

## Staff you may meet

**Radiation Oncologists** - specialist doctors who prescribe your radiotherapy treatment.

**Radiation Therapists** - plan and deliver your radiotherapy, offer support and advice.

**Radiation Oncology Nurses** - oversee your wellbeing during treatment, offer support and advice.

**Radiation Oncology Medical Physicists** - ensure the treatment machines work correctly and that your treatment plan is accurate.

**Cancer Care Coordinators** - arrange patient care and ensure you have access to other information and support services.

**Dietitians** - provide nutritional support and advice.

**Social Workers** - provide emotional and practical support and assist in accessing community services.

**Speech Pathologists** - provide expert support and clinical advice.

**Reception staff** – are the first point of contact in the centre and can assist you with appointments and general information.



North Coast Cancer Institute,  
Lismore Cancer Care and  
Haematology Unit

Hunter Street, Lismore

**Hours:** Monday to Friday  
8:00am to 4:30pm

**Phone:** (02) 6620 2416  
**Fax:** (02) 6620 2355

**Web:** [nswlhd.health.nsw.gov.au](http://nswlhd.health.nsw.gov.au)

Limited parking onsite.  
A drop off zone is available at  
the front entrance.

Paid and timed parking is  
available in the surrounding  
streets.

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## Guide to: Radiotherapy Services



Health  
Northern NSW  
Local Health District

# Radiotherapy in Lismore

Radiotherapy is one of the main ways to treat cancer. Treatments, including radiotherapy, chemotherapy or surgery, are used for different cancers and can be used together. Radiotherapy uses radiation to kill or injure cancer cells and stop them multiplying.

You will have scheduled appointments with your radiation oncologist throughout your treatment and weekly assessments by nursing staff. Radiation therapists will give you your treatment. There are many staff available to support you. Please tell us how you are feeling and if you need advice or help.

## Stages of Radiotherapy

### Initial consultation

Your radiation oncologist will go through your treatment options and their benefits and risks. We welcome questions. It's fine if you want to talk to family or friends after the appointment before making any decisions about treatment.

### Simulation

Your 'Treatment Simulation' appointment includes imaging scans on a CT and possibly an MRI scanner. This appointment can take a few hours. We may ask you to prepare by drinking water before the session.

If you have a pacemaker, a defibrillator or any other implantable electronic device or if you think you may be pregnant, please let us know beforehand.

Accuracy is very important in radiotherapy. To reduce side effects we help you lie in exactly the same position each day for treatment. We find this position during simulation. To help reproduce that position, we may make 2-3 small, permanent ink marks on your skin. We might also make equipment to help keep you in position.

### Planning

It may be a few weeks between your simulation session and the start of your treatment. This gives us time to design and check your treatment plan. We design a customised plan to suit your needs.

### Treatment

A course of radiotherapy can take between 1-8 weeks. If you need particular appointment times, please discuss this with us as early as possible.

Your daily radiotherapy treatment includes many checks such as x-rays, scans and several measurements. This is so treatment is accurate and we can make changes if needed.

It's very important to keep still during treatment.

### Follow up

After finishing radiotherapy you will receive a plan that includes follow up phone calls and meetings with your radiation oncology team.

## External Beam Radiotherapy

There are different types of radiotherapy. We use external beam radiotherapy. This is similar to X-rays.

You are only exposed to radiation when the machine is switched on. The radiation is aimed precisely at the part of the body that requires treatment. The rest of your body receives little or no radiation. You do not become radioactive as a result of the treatment.

### Side Effects

Short term side effects are possible from the treatment. We will explain the side effects that you could expect.

Radiotherapy is very precise so any side effects will usually be at the site of treatment. You may feel tired during treatment.

Most people can continue doing their normal daily activities during treatment.



A Linear accelerator is used in radiotherapy. *Image courtesy of Elekta*