



Colquitt Regional to Hold Virtual Ribbon Cutting for Radiation Oncology Unit

On March 3, the Edwards Cancer Center at Colquitt Regional will celebrate its new radiation oncology unit with a virtual ribbon cutting ceremony. The ceremony will be streamed live on the Colquitt Regional Facebook page at 10 am.

Colquitt Regional broke ground on the new 6,900 sq. ft. building in May 2020 and will welcome its first patient this week.

The new unit will feature a state-of-the-art linear accelerator, the Versa HD, which is a revolutionary radiation treatment system designed to improve cancer patient care.

Developed by Elekta, the Versa HD allows for treatment of a broader spectrum of tumors throughout the body, while enabling treatment of complex cancers that require extreme precision.

With this sophisticated technology, the Edwards Cancer Center will be able to offer highly customized treatments to address patient needs.

“In 2018, we completed phase one of our oncology service line expansion with the opening of the Edwards Cancer Center,” said Colquitt Regional President and CEO Jim Matney. “Since then, we have seen hundreds of patients benefit from being able to receive first-class cancer care

right here in our community. Today, as we cut the ribbon on our new radiation oncology unit, we are proud to bring this greatly-needed service line to our patients.”

Currently, any patient that needs radiation treatment must travel a minimum of 30 minutes to receive care.

“It can be such a burden on patients and caregivers to travel out of town every day for six to eight weeks at a time to receive radiation services,” said Matney. “This new facility and equipment will truly be life-altering for our patients.”

The Versa HD features patented technology that enables it to deliver extremely precise radiation with superior conformance to the targeted tumor’s size, shape and volume. Clinicians can administer higher dose rates in less time, to enhance treatment effectiveness while protecting critical structures such as the heart, spine, or bladder.

Colquitt Regional officials planned for the treatment area to have a spa-like atmosphere. The Versa HD offers ergonomic features and softer streamlined shapes, combined with low mechanical noise and ambient lighting effects, which create a confident and relaxed patient treatment environment.

Designed with patient safety in mind, the Versa HD incorporates features such as touch-

Colquitt Regional will cut the ribbon on its new radiation oncology unit at the Edwards Cancer Center on March 3. Pictured is the state-of-the-art linear accelerator, the Elekta Versa HD, which is housed in the treatment chamber of the new unit. This technology is a revolutionary radiation treatment system designed to improve cancer patient care and is now available at the Edwards Cancer Center.

activated patient protection and the lowest radiation transmission of any commercially available linear accelerator.

In addition to current providers Wenhui Zhu, MD, and Kerri Holloway-Cox, FNP-C, J. Steven Johnson, MD, and David A. Saunders, MD, will be joining the team at the Edwards Cancer Center. Johnson and Saunders, who have provided care at the Lewis Hall Singletary Oncology Center in Thomasville for over 33 and 24 years, respectively, will serve as the primary radiation oncologists.

“I am looking forward to working with the Edwards Cancer Center and playing a part in bringing radiation oncology services to this community,” said Johnson. “This new facility is incredible. Having access to the latest technology with the Versa HD is going to make a great difference in patient care and, as a physician, it provides me with a broad range of advanced treatment solutions for my patients.”

Other new staff members include: physicist Ramesh Nair, PhD, medical dosimetrist Roy Hall, CMD, RTT(T), radiation therapist Traci Fuller, R(R)(M)(T), radiation therapist Lei-Ann Barnes, BSRT(R)(T), radiation therapist Holli Holmes, RT(R)(T), and nurse Jennifer Mathis, RN, ONS.

The Edwards Cancer Center construction and expansion was made possible through Colquitt Regional's participation in the Georgia HEART Tax Credit Program. This program allows Georgia residents to reallocate their state tax dollars to qualified rural hospital organizations.

Colquitt Regional has been approved to participate in the tax credit program again in 2021. To participate in the program, interested individuals may contact Gina McDonald at 229-890-3416.

For more information on radiation oncology services, please visit theedwardscenter.com or call 229-890-3514.

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