

A New Era in Prostate Cancer Care at Melomed Mitchells Plain



Melomed Mitchells Plain Successfully Performs Its First Prostate Brachytherapy Procedures

Melomed Mitchells Plain has reached a significant milestone in cancer care with the successful completion of its first two Low Dose Rate (LDR) prostate brachytherapy procedures. This achievement marks an important step forward in expanding access to advanced cancer treatment within the local community and reinforces Melomed's commitment to providing world-class healthcare closer to home.

The procedures were performed by Dr Kent Pluke, Specialist Urologist, and Dr Adnaan Sayed, Radiation Oncologist, working together with a highly skilled multidisciplinary team comprising anaesthetists, theatre staff, medical physicists and specialised nursing personnel. Their collaboration is fundamental to the success of prostate brachytherapy, ensuring meticulous treatment planning, accurate seed implantation and the highest standards of patient care. This milestone enables patients from Mitchells Plain and surrounding communities to receive this highly specialised treatment closer to home, eliminating the need to travel to distant tertiary or private centres for advanced prostate cancer care.

What is Prostate Brachytherapy?

Prostate brachytherapy is an advanced form of internal radiotherapy used to treat selected patients with localised prostate cancer. Unlike external beam radiotherapy, which delivers radiation from outside the body over several weeks, brachytherapy delivers radiation directly within the prostate gland. During the procedure, tiny radioactive seeds—each only a few millimetres in size—are permanently implanted into the prostate. These seeds emit a controlled dose of radiation over several months, targeting the cancer while minimising radiation exposure to surrounding healthy tissues such as the bladder and rectum. Over time, the radiation naturally diminishes, while the seeds remain safely within the prostate.

For appropriately selected patients, LDR prostate brachytherapy offers cancer control rates comparable to surgery and external beam radiotherapy, while providing the additional advantages of a minimally invasive procedure, a short hospital stay, rapid recovery and preservation of quality of life.

How is the Procedure Performed?

The procedure is performed under anaesthesia in a fully equipped operating theatre. Using real-time ultrasound guidance and specialised treatment planning software, the urologist and radiation oncologist work together to accurately map the prostate gland. Fine needles are then inserted through the perineum (the area between the scrotum and anus), allowing the radioactive seeds to be placed with millimetre precision according to a carefully designed treatment plan. The radiation oncologist determines the optimal radiation dose and seed distribution, while the urologist performs the implantation using imaging guidance. Medical physicists verify every aspect of the treatment plan and seed placement to ensure the highest standards of safety and accuracy.

Following the procedure, patients are monitored for a short period before being discharged, often on the same day or after an overnight stay. Most patients are able to resume their normal daily activities within a few days.

A Milestone for Mitchells Plain

The introduction of prostate brachytherapy at Melomed Mitchells Plain represents far more than the addition of a new procedure—it is a major advancement in equitable access to specialised cancer care. Historically, patients requiring prostate brachytherapy often had to travel considerable distances to access treatment at specialised centres. For many individuals and their families, this meant

additional travel costs, time away from work, logistical challenges and unnecessary stress during an already difficult period.

By offering this treatment locally, Melomed Mitchells Plain is helping to remove these barriers. Patients can now receive internationally recognised, state-of-the-art prostate cancer treatment within their own community, supported by healthcare professionals they know and trust.

Dr Kent Pluke, Specialist Urologist, said:

"For appropriately selected patients, prostate brachytherapy offers outstanding long-term cancer control through a minimally invasive procedure with excellent functional outcomes. Being able to provide this treatment at Melomed Mitchells Plain means our patients can now access internationally recognised care closer to home, supported by a multidisciplinary team committed to achieving the very best outcomes."

Dr Adnaan Sayed, Radiation Oncologist, added:

"Brachytherapy combines advanced imaging, meticulous treatment planning and precision radiotherapy to deliver highly targeted treatment directly to the prostate while limiting radiation exposure to surrounding healthy organs. The successful launch of this programme reflects the strength of multidisciplinary collaboration and our commitment to making leading-edge cancer treatment more accessible to communities across the Western Cape."

The introduction of prostate brachytherapy further strengthens Melomed Mitchells Plain's growing oncology service offering and reflects the hospital's continued investment in specialist expertise, advanced technology and innovative cancer care. Through the partnership between urology, radiation oncology and the wider multidisciplinary team, patients now have access to one of the most sophisticated treatment options available for localised prostate cancer - without having to leave their community.

This milestone reflects Melomed's ongoing investment in advanced medical technology, specialist expertise and comprehensive multidisciplinary cancer care. It demonstrates that highly specialised oncological procedures can be successfully delivered closer to where patients live, improving both accessibility and the overall patient experience. The successful completion of these first two procedures establishes Melomed Mitchells Plain as one of the few centres in the region capable of offering LDR prostate brachytherapy. As the programme grows, more men diagnosed with localised prostate cancer will benefit from access to this highly effective treatment without leaving their community. It represents another important step in Melomed's mission to provide innovative, patient-centred healthcare while continually expanding the range of specialised services available to the people of Mitchells Plain and the broader Western Cape.

The successful launch of the prostate brachytherapy programme is a testament to the dedication, expertise and collaboration of the multidisciplinary team. It reflects a shared commitment to ensuring that patients receive the highest standard of cancer care - close to home, close to family and close to the community they call home.

About the Specialists

Dr Kent Pluke Specialist Urologist

Dr Kent Pluke is a Specialist Urologist with a particular interest in prostate diseases, including prostate cancer, benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH), minimally invasive urological surgery and prostate brachytherapy. He is committed to providing evidence-based, patient-centred care and works closely with multidisciplinary teams to ensure the best possible outcomes for men diagnosed with urological cancers.

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Dr Adnaan Sayed Radiation Oncologist

Dr Adnaan Sayed is a Radiation Oncologist dedicated to providing personalised, evidence-based cancer care. His expertise includes precision radiotherapy, stereotactic treatments and brachytherapy, with a strong focus on delivering advanced oncology care while maintaining compassion and individualised treatment for every patient.

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