



Australian Government
Department of Health and Ageing

Better Access to Radiation Oncology – Continue funding

Why is this important?

- Radiation therapy is one of the main ways of treating cancer. Shortages in radiotherapy facilities and in staff have resulted in waiting lists and difficulties in access to treatment, especially for people in regional areas. The continued expansion of the radiotherapy sector will result in improvements for people in non-metropolitan areas in terms of access to, and reduced waiting times for, treatment.
- A radiation therapy facility in Northern Australia has been identified as a priority. This can be accommodated within the programme funds, with private sector and Northern Territory Government contributions.

Who will benefit?

- It is estimated that in 2007, over 103,000 people will be diagnosed with malignant cancer. Areas of need will be identified in conjunction with radiotherapy stakeholders, for construction of a number of new radiotherapy facilities. People in those areas will benefit from easier access to treatment.
- In Darwin it is estimated that by 2010 up to 400 people per year with cancer will benefit from a radiation therapy facility.

What funding is the Government committing to the initiative?

- The Government has committed continued funding of \$90.3 million over four years. This includes \$10.1 million from the 2002-03 Budget measure, Better Treatment for Cancer Patients.

What have we done in the past?

- The Government provided \$72.7 million under the 2002-03 Budget measure, Better Treatment for Cancer Patients.
- The Government also provided \$8.9 million under the 2004-05 Budget measure, Strengthening Cancer Care, to support the non-medical radiation therapy workforce undertaking clinical training.

When will the initiative conclude?

- This initiative will be reviewed in the 2010-11 Budget.