

# Education program builds GP's knowledge of radiation therapy

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(HealthDay)—Australia's national education program improves general

practitioner (GP) knowledge about radiation therapy (RT) and may influence patient referrals for RT, according to a study published online Oct. 28 in the *Journal of Medical Imaging and Radiation Oncology*.

Lucinda Morris, M.B.B.S., from the Crown Princess Mary Cancer Centre in Sydney, and colleagues evaluated a national education program in Australia aimed at improving GP knowledge about RT and referral pathways to [radiation oncologists](#) (ROs). One hundred seventy-four participants responded to pre- and post-intervention surveys.

The researchers found that pre-session, 96 percent of GPs reported their knowledge of RT required improvement, while post-session, 95 percent of GPs rated their knowledge as "excellent," "above average," or "competent." Just about one-third (32.5 percent) of GPs were not aware of the location of their local RT department, but 81 percent reported patients would benefit from having clearer referral pathways to ROs. The vast majority of respondents (96 percent) agreed that the GP's role is to refer [cancer patients](#) to relevant specialists to discuss treatment options; however, only 49 percent were satisfied with their ability to refer directly to an RO. In the follow up survey, nearly all respondents reported that the session had improved their ability to care for cancer patients and their understanding of RT.

"A national GP education program improves GP knowledge about RT and may influence patient referrals for RT," the authors write.

**More information:** [Abstract](#)  
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