

SIR CHARLES GAIRDNER HOSPITAL / WA HEALTH

2016 Review of the Radiation Oncology Health Program Grants (ROHPG) Scheme

Submission from Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital / WA Health 25th February 2016

The benefits and limitations of the scheme

The ROHPG Scheme was introduced in 1988 because public sector radiation therapy departments were using equipment which was 25 years old and hence public patients were being disadvantaged as these public departments could not offer the best practice in treatment.

The major benefit of the ROHPG scheme is that the funds are quarantined for replacement equipment which makes the replacement process easier and timelier. Linear accelerators cost approximately \$3M each and WA Health has 5 of them, plus a CT scanner, a HDR brachytherapy system, various Treatment Planning Systems and IT infrastructure, all of which, without ROHPG, would struggle to find the funds to replace this equipment once it had reached its end of 10 year lifespan.

A limitation of the scheme is that it has not kept up with the value of replacement equipment.

Potential alternative funding models

WA Health does not advocate a change in funding model and believes the existing model works reasonably well.

Linking funding to quality measures (rather than throughput)

WA Health participates in regular audits conducted by the Australian Clinical Dosimetry Service and has passed them all. It also is working towards full compliance with the Radiation Oncology Standards (Tripartite Committee, 2011). Linking ROHPG funding to compliance with the Standards and passing quality audits would ensure improved quality of Radiation Oncology services nationally. WA Health is not keen to change the funding model for ROHPG reimbursement at this time.