
First UK Novalis Tx™ Radiosurgery Launched



Today (February 7 2011), for the first time in the UK, cancer patients are starting to receive treatment with Novalis Tx™ radiosurgery. This device gives the chance of a cure to those with inoperable tumours and offers the possibility to perform precise painless treatment to tumours in a single patient visit.

The Novalis Tx makes it possible for doctors to treat patients with tumours virtually anywhere in the body in just a single session. Combining a 'sat nav' like targeting system and powerful treatment beams, the Novalis Tx can destroy cancerous cells and helps to protect surrounding healthy tissue. Treatment is also made more patient-friendly by delivering frameless radiosurgery for brain tumours; an alternative to techniques that require immobilisation with an invasive head ring that is affixed to the skull. In its first year of operation the Novalis Tx, installed at the brand new Clatterbridge Cancer Centre, Liverpool, is expected to treat over 800 cancer patients. It is estimated that 150 of these patients will be priority brain tumour patients where precise, non-invasive treatment is particularly effective.

Dr Brian Haylock, Consultant Oncologist and Clinical Director for Radiotherapy at Clatterbridge Centre for Oncology, said: "Unlike some other highly specialised radiation treatment machines, the Novalis Tx can treat many different types of cancer in all over the body allowing us to treat more cancer patients with a single device. This coupled with the speed with which we can treat patients – in some cases in as little as 15 minutes in just one session – means the equipment will be available for the benefit of more patients here in the UK."

The Novalis Tx promises to improve patients' access to world-leading cancer treatment in the UK. Clatterbridge and The Walton Centre have worked in partnership to bring this state-of-the-art treatment option to UK patients. Later this year Novalis Tx machines will become operational at two other specialist NHS cancer centres in Edinburgh and Manchester. Treatment with Novalis Tx will be considered for any patient in the UK for whom their doctor feels it is suitable.

Sue Farrington-Smith, Director of the charity Brain Tumour Research, comments on the launch: "We are delighted that advanced brain tumour treatments like the Novalis Tx are now available to cancer patients on the NHS. The work of Clatterbridge and The Walton Centre Trusts in Liverpool will undoubtedly provide the best cancer care for their patients. This is inspirational stuff." Clatterbridge Centre for Oncology's new purpose-built facility will be equipped with the Novalis Tx radiosurgery system and two other radiotherapy treatment systems, together with expert cancer rehabilitation and support services.

David Brett, Marketing Director for Radiotherapy at Brainlab, the radiosurgery pioneers who co-developed the Novalis Tx with medical device manufacturer Varian Medical Systems, said: "We continually strive to develop cutting-edge treatments that offer doctors the best treatment possibilities for their patients. We are proud to be part of the collaboration between leading oncology and neurosurgery teams and delighted to offer better care to UK patients. We hope that the three first sites for the Novalis Tx will help support the provision of improved cancer care to patients."

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