

NATIONAL PARTICLE THERAPY SYMPOSIUM



Communiqué Particle Therapy Symposium, 10-11 December 2020

The participants in the National Particle Therapy Symposium 2020:

- emphasise the need for a continuing, unified national approach for the best combination of particle therapy facilities in Australia aimed at achieving the best possible outcomes for patients, clinicians, researchers, and the broader public;
- welcome the commencement of construction of the Australian Bragg Centre for Proton Therapy and Research - Australia's first particle therapy facility;
- emphasises the critical importance of local cancer cure in the overall management of people affected by cancer;
- support Victoria's proposal for a proton therapy centre within the Melbourne Biomedical Precinct;
- recognise the progress made by Australian clinical and research communities in developing a coherent, national plan for particle therapy facilities, including a high energy proton facility in South Australia, proton therapy facilities in Victoria and Queensland, and a proton and carbon-ion therapy facility in New South Wales;
- note that access to particle therapy as part of the Medical Treatment Overseas Program for Australians is currently limited due to COVID-19 restrictions, that there is an increased need to build sovereign capabilities in particle therapy treatment and technology;
- draw attention to the progress that has been made by the clinical and research communities in developing a highly skilled particle therapy workforce to ensure its successful introduction in Australia;
- note that in 32 countries, there are 110 operational particle therapy facilities with a further 65 under construction or in planning, including 19 offering carbon-ion therapy;
- emphasise that thousands of Australian patients, including those with a range of life-threatening tumours and paediatric cancers, go untreated due to the proximity of sensitive organs and could significantly benefit from particle therapy in Australia;
- support establishing a national clinical registry that would facilitate the evaluation of patients who may benefit from particle therapy, expedite the patient treatment review process, support future research and clinical trials, and enable international research collaboration and benchmarking;
- support the need for a nationally coherent and uniform referral network for patients within a sustainable reimbursement scheme;
- commit to ensuring that access to particle therapy in Australia is available to those most in need based on internationally recognised clinical indications and research protocols;
- recognise that national collaborative efforts will provide the tools for Australia to lead research in particle therapy, generate innovation potential, and create new jobs in fields of physics, radiation medicine, and in industrial and clinical research;
- recognise the importance of continued patient and consumer engagement in the development of particle therapy facilities in Australia;
- noted several recent publications from the national collaborative Australian particle therapy group in a themed issue of the Journal of Medical Imaging and Radiation Oncology (JMRO).

The delegates to the 2020 National Particle Therapy Symposium represent consumers, government agencies, health services, research organisations, and universities across Australia, New Zealand, and overseas. The Symposium was hosted virtually by The Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre, with contributors outlined below: