

Thought Leaders in Radiation Medicine Convene to Discuss Safety and Advancements in Cancer Treatment

The Associated Press

Advancements in radiation treatment technology, safety protocols and workflow improvements were key topics discussed during the recent Future of Radiation Medicine: 2012 Clinical Leadership Symposium, sponsored by Elekta, a company pioneering significant innovations and clinical solutions for treating cancer and brain disorders. During the symposium, clinical experts presented data and participated in discussions on how advancements are helping clinicians safely and more accurately treat individuals with lung, prostate and pancreatic cancers.

"With the abundance of new data on technological advancements and key insight from institutions enacting new safety programs, we believed it would be beneficial to bring together these thought leaders to share their knowledge with the medical community," says Jay Hoey, Executive Vice President, Elekta North America.

The event, held on March 15, 2012 in Baltimore, included a panel discussion on advances in safety process evaluation and workflow improvements featuring clinical experts from Johns Hopkins University, North Shore University Hospital (NSUH) and Long Island Jewish Medical Center. During their presentations the speakers highlighted critical findings and outcomes from programs enacted at their institutions.

In her presentation, Stephanie Terezakis, M.D., Department of Radiation Oncology at Johns Hopkins University, emphasized that simple steps - such as checklists and electronic incident reporting systems - can be easily implemented, making a national registry of incidents and near-misses a reality.

Advancements in hypofractionation also were a topic of discussion during the symposium, including a detailed discussion of treatment methods for locally advanced pancreatic cancer. Data comparing conventional radiation therapy and fractionated stereotactic body radiation therapy (SBRT) were reviewed.

Joseph Herman, M.D., MSc, Department of Radiation Oncology at Johns Hopkins University presented preliminary data which support the use of fractionated SBRT in well selected patients with unresectable pancreatic cancer. His analysis of the data concluded that fractionated SBRT appears safe with less acute toxicity than conventional radiation therapy.

Marc Posner, M.D., of the Center for Advanced Radiation Medicine at Northwestern Lake Forest Hospital, discussed real-time tracking for treating prostate cancer using non-ionizing soft tissue visualization.

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He highlighted the potential of transperineal ultrasound* with Elekta's ClarityT system, and explained the advantages such a motion management strategy could provide over other imaging modalities, such as MR, CT, kV and MV imaging in hypofractionated prostate treatments.

"Clinical set-up will be easy - anyone can learn how to do this," he said. "In tests of the approach, all the patients have accepted it, the therapists love it and image quality is excellent. I actually spend less time in the simulator now, because the ultrasound helps with prostate definition, I don't have to perform the urethrogram and my patients don't have to have rectal enemas. There is also the potential clinical benefit, enabling a small community center such as ours to move into the 21st century and start performing hypofractionation." A full synopsis of the symposium will be available on the Elekta website in the coming months.

*Work in progress.

About Elekta Elekta is a human care company pioneering significant innovations and clinical solutions for treating cancer and brain disorders. The company develops sophisticated, state-of-the-art tools and treatment planning systems for radiation therapy, radiosurgery and brachytherapy, as well as workflow enhancing software systems across the spectrum of cancer care. Stretching the boundaries of science and technology, providing intelligent and resource-efficient solutions that offer confidence to both healthcare providers and patients, Elekta aims to improve, prolong and even save patient lives.

Today, Elekta solutions in oncology and neurosurgery are used in over 6,000 hospitals worldwide. Elekta employs around 3,300 employees globally. The corporate headquarters is located in Stockholm, Sweden, and the company is listed on the Nordic Exchange under the ticker EKTab. Website: www.elekta.com.

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