



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact: Theresa Makrush
m: (904) 505-6157
tmakrush@shepherdagency.com

Expansion, upgrades at UF Health Proton Therapy Institute announced

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. (January 13, 2016) — The UF Health Proton Therapy Institute today announced an expansion that will increase the number of cancer patients and the types of cancer it is able to treat. The estimated \$39 million project will include system upgrades that will improve treatment efficiency and technology.

The centerpiece of the multiphase project is the addition of a compact, single-room treatment system. The 10,000-square-foot expansion includes both an accelerator, used to speed up the protons, and a treatment gantry equipped with pencil beam scanning – an advanced delivery technique. Currently, the 98,000-square-foot facility has four treatment rooms – three equipped with rotating gantries and one fixed beam room – all powered by one proton accelerator called a cyclotron. When the addition is completed, the facility will have five treatment rooms – four gantries and one fixed beam room – and will increase patient capacity by approximately 25 percent.

“When the project is completed, UF Health Proton Therapy Institute will have one of the most versatile proton therapy systems in the world,” said executive director Stuart L. Klein, MHA. “Each delivery technique – double scattering, uniform scanning and pencil beam scanning – will enable physicians to use the optimal treatment delivery customized for each patient.”

The first phase of the project is underway and includes upgrades to the original system, which will be completed by June 2016. Funded in part by a \$5.8 million budget allocation by the Florida Legislature, the first phase includes adding rolling floors under the treatment tables in two of the gantries, a new imaging system and a new treatment planning system. These updates will enhance efficiency, patient and staff safety, and treatment accuracy.

Phase two will encompass the expansion construction and installation of the single-room proton therapy system. Bids for the proton therapy system equipment, construction management and architectural design for the expansion have been issued and vendor selection is expected to take place in January 2016. The project is being managed by the University of Florida Planning, Design & Construction department.

Phase three involves retrofitting one treatment gantry with a dedicated pencil beam scanning nozzle. Pencil beam scanning is an advanced form of proton therapy delivery using a thin beam of protons. Similar to the way one uses a pencil to color in a shape with back and forth strokes, pencil beam scanning uses back and forth strokes calibrated to the exact shape, size and depth of the treatment area. Pencil beam scanning will offer clinical advantages for treating certain kinds of cancer.

About Proton Therapy

Proton therapy is an advanced form of radiation therapy that uses protons rather than traditional X-rays. It targets tumors and cancer cells more precisely. This means less damage to surrounding tissue which results in a lower risk of side effects and a better quality of life during and after cancer treatment.

UF Health Proton Therapy Institute is a nonprofit 501(c)3 organization affiliated with the UF College of Medicine and the UF Health Cancer Center, a Florida Cancer Center of Excellence, dedicated to delivering state-of-the-art cancer treatment and setting new standards for treating and curing cancer. It is an accredited radiation oncology facility by the American College of Radiology. The cancer treatment facility houses both conventional radiation and proton therapy, and delivers proton therapy to 100 patients a day. For more information about the UF Health Proton Therapy Institute, please visit www.floridaproton.org, or call toll-free 877-686-6009.

###