Cancer Treatment Experts from Across Latin America Gather in Rio de Janeiro to Discuss Advances in Radiation Oncology

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RIO DE JANEIRO, July 11, 2011 /PRNewswire/ -- Advances in radiotherapy for the treatment of cancer were among the many topics discussed during four days of scientific presentations at the Thirteenth Annual Congress of the Brazilian Society of Radiotherapy (SBRT), held in Rio de Janeiro last month. The Congress, attended by 900 clinical professionals from across Latin America, featured distinguished experts from around the world who discussed the use of advanced forms of radiotherapy in the treatment of breast, prostate, colon, brain, gynecological, and head and neck cancer.

"Radiotherapy is more useful and effective today than at any other time in history, thanks mostly to important developments in technology," said Dr. Carlos Manoel Mendonca de Araujo, President of the Brazilian Society of Radiotherapy (SBRT) and Director of the Radiation Oncology Department of the National Cancer Institute (INCA) in Rio de Janeiro. "The government of Brazil has recognized the importance of modern radiotherapy in the fight against cancer, by acquiring new equipment for the public hospitals and by raising reimbursement rates for this type of treatment. We are very likely to see, in coming years, a significant upgrade of the radiotherapy resources at treatment centers across Brazil and Latin America."

Radiotherapy is the carefully planned therapeutic use of high-energy X-ray beams that are able to kill fast-growing cancer cells. The most modern form of radiotherapy uses special beam-shaping technology to focus the beam on a targeted tumor while minimizing exposure of surrounding healthy tissues. This type of radiotherapy, called "intensity-modulated radiation therapy" (IMRT) is being adopted by many of Brazil's cancer clinics. Sometimes IMRT treatments are guided using real-time imaging to further enhance treatment precision by accounting for changes in the tumor and surrounding anatomy over a course of treatment, which often requires up
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