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House of Commons
Health and Social Care Select Committee
London, SW1A 0AA

Dear Health and Social Care Select Committee,

AdvaMed is writing to submit evidence regarding the pressing need for investment in technology and people to support radiotherapy services, as part of the Future Cancer inquiry. AdvaMed represents manufacturers that produce state-of-the-art medical devices, diagnostic products, and health information systems that are transforming health care through earlier disease detection, less invasive procedures, and more effective treatments. AdvaMed members range from the largest to the smallest medical technology innovators and companies. We are committed to ensuring patient access to lifesaving and life-enhancing devices and other advanced medical technologies in the most appropriate settings. The task of improving cancer services in the UK will require a coordinated effort between healthcare providers, policymakers, researchers and industry and the radiotherapy industry stands ready to help as you take on the challenge.

Radiotherapy is an essential treatment option for most cancer patients, with at least 50% of cancer patients needing radiotherapy during their course of care. There is evidence that 40% of all cancers cured are eliminated by radiotherapy, either alone or acting in combination with other types of treatment. Post-operative radiotherapy for breast cancer patients, for example, has been shown to halve the rate of recurrence compared with surgery alone. We believe recent advances mean that it can play an even greater role. However, radiotherapy services are currently facing unprecedented pressure due to increasing demand, outdated technology, an aging population and workforce shortages.

In recent years there have been rapid advances in radiotherapy technology which are now delivering higher cure rates more cost effectively with fewer side effects. Technological advances allow for highly targeted doses of radiation to be delivered to cancerous cells, reducing side effects and improving and ensuring that modern radiotherapy is carefully shaped to each patient's cancer. To ensure that

these innovations are effectively transitioned into frontline clinical settings, there must be investment in training and education for healthcare professionals, as well as infrastructure and equipment upgrades.

As the UK strives to improve cancer services, many international examples of best practice in cancer diagnosis and treatment can provide valuable insights into the use of radiotherapy. For example, in the Netherlands, radiotherapy services are highly integrated with other aspects of cancer care, with a focus on multidisciplinary teams and patient-centered care. The number of radiation therapy machines in the Netherlands is 10.4 per million inhabitants, while it is 6.2 in the UK.

A significant piece of improving cancer services, particularly in radiotherapy as it is a team of experts delivering treatment, is addressing workforce planning. The shortage of trained radiotherapy professionals, including radiation oncologists, therapeutic radiographers, and medical physicists, is a considerable challenge. Investment in training and education, as well as recruitment and retention initiatives, must be prioritized to ensure that the workforce can keep up with advances in radiotherapy technology.

Finally, the impact of innovations in cancer diagnosis and treatment on health inequalities must be taken into account. It is important to ensure that access to radiotherapy services is equitable and that innovative treatments are available to all patients regardless of their socioeconomic status or geographic location.

By ensuring that patients have timely access to up-to-date radiotherapy treatment options, including access in more rural regions, we can improve survival rates and enhance the quality of life for those undergoing cancer treatment. Better access to leading radiotherapy technologies can lead to significant cost savings in the long term, as fewer patients will require more expensive treatments and hospital stays, and patients can be treated more efficiently. We believe the committee's inquiry into the future of cancer should include a specific focus on delivering world-class advanced radiotherapy. We stand ready to provide the committee with further examples of how technological innovations in radiotherapy can lead to better outcomes for patients.

Sincerely,

AdvaMed

Accuray

Elekta

Varian, a Siemens Healthineers Company