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Tuesday 28 March 2006

### NEW TOOL AT RAH TO TARGET CANCER

**A new state-of-the-art linear accelerator to treat cancer is being commissioned today at the Royal Adelaide Hospital.**

Health Minister John Hill says the hi-tech machine in the Radiation Oncology Department of the Cancer Centre at the RAH is the first of three replacement linear accelerators.

The State Government has funded the three replacement machines at a cost of \$8 million, with the second and third to be installed by mid-2007.

“I had a chance to inspect this first linear accelerator first hand at the launch of the Cancer Control Plan in February, while it was being tested before today’s commissioning,” Minister Hill said.

“It’s an impressive piece of medical equipment which will be of enormous assistance in treating cancerous tumours.

“The benefits of the new technology for patients include improved quality of treatment and better control of tumours. Importantly, it also means reduced side effects for cancer sufferers.”

Minister Hill said the investment was also positive for the health system, as the new linear accelerator would mean reductions to the waiting list and more efficient and timely treatment of patients.

“The replacement linear accelerator is ten times more efficient in terms of patient treatment than the previous version, meaning more people can receive life-saving treatment each day,” he said.

The RAH’s Radiation Oncology Department is the fourth largest public radiation department in the country. It is currently the only radiation oncology facility in South Australia to provide a comprehensive range of radiation therapy.

“The Royal Adelaide’s Radiation Oncology Department has the leading edge in cancer management across the country, and with this new equipment will continue to excel in cancer patient treatments, teaching and research,” Minister Hill said.

“The Rann Government is committed to ensuring our public hospitals have the best medical equipment, as shown through our election commitment to allocate an additional \$20 million to a new Medical Equipment Fund.

“This extra money brings the total for the Medical Equipment Fund to \$61.8 million over four years.”

**Minister Hill will also today open the second Australasian Redesigning Care Summit, which will be attended by early 300 senior clinicians and health care executives from the UK, the United States, New Zealand and Singapore**

“The Redesigning Care Program began at the Flinders Medical Centre in 2003 to increase capacity in the emergency department,” Minister Hill said.

“Since its introduction, Redesigning Care has led to a significant reduction in waiting times and major improvements to the timeliness of patient care.

“People are spending less time on average in the ED, and are being treated earlier – and this has all been achieved during a period when demand on the emergency department has increased.

“Health experts from around the world want to learn from the experiences and successes at FMC, which has one of the country’s busiest emergency departments.”

Minister Hill said the success of Redesigning Care at Flinders had led to the Rann Government’s commitment to roll out the initiative to other metropolitan public hospitals, with \$16 million over four years allocated to the project.

“SA has taken the lead in this initiative, in a bid to reduce waiting lists and waiting times in emergency departments, and I am sure the project will continue to be a success across all metropolitan hospitals.”