

MEDIA ADVISORY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Radiation Therapy for Cancer Patients Saves Hundreds of Lives Daily in Canada

Leading clinicians and scientists gather in Vancouver at Canadian Association of Radiation Oncology – Association canadienne de radio-oncologie (CARO-ACRO) national Annual Scientific Meeting (ASM) to share new trends and discoveries in physics and radiation oncology.

VANCOUVER, September 8, 2010 - A cancer diagnosis leads to a life-altering journey for most Canadian patients. Conventional treatments include surgical removal of the tumour, chemotherapy and/or radiation therapy. Today, 50 per cent of cancer patients will benefit from radiation therapy; however, in many Canadian regions, only 33 per cent are receiving this life saving treatment.

“In some remote and rural locations, patient travel distance may be an issue,” explains Dr. Ida Ackerman, radiation oncologist at the Odette Cancer Centre and president of the Canadian Radiation Oncology Foundation (CROF). “However, in Toronto for example, there are two major cancer centres, yet radiation therapy utilization remains lower in the immediate area. Many primary care physicians receive little or no teaching in medical school on radiation therapy for cancer. There exists a lack of information regarding the benefits and safety of this critical treatment modality.”

Dr. Ackerman said important goals of CARO-ACRO and CROF are:

- To dispel myths surrounding radiation therapy;
- To educate patients, their families, and our colleagues in the medical profession about the proven value, efficacy and safety of radiation therapy; and
- To encourage the early exploration of the radiation therapy option when planning treatment.

Coinciding with the CARO-ACRO ASM, September 22 to 25 at the Hyatt Regency in Vancouver, the organizations are releasing a number of stories, photos and illustrations and are providing experts for interviews about the Canadian radiation oncology field, including:

- Wonders of Physics in Radiation Therapy
- Radiation Therapy Myth Buster for Patients and Their Families
- Behind Each Patient: The Radiation Therapy Team (up to 14 unique professionals)
- Patient Story: Gibsons B.C. resident Mrs. Pat Mostovich Receives One-Week, High Dose Rate Brachytherapy for Breast Cancer
- University of Toronto Physics Researcher Investigates Use of Gold Nanoparticles to Enhance Radiation Therapy



- Canadian Partnership Against Cancer (CPAC) and CARO-ACRO Announce Collaborative National Project: National Quality Program in Radiation Therapy (C-PQR)
- Experimental Social Psychologist Lectures on 'Living With Death'
- Patient Information Booklet: The Radiation Therapy Experience
- CARO/CROF Backgrounders
- ASM Meeting Program

All documents, photos, illustrations, interview opportunities can be found at the **CARO-ACRO 2010 ASM Online Newsroom**: www.caro-acro

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About the Canadian Association of Radiation Oncology – Association canadienne de radio-oncologie (CARO-ACRO) (www.caro-acro.ca)

CARO-ACRO is a national organization representing Canadian radiation oncologists, and other professionals in the radiation therapy field, to promote the interests of radiation oncology in Canada, and to represent the specialty to governments, The Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada and other national and international societies.

The mission of CARO-ACRO is to: represent and support its membership nationally and internationally through the promotion of high standards of patient care in the practice of radiation oncology; to support excellence in professional standards; and to promote radiation oncology research and education.

CARO-ACRO is a partner with other disciplines in seeking to improve the outcomes of cancer patients, and provides a consultative authority to oncology related agencies, academic institutions and to the public in all matters pertaining to radiotherapy and oncology in Canada.

Currently there are 320 radiation oncologists and 1,190 radiation therapists practicing at 35 centres across the country. CARO-ACRO has a total membership of 687 members from a variety of specialties within the field: radiation oncologists (physicians with specialized training in the care of patients with cancer and the use of radiation treatment), physicists, therapists, radiobiologists, fellows and residents.



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