Radiation Therapy for Regional Australia
• Public advocacy trumps straight lobbying

• Becoming a trusted source of advice
  ❖ build an evidence base (Cost Benefit Analysis of RT)

• The currency in Canberra is patients, not doctors or medical device manufacturers

• Campaigns work. Keep it local: Melton Hospital - $150 million secured

• Advocacy involves many levers:
  ❖ Be present in public policy debates – so being relevant and opportunistic
  ❖ Offering thought leadership and quality research insights
  ❖ Aligning with influential and high credibility outside voices
  ❖ Having a dynamic digital presence
  ❖ Boosting profile in the mainstream media through one coherent voice
  ❖ Utilising events in political centres to leverage private relationships
In Australia radiation therapy is underused in the fight against cancer.

**Only 1 in 3** Australian cancer patients today receive radiation therapy

That number should be **1 in 2**, in line with Europe and North America.
A key barrier to radiation therapy is not cost or treatment effectiveness. **It’s lack of access.**

Distance from a treatment centre is one of the biggest contributors to this problem.
Bega’s closest radiation therapy centre is in Canberra. That’s a three-hour drive.
Geraldton’s closest radiation therapy centre is in Perth. That’s 415km away.
Mt Gambier’s closest radiation therapy centre is in Warrnambool. That’s 190km away.
Population centres more than one hour’s drive from an RT centre
What a lack of radiation therapy means for patients:

- Lower survival rates
- Avoidable surgeries
- Long distance travel
- Weeks away from home
Cancer patients in regional areas are up to 35% more likely to die within 5 years of diagnosis.
We need our politicians to step up and ensure regional communities get the cancer services they need.

The Federal Government must make radiation therapy available to more Australians who need it.
This means providing:

- A firm commitment to ensure equal access to radiation therapy for all Australians
- Funding for more treatment centres in regional and rural communities
- More information for cancer patients on the available treatment options
Only 9 cents
in every dollar the Federal Government spends on cancer diagnosis and treatment goes to radiation therapy.
The Campaign So Far

Launch of cost-benefit analysis, Parliament House, Canberra - 17 October 2018
THE CAMPAIGN SO FAR

Radiation Therapy for Regional Australia campaign launch, Newcastle – 25 February 2019
THE CAMPAIGN SO FAR

Campaign introduction
letters sent to:

Federal MPs
State MPs
Federal and State Health Ministers
Local mayors
THE CAMPAIGN SO FAR

Cr Kristy McBain
Mayor, Bega Valley Shire
By email: kmcbain@begavalley.nsw.gov.au

Dear Councillor McBain,

Hon B. T. G. Joyce MP
Member for New England
PO Box 963
Tamworth NSW 2340

Dear Mr Joyce,

Hon C. F. King MP
Shadow Minister for Health and Medicare
Member for Ballarat
PO Box 719
Ballarat Vic 3353

Dear Ms King,

Time to change
We firmly believe all our politicians need to step up and ensure regional communities get the cancer services they need.
Should you or party representatives have any questions please contact us on campaignqueries@radiationtherapy.org.au
You are also most welcome to call me personally on 02 4918 4500 to discuss the campaign and our issues.
Yours sincerely

Peter O’Brien
Associate Professor Peter O’Brien
RTAG Chair
EDITORIAL: Checks crucial for a healthy system

Without campaigns like Radiation Therapy for Regional Australia, and without patients willing to share their struggles like Mr Crockett, the symptoms in regional and remote areas less blessed than the Hunter are unlikely to abate.

ISSUE: 39,138

The Hunter is ably served by significant health resources. As well as the John Hunter Hospital, private facilities are spread from Maitland to Lake Macquarie. The Hunter Medical Research Institute and the University of Newcastle put the region on the front foot when it comes to innovation.
THE CAMPAIGN SO FAR

More radiation treatment centres needed in regional Australia

Article syndicated across:

The Area News  Mudgee Guardian
Bay Post  MORUYA Examiner
Wellington Times  Manning River
Newcastle Herald
Bega District News  Guardian News
Gazette  STAR
Central Western Daily
The Armidale Express  Western Advocate

With a combined estimated reach of:

1,374,799 people
THE CAMPAIGN SO FAR
Labor's Bill Shorten promises radiation therapy facility in Moruya | VIDEO

We welcome the Federal Budget pledge of $45.5 million for regional radiation treatment centres.

We have been campaigning for better access for regional cancer patients and we’re pleased that the Government recognises the need to help them access radiation therapy.

We look forward to working with the Federal Government to plan for the most effective distribution of this money to regional population centres that can service their surrounding areas, and hope to be able to improv...

See more
THE CAMPAIGN SO FAR

Hard copy materials distributed: 25,284

GPs and medical clinics supporting the campaign: 42

Politicians engaged: 48

News articles/reports: 40

And counting...