

MEDIA RELEASE

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Local cancer centre first in state to deliver cutting-edge radiation therapy treatment for advanced brain cancer

Icon Cancer Centre Hobart has delivered its first stereotactic radiation therapy (SRT) treatment, an advanced technique used to treat, small well-defined brain tumours, including tumours that have spread from a primary cancer. The centre is the first oncology care provider in Tasmania to apply this precision treatment technique to brain tumours.

Local cancer patient, 68-year-old, Christine Dale was first diagnosed with breast cancer in 2013. After a bilateral mastectomy she was given the all clear. Three years later another lump appeared. She went on to receive chemotherapy and radiation therapy. After several wins and more setbacks, Christine's scans found more lesions in her brain and lung.

"It's been frustrating being in and out of treatment but we've taken it a step at a time. Once I had metastases, I knew I would never be clear again. But I've accepted and value spending my time with family and friends," Mrs Dale said.

Christine was referred to Icon for stereotactic radiation therapy to the brain lesion. SRT delivers high doses of pinpoint precision radiation to the tumour while limiting dose to surrounding healthy brain tissue. She received three sessions of radiation therapy treatment to help reduce the lesion.

"I felt a little nervous at first, because it was a treatment that hadn't been done in Hobart before. But the team reassured me and had also delivered the treatment before in other States. The treatment was fast, I was only on the bed for 15 minutes each time for three days. I was expecting to get headaches, but I always felt ok afterwards. It's nice to know I have had the latest treatment."

Previously, patients were required to travel interstate to receive this comparable care.

"Previously, for a lot of secondary brain tumour cases you would need to radiate the entire brain. This can be uncomfortable for the patient and cause increased side effects, such as severe headaches, hair loss and nausea. Stereotactic radiation therapy only targets the individual tumours, delivering safe and effective treatment which can also reduce side effects allowing patients a better quality of life," says Icon Radiation Oncologist Dr Raef Awad.

"Being able to offer the latest techniques to the local community is an important step in fulfilling our commitment to delivering the best possible cancer care to more patients, closer to home."

For Christine, although she has less energy, she can still continue to spend more time with her granddaughter and enjoy short walks with her husband and dogs.

Icon's national network ensures a robust stereotactic program across all their centres, including national training, extensive quality assurance checks and support to ensure treatment is delivered with the highest safety and quality. Icon Cancer Centre Hobart opened in late 2017 and is proud to work alongside the local healthcare community to offer greater choice to patients and their families.

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About Icon Cancer Centre Hobart:

Icon Cancer Centre Hobart provides Tasmanian patients with access to comprehensive cancer care under the one roof. No private health insurance is required for radiation therapy, with up to 80-90% covered by Medicare.

Medical oncology services are available for patients who access private health insurance. Pharmacy, pathology and cancer support services are also located on-site.

In November 2018, Icon Cancer Centre marked one year of service to the Hobart community.

About Icon Group:

Icon Group - Australia's largest dedicated cancer care provider. The Group has expanded globally into Singapore, China and New Zealand and is among the top ten healthcare companies in Australia.

The Group's cancer services include 28 cancer centres in Australia, including day oncology hospitals, radiation oncology facilities and comprehensive centres that bring both oncology disciplines together.

The Group also encompasses Epic Pharmacy: provider of medication management and pharmacy services to the hospital, oncology and aged care sectors; and Slade Health: one of Australia's largest chemotherapy compounders with three TGA-approved manufacturing sites across the eastern seaboard. For more information visit www.icongroup.global and follow us on social media @IconGroupAU

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