

GE launches new cancer-detection system

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Coimbatore, Dec 15:

GE Healthcare has unveiled Discovery IQ PET/CT (Positron Emission Tomography/ Computed Tomography), an imaging system that not only helps in early detection of cancer, but makes it 40 per cent more affordable than the currently available PET/CTs.

The machine, a result of three years collaborative research with Indian nuclear physicians and oncologists is the 25th product developed by GE team in India.

GE Healthcare sources said that Sri Ramakrishna Hospital, run by SNR Sons Charitable Trust is the first in South India to have installed this gold standard ranked machine

The roll out of Discovery IQ is happening in the Silver Jubilee year of our joint venture with Wipro, said Terri Bresenham, Chief Executive Officer, GE Healthcare (South Asia).

Hailing the Indian team's capability in developing sophisticated medical technologies she said 'a state of the art imaging system is required to scan the human body and a cyclotron to produce bio-markers for lighting up cancer cells. However, setting up a molecular imaging centre can be quite expensive, requiring an investment of ₹ 30 - 35 cr. This has actually prevented proliferation of such early detection technologies in India. With the support of several Indian entrepreneurs, GE has built a robust network of cyclotrons, which in turn has helped bring down the investment on molecular imaging centre by 50 per cent."

Citing a GE commissioned study, she said nearly 80 per cent of cancer patients are diagnosed late, which renders any form of treatment less effective, while many more have no access to quality cancer treatment.

Treatment cost apart, the survey has revealed that out of the 400 cancer centres in India, 70 per cent do not have molecular imaging technologies like PET/CT which helps measure effectiveness of the treatment.

The study suggests that **India** will need at least 650 additional cancer care centres by 2020. The country today has about 120 PET/CTs, but considering the alarming rate at which it is afflicting people, the country will need at least 1300 imaging systems. And GE Healthcare has committed US\$ one billion towards accelerating research and development of advanced, affordable oncology solutions, she said.

(This article was published on December 17, 2014)

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