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Laser Treatment for Cancer Patients

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New skin cancer treatment in Cornwall could mean more patients do not need chemo or radiotherapy.

Cutting edge Photodynamic Therapy equipment is being installed at Treliske.

A laser destroys cancer cells without touching healthy tissue.

It takes a matter of minutes and has none of the side effects of surgery or chemotherapy.

Patients are injected with a light sensitive drug which then goes on a search-and-destroy mission.

Zelah patient Duncan Harris is waiting for the all clear. He said: "It's a help right here. There are so many people who have to travel a long way in Cornwall to get treatment. I often think of those poor devils on the Lizard who have the same problems as me - the amount of traveling.

"I can't fault them - really, really excellent."

The £15,000 worth of equipment has been donated by charity PDT For Cancer Cure.

Consultant dermatologist, Dr Sandra Campbell, said "The two pieces of equipment offer us the latest technology in photodynamic treatment. Skin cancer is on the increase and particularly so in Cornwall.

"For certain types of skin cancer PDT is a hugely important treatment and this opens new avenues for us to treating people locally. The static lamp has much greater control to tailor treatment to individual patients. We can vary the strength of the light therapy which is particularly useful when treating sensitive areas of the body, making it less painful.

Visiting the dermatology unit PDT for Cancer Cure Chairman, Bill Loryman said, "We are really impressed by the research work that has been going on in Cornwall and it was an easy choice to make one of our first donations to the team here.

"We're a national charity with around 6,000 donors and our ambition is to see every hospital equipped with PDT systems so that patients can get the best treatment locally, as well as to support those at the fore-front of ongoing skin cancer research."