



The Royal College Of Radiologists

PRESS STATEMENT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

19 March 2008

RCR welcomes START, showing that fewer fractions of radiotherapy work for breast cancer treatment

The Royal College of Radiologists welcomes the latest results from the Standardisation of Breast Radiotherapy Trial (START), which has found that radiotherapy treatment for breast cancer can now be given in fewer treatments than the international standard of 25 fractions.

Local recurrence in the breast has reduced markedly over the last 10 years and now only affects one woman in 25. This is due to improved cancer care and quality assurance. In addition radiotherapy side effects are now less marked

Professor Andy Adam, President of the Royal College of Radiologists said, "START represents the culmination of twenty years of study conducted by researchers from the UK, and as such is an important milestone in radiotherapy research. It shows that treatment for women with breast cancer can be given in a quicker and more convenient way, and it has the potential to improve the treatment of breast cancer patients across the world."

Dr Michael Williams, Vice-President of the Royal College of Radiologists said, "This study confirms that a shorter treatment is both effective and safe. Three quarters of women in the UK are already treated with short treatments, but this was a decision driven mainly by lack of resources. Further investment in radiotherapy services is required to ensure prompt and appropriate treatment. This has been recognised in the development of the English Cancer Reform Strategy, and we look forward to working to carry out its recommendations."

Notes to Editors

1. For further information, please contact the Royal College of Radiologists' Communications Officer on 020 7299 1138, or dan_garbutt@rcr.ac.uk
2. This research is published today, Wednesday 19 March 2008, in the [Lancet](#) and the [Lancet Oncology](#).
3. The Royal College of Radiologists (RCR) has approximately 7,500 members and Fellows worldwide representing the disciplines of clinical oncology and clinical radiology. All members and Fellows of the College are registered medical or dental practitioners.