

For Immediate Release

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SGMC Completes \$6 Million Investment in Cancer Treatment Technology

South Georgia Medical Center recently completed a \$6 million upgrade of its two linear accelerators. Located in the Pearlman Cancer Center, the versatile linear accelerators deliver customized external beam radiation treatments to cancer patients. These units are an essential part of cancer treatment with two-thirds of Pearlman's patients receiving radiation therapy at some point during their care.

Dr. John Devine, Medical Director for Radiation Oncology, said, "The Elekta Versa HD linear accelerators provide additional capabilities, such as stereotactic radiosurgery, volume modulated arc therapy, and surface guided radiation therapy including deep inspiration breath hold."

Stereotactic radiosurgery (SRS) ensures high definition dynamic treatment of complex or challenging cancers with submillimeter accuracy. Volume modulated arc therapy (VMAT) speeds up the treatment delivery time.

The new accelerators use Vision RT Surface Guided Radiation Therapy (SGRT), a technique that includes a three-dimensional camera system to project a laser map on the patient's skin surface to detect any position changes during treatment. When movement is detected, the accelerator automatically pauses the radiation treatment.

“The goal is to treat the tumor with a high dose of radiation while protecting the surrounding vital organs and tissues,” Devine said.

According to Shahidul Pramanik, Medical Physicist, the upgrade took approximately a year to complete. Each accelerator weighs nearly 9 tons and is housed separately in a specially constructed vault. An up-grade of this magnitude is needed every 10-12 years, which is the expected life-span of the sophisticated equipment.

“At the center of every cancer fight is a patient,” said Laura Jones, Chief Therapist and Dosimetrist. “It’s always exciting to have the most advanced technology to offer our patients, because they are our friends and family.”

Janna Luke, Director of the Pearlman Cancer Center, said, “We pride ourselves in being the region’s leader in comprehensive cancer care. This investment further supports that mission as patients can receive the latest and greatest cancer treatment closer to home.”

Pearlman serves a 15-county area, treating nearly 2,000 patients each year. Pearlman has performed approximately 100,000 treatments through the linear accelerator and more than 250,000 radiation oncology procedures in the last decade. The center is accredited by the American College of Surgeons Commission on Cancer and the American College of Radiology.

Purchase of the linear accelerators was made possible by the philanthropic support of the [SGMC Foundation](#).

[To learn more about the Pearlman Cancer Center, click here.](#)

Pictured: SGMC Medical Physicist Shahidul Pramanik and Dr. John Devine, Medical Director for Radiation Oncology, showcase one of the two new linear accelerators located in the Pearlman Cancer Center.

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