



Radiation Oncology Centre of Jamaica

Newsletter

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ROCJ OFFERS 20% DISCOUNT FOR EXTERNAL BEAM RADIATION TREATMENT FOR ALL TYPE OF CANCERS

The Management of Radiation Oncology Centre of Jamaica has extended the discount for external beam radiation treatment for all types of cancer by twenty percent (20%), from January 31, 2011 to February 4, 2011. A 20% discount is also being offered for Superficial Radiation which is used to treat keloids of the skin and skin cancer.

According to ROCJ's Management, "The reduction in prices is aimed at increasing the access to radiation treatment for more Jamaicans suffering with cancer who are in need of radiation therapy services, but who are unable to afford the cost of modern treatment." We know that there is a growing incidence of cancer in Jamaica and ROCJ hopes that this offer will assist more patients to get the treatment they need.

External Beam Radiation is the use of high-energy radiation to target and destroy cancer cells and is one of the most expensive therapies worldwide. ROCJ utilizes a Linear Accelerator supported by computerized 3D planning computer systems, conventional & CT simulators. These are modern technologies, which offer shorter treatment times, greater accuracy and better depth penetration.

ROCJ is the first of four modern radiation therapy facilities in the Caribbean, the others being located in Trinidad and the Bahamas and has the lowest prices for radiation treatment services in the Region.

ROCJ PARTNERS WITH MOH TO ESTABLISH TRAINING FOR RADIATION THERAPISTS

ROCJ has partnered with the Ministry of Health to establish the Jamaica School of Radiation Therapy. A one year programme was designed to upgrade the skills of experienced diagnostic radiographers, to become radiation therapists.

The idea of the school was the brainchild of ROCJ's Managing Director Dr. Collie Miller who was supported in the development and implementation of the programme by the Ministry of Health, the Medical Physics and Radiotherapy Departments at KPH and ROCJ.



Dr. Collie Miller

Dr. Miller says, "There is a severe shortage of radiation therapists in Jamaica and over the years we have had to be recruiting from as far as India and Africa. We have the expertise here in Jamaica to deliver the training for radiation therapists. By making the modern facility here at ROCJ available for training and coupled with the Radiation Therapy Unit at KPH ensures that a comprehensive programme is delivered."

Class rooms were set-up at the Arthur Wint Drive Dental Auxiliary School Compound. The first two semesters featured didactic training and followed by clinical training at ROCJ and KPH.

Three students from the inaugural programme, which started in July 2009, have completed their training. Rosalee Newman has been placed at ROCJ and the other therapists at the Radiation Therapy Departments at KPH and Cornwall Regional Hospital.

Put Cancer Screening on Your New Year's Resolutions

Making a list of resolutions is a useful activity at the start of each New Year and health concerns should be at the top of the list. Truth is we must protect our health because it is essential in helping us to continue to enjoy life and be productive.

Men and women in their 40s and older, should schedule annual screening tests for various cancers.

Among the checks which are highly recommended are those for prostate cancer for men and breast cancer for women. These are the most common cancers treated at ROCJ. The earlier these cancers are identified and treated the better the outcome.

Other common cancers treated at ROCJ are colon cancer, cancers of the head and neck and cervical cancer and many other types of cancer.

Don't let fear keep you from knowing the truth about your health status. Take the bold step and do the necessary screening and if you need radiation treatment our highly trained and experienced staff at ROCJ are here to help you, using modern technology. This year find out early, treat early for the best chance of surviving cancer.

ROCJ EMPLOYS FIRST LOCALLY TRAINED RADIATION THERAPIST

Rosalee Newman is one of the first graduates from the Jamaica School of Radiation Therapy, which is a joint project of the Radiation Oncology Centre of Jamaica and the Ministry of Health. On completion of her training she was placed at ROCJ.

Students who were accepted for the Post Graduate Radiation Therapy Diploma Programme, at the school, had to be experienced diagnostic radiographers. Rosalee who had graduated with Honours from the School of Medical Radiation Technology, had eight years experience in this field and was a diagnostic radiographer at Spanish Town Hospital, when she joined the ROCJ/MOH programme.

The St. Hugh's old girl notes that the diploma programme was intense and very interesting, especially training on the advanced equipment at ROCJ. The first six months was rigorous theory on radiation physics and radiation therapy techniques and the last six months comprehensive practicals at KPH and ROCJ.



“It's a great experience being placed at ROCJ, not only do I get to work with modern equipment but I get a chance to provide care in an area I always wanted to work. I enjoy interacting with patients. After several weeks of treatment in which I see patients every day for 15 - 20 minutes, they become like family,” says Rosalee.

The daughter of an Enrolled Nurse at the KPH, it is not surprising that Rosalee chose a profession in health care. “I really enjoy my job here at ROCJ. I have become part of a special team and my focus will always be on caring for the patient's needs, while encouraging them to be strong and be determined to complete their course of treatment.”



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