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Preliminary data show good results at Studsvik's BNCT clinic

14 patients with malignant glioma brain tumours have now completed the 6 month check-up after treatment at the Studsvik BNCT clinic. Preliminary data show that the objective of stopping tumour growth for a six-month period for a significant fraction of the patients has been achieved. The outcome as regards prolonged survival cannot yet be evaluated due to the still too short follow-up time.

Altogether 28 patients have now been treated at Studsvik's BNCT clinic for irradiation of tumours at the R2-0 reactor, 23 of whom are part of the present study. All 30 patients to be included in the study are expected to have been treated by the end of the year, which means that the final evaluation concerning tumour re-growth should be completed around the middle of 2003.

BNCT is a high-technology project aimed at combining knowledge within the Swedish tumour research with the extensive experience within nuclear technology developed over many years at Studsvik. The clinical activities are pursued in close collaboration with the national health care system, mainly Sörmland County Council. The activities to date have demonstrated that both the irradiation routines at Studsvik and the entire health care chain function extremely well.

The facility at Studsvik was commissioned in March 2001 when clinical trials for treatment of malignant glioma brain tumours were started. The ambition is to establish the BNCT method as soon as possible as a clinical alternative for treating glioblastoma and other severe tumour diseases.

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Studsvik and BNCT in brief

Studsvik is a high-tech company group with a leading position in nuclear technology, which is organised into four business units – Nuclear Technology, Waste & Decommissioning, Industrial Services and **Nuclear Medicine**.

In **Nuclear Medicine** a number of products and services are supplied for medical use with a nuclear connection. The range includes treatment of tumours and sale of radioisotopes for medical use. The radiopharmaceutical industry and the health care services are the main customers.

The Nuclear Medicine facilities are located at the reactors in Studsvik. The R2-0-reactor is used for **BNCT** and the R2 reactor for production of medical isotopes. Studsvik has constructed complete clinic facilities adjacent to the R2-0 reactor for BNCT treatments.

The BNCT method may entail a breakthrough in the treatment of fast-growing cancer tumours. The necessary requirement is that the BNCT treatments now in progress at Studsvik will show positive clinical results, not least in the form of better quality of life for the patients. At present Studsvik has a technological edge over other actors in the field in the form of the unique lithium filter and the R2-0 reactor, which is specially adapted for BNCT.

Together with the scientific council associated with the clinic, Studsvik is also evaluating new protocols for BNCT treatment, not only for various forms of brain tumours, but also for treatment of other tumours as well as entirely different applications, such as rheumatoid arthritis. During 2002 a clinical trial will be initiated where BNCT is applied to melanoma brain metastases.