

NEWS FROM PROVISION CENTER FOR PROTON THERAPY



Victory Bell rings at Provision

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Rex Ward and his wife Deanna (center) celebrate the completion of his proton therapy treatments for prostate cancer. He completed four weeks of 20 treatments at the Provision Center for Proton Therapy and rang the ceremonial Victory Bell to commemorate his graduation from treatment. He is pictured with the Provision Center for Proton Therapy clinical staff: Niek Schreuder, chief medical physicist; Rebecca Thomas, nurse manager; Marcio Fagundes, M.D., radiation oncologist and medical director; Rex and Deanna Ward; David Raubach, vice president of operations and Zach Dutton, radiation therapist.

By Shannon Carey

Three resonant peals from the Victory Bell rang through the lobby at Provision Center for Proton Therapy Feb. 24. They kept sounding over the applause of the gathered staff and well-wishers, announcing the good news: Rex Ward has completed his treatment. He is one of the first patients to complete proton therapy at the new facility.

Rex was in high spirits, shaking hands and cracking jokes, grinning from ear to ear, his wife, Deanna, by his side. Rex said upbeat music is always playing during treatments at Provision, but Dolly Parton's "I Will Always Love You" was the soundtrack today.

"I do feel that way about these people," he said. "I've had a lot of medical experiences, but I've never had one like this."

"I keep expecting my cap and gown," he joked.

When Rex was first diagnosed with prostate cancer,

Rex Ward volunteered to keep a video blog of his Provision Proton Therapy experience. You can follow his progress at provisionproton.com/blog.

his urologist gave him a lot of options, but proton therapy wasn't one of them. He knew about the treatment from family members who had gone through the program at Loma Linda, Calif., the first proton therapy treatment facility in the country. He had almost settled on another treatment path when he saw a television commercial featuring Provision's Proton Guys, volunteers who have gone through proton therapy and now serve as ambassadors for the program.

"We went online, and within a day or two we had an appointment here," said Deanna.

"It's a providential thing that this center opened right

when I needed it," said Rex. "God does wonderful things. I am thankful that God gives people the science to be able to do things like this."

Rex said the treatments have been painless, "like taking an X-ray."

"I feel great! No side effects, no pain. It's a real blessing," he said.

Dr. Marcio Fagundes, radiation oncologist and medical director of Provision Center for Proton Therapy, had two patients complete treatment Feb. 24, Rex and one other.

"Both feel wonderful," he said. "It's just a great accomplishment to provide the most advanced treatment available.

It's good to see the patients we're seeing doing so well."

Deanna said Fagundes has been a great support for her and Rex.

"There was no question too trivial, no time that we could not call," she said.

According to Fagundes, next steps for Rex include a screening and exam three months from now, followed by screenings every six months for the first five years, and every year after that.

For Rex and Deanna, they plan to stay in touch with the team at Provision.

"The whole staff here is like family," said Rex. "It's an experience that I won't forget."



Rex Ward, one of the first patients to complete treatment at Provision Center for Proton Therapy in Knoxville, rings the victory bell.

Study shows proton therapy is most effective prostate cancer treatment

A recent study by the University of Florida Proton Therapy Institute published in the International Journal of Radiation Oncology showed that proton therapy is the most effective treatment for prostate cancer. This study reported very effective outcomes for low, intermediate and high risk patients with prostate cancer. It also demonstrated minimal toxicity to the healthy tissues surrounding the prostate resulting in excellent patient-reported outcomes with limited side effects. Five-year disease free survival rates were 99 percent, 99 percent, and 76 percent in low-, intermediate-, and high-risk patients, respectively. This compares to rates of 97 percent, 85 percent, and 67 percent reported from a five-year study conducted by Memorial Sloan Kettering using IMRT (Intensity Modulated Radiation Therapy).

"The University of Florida study is based on physician-reported and patient-reported outcomes, and it adds convincingly to a large body of evidence regarding the efficacy and unique advantages of proton therapy for prostate cancer," said Marcio Fagundes, M.D., a board-certified radiation oncologist and medical director of the Provision Center for Proton Therapy. "At the same time, this report debunks the one or two widely reported studies that used sub-standard procedures and surrogate data to draw flawed conclusions."

Proton Therapy side effects were reported to be minimal. Gastrointestinal and urologic side effects were 1 percent and 5.4 percent respectively. An earlier study claimed that proton therapy may be more toxic than IMRT. This study shows that claim to be false. For a link to the full study, visit ProvisionProton.com/blog.

Meek named to prestigious 2014 Best Doctors in America® List

Allen G. Meek, M.D. has been named one of the Best Doctors in America® for 2014. The prestigious recognition marks the 10th time that he has earned this honor (from 2005-2014). Dr. Meek is a board-certified radiation oncologist with Provision Radiation Therapy and Chairman of the Provision Medical Group.

The highly regarded Best Doctors in America® List, assembled by Best Doctors, Inc. and audited and certified by Gallup® results from exhaustive polling of more than 45,000 physicians in the United States. In a confidential review, current physician listees answer the question, "If you or a loved one needed a doctor in your specialty, to whom would you refer?" Best Doctors, Inc. evaluates the

results and verifies all additional information to meet detailed inclusion criteria.

"It's incredibly rewarding to know that so many of my respected peers recognized me as an expert in the field of radiation oncology," said Dr. Meek. "I really enjoy working in an organization that truly cares to provide the level of service to my patients that I aim for."

Dr. Meek was the Founding Chairman of the Department of Radiation

Oncology at Stony Brook University Medical School and a Professor for more than 28 years. Prior to that, he spent 11 years at Johns Hopkins in Baltimore, Md., completing medical school, residencies in Internal Medicine and Radiation Oncology and a fellowship in Medical Oncology. A Navy veteran, Dr. Meek also served as board member and officer of several non-profit organizations on Long Island. While in New York, Dr. Meek received numerous awards, including Top Doctors in New York and Best Doctors in the USA, along with awards for Humanitarianism and Environmental Stewardship. He has also been named as a Castle Connolly Top Doctor® for the past 15 years.



Dr. Meek