radiation therapy at Blacktown, avoiding the need to travel too far for this treatment.

"GPs who attend the education evening will get to visit the brand new radiation oncology clinic as well as learn about how radiation therapy might help their patients as well as the sophisticated technology and practicalities of modern radiation therapy," said A/Prof Turner.

"A number of factors contribute to the under-utilisation of this treatment but one of the main issues, is lack of awareness by patients and healthcare professionals. This education evening is all about providing the most comprehensive information available on how and where radiation therapy could benefit a patient either for cure or alleviation of symptoms such as pain.

The radiation oncology clinic at Blacktown is equipped with two brand new high-tech radiation therapy treatment machines called Linear Accelerators.

The education evening incorporates a guided physical tour of department and the radiation machines and captures the typical pathway of a cancer patient when they arrive at the department.

GPs interested in attending the education evening at Blacktown Hospital on Wednesday 25th May at 5:30pm can confirm their attendance by email to Kim.Watson@health.nsw.gov.au
For enquiries call 02 98456489.