
NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Health
BC Cancer Agency
Provincial Health Services Authority

PROVINCE INCREASES CAPACITY FOR RADIATION THERAPY

VANCOUVER – Health Minister George Abbott today officially opened two new radiation therapy vaults at the BC Cancer Agency, an agency of the Provincial Health Services Authority.

“These two new treatment vaults will improve access to care by expanding the capacity the BC Cancer Agency’s Vancouver Centre has to provide radiation treatment to patients,” said Abbott. “This means that medical specialists will be able to accommodate an additional 850 patients per year and this increase helps alleviate the high level of demand for cancer treatment and therapies.”

Through the Provincial Health Services Authority, the Ministry of Health provided \$4.8 million in 2004 to the BC Cancer Agency to complete the construction of four vaults. Two of the vaults are equipped now and in use. The remaining two are in place for future capacity needs.

The machines offer a new emerging type of radiation therapy called Intensity Modulated Radiotherapy Treatment (IMRT), allowing for an intense amount of radiation delivered to a very specific tumour target, while sparing the surrounding healthy tissue from radiation damage.

“This is a strategic investment that the ministry, along with PHSA, is making to ensure the BC Cancer Agency continues to be a national leader in cancer control and treatment,” said Wynne Powell, chair of the PHSA Board of Directors.

“The BC Cancer Agency has among the best cancer survival rates in Canada, thanks to its provincewide system of cancer control and care,” said Dr. Simon Sutcliffe, president of the BC Cancer Agency. “The opening of these new vaults supports the BC Cancer Agency’s ability to provide state-of-the-art, evidence-based care to the people of B.C.”

The BC Cancer Agency, a part of the Provincial Health Services Authority, is committed to reducing the incidence of cancer, reducing the mortality from cancer and improving the quality of life for those living with cancer. It provides a comprehensive cancer control program for the people of British Columbia by working with community partners to deliver a range of oncology services, including prevention, early detection, diagnosis and treatment, research, education, supportive care rehabilitation and palliative care.

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