

BIR Response to the Announcement of an Increase in Spending by NHS on Radiotherapy Treatment



The BIR welcomes the announcement that the NHS is to spend £130 million on linear accelerator equipment (Linacs) to treat cancer, especially at a time of severe constraints on NHS Trusts' budgets. Radiotherapy treatment is the most cost effective treatment for cancer as it is able to accurately target the tumour, avoiding healthy tissue. It is often the preferred choice over drugs or surgery as it has fewer side effects and avoids the need for post-surgery care.

However, the Linacs require a multidisciplinary team of staff which must be trained to use the machines effectively and a tariff system to match the increasingly complex treatment plans required by these machines so that they can be used to their full potential.

The BIR President, Andy Rogers, said "Without doubt radiotherapy treatment saves lives and is cost-effective but a one-off injection of cash does not make our radiotherapy service sustainable. This funding does nothing to address the staff recruitment to enable these machines to be fully utilised. There are chronic shortages of clinical oncologists, medical physicists and therapeutic radiographers, the vital team needed to support this equipment. Furthermore, this is only approximately 50% of the funding recommended by the Cancer Taskforce"

Source & Image Credit: [British Institute of Radiology](#)

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