

Press release

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TRUST LEADS THE WAY IN BLADDER CANCER TRIAL

THE James Cook University Hospital has become the first hospital in the North east – and one of only six in the country - to offer a new clinical trial to patients with bladder cancer.

The National Cancer Research Institute (NCRI) clinical trial uses thermotherapy to warm the bladder wall during chemotherapy to improve the effect of the drug.

Prior to the trial patients with bladder cancer resistant to other treatments who were not fit enough to consider radical surgery had no other options available. But now these patients are being offered the chance to undergo thermotherapy.

Six patients have already signed up to the trial at James Cook – more than any other UK hospital.

Miss Jo Cresswell, consultant urological surgeon, said: “We are only one of a few centres in the UK to offer this treatment.

“Previously, if bladder cancer came back after standard treatment and it was aggressive the only option would have been to remove the bladder with radical surgery.

“But some patients are not fit enough to consider radical surgery so this trial gives them another option.

“Thermotherapy has shown promising results in previous trials and we are delighted we can now offer it to our patients.”

State-of-the-art equipment for the trial has been leased thanks to the help of urology department charitable funds and a grant from Kyowa, a pharmaceutical company supporting the trial.

The thermotherapy machine heats the bladder to 42°C while a chemotherapy wash is pumped around the bladder. It is believed that the heat helps the bladder to absorb the drug more quickly and makes the chemotherapy more active against the cancer cells.

“Early results from other parts of the world suggest up to 50% of patients who have this treatment will be rendered disease free,” said Miss Cresswell. “Units like ours hope to prove the benefits of this treatment for UK patients.”

Sister Lynn Mudd, clinical sister for urology added: “It’s very exciting to be one of the first hospitals to offer this treatment. Patients can now have any bladder cancer treatment that is available in the UK, here at James Cook.”

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