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**THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA AT BIRMINGHAM AND PROTON INTERNATIONAL  
MOVING FORWARD TO DEVELOP STATE'S FIRST PROTON TREATMENT CENTER**

Birmingham, Ala. – Proton International and the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) announced today they are securing necessary approvals to begin construction this year of a proton therapy center that will provide cancer patients with an effective treatment option that is an alternative to traditional radiation therapy. Proton therapy is a highly precise treatment for treating cancer and some non-cancerous tumors without many of the side effects that often accompany traditional radiation therapy. This will be the 4<sup>th</sup> of 7 centers Proton International has been involved with as one of the world's leading developers of facilities offering this advanced therapy.

The UAB center, which will be the first in the State, has been approved by an Administrative Law Judge appointed by the Alabama State Health Planning and Development Agency. The two-year construction process is expected to begin this year with an opening planned for 2019. Proton International will build and own the center with UAB physicians providing clinical services and providing the leadership for education and research within the facility.

“This is a significant step forward in cancer treatment for residents of Alabama and surrounding areas,” said Will Ferniany, PhD, and CEO of the UAB Health System. “Proton therapy is an extremely advanced cancer-fighting technology. Coupled with the skill, experience and resources of the UAB Comprehensive Cancer Center, the UAB Proton Therapy Center will be a life-changing resource for thousands of cancer patients throughout our region.” The Comprehensive Cancer Center is the only National Cancer Institute Designated Cancer Center in Alabama.

“UAB is joining a stellar group of 25 of the nation's top hospitals and cancer treatment centers providing proton therapy to patients,” said Chris Chandler, CEO, who founded Proton International after developing, opening and overseeing the operation of some of the first proton centers in the U.S. and Europe. “This center will have advanced proton therapy technology – a fully featured system with dynamic peak pencil beam scanning, developed by Varian Medical Systems an important technology leader.”

“Recent advances in imaging have made proton therapy much more viable,” said John Fiveash, M.D., professor in the UAB Department of Radiation Oncology. “It uses sophisticated imaging to create a 3D image of the tumor. It then delivers a focused beam of radiation, custom-sized and shaped, so that it paints the tumor site while leaving surrounding tissue generally untouched, reducing collateral damage.”

It is conservatively estimated that some 250,000 cancer patients in the U.S. alone could benefit from proton therapy, which is mainly being used to treat solid cancer tumors, including tumors of the brain and central nervous system, spine, head and neck, lung, prostate, liver, gastrointestinal tract and colon, and some breast tumors. While it primarily treats single-site tumors, it can in some cases be used for treating cancer that has spread (metastasized) to surrounding tissue because of its focused dose capabilities.

Protons are widely used to treat children, who are particularly sensitive to the effects of radiation therapy. Because of its precision in targeting tumors, proton therapy greatly reduces damage to nearby healthy tissue, which is the cause of most short- and long-term side-effects, including cancer recurrence later in life.

The three-story UAB Proton Center will be built on the Campus of UAB. Planning and pre-treatment will continue to be done at UAB's Hazelrigg-Salter Radiation Oncology Center and medical staff will be exclusively from UAB. The center will enroll its patients in national proton therapy registries and will participate in clinical research studies to advance the application of proton therapy and determine best practices.

In partnering with Proton International UAB has a team of proven providers. Proton International is currently participating in the development of 7 centers two of which are under construction; another set to break ground in March, and a memorandum of understanding approved for 4 others. PI's turnkey development model significantly lowers project risk and provides access to long-term funding. For this project UAB and PI have selected Varian Medical Systems, an innovator in proton therapy systems Varian has been a longtime partner with UAB in the delivery of radiation therapy, and this new proton system will integrate UAB's existing network of Varian products, including TrueBeam linear accelerators, Eclipse treatment planning, and ARIA information system.

### **About UAB Medicine**

[UAB Medicine](#) comprises the [School of Medicine](#) and the \$3 billion UAB Health System that includes all of the [University of Alabama at Birmingham](#)'s patient-care activities and 2,300 licensed beds in six hospitals, one of which is [UAB Hospital](#) — the third-largest public hospital in the United States, winner of the Women's Choice award, and one of U.S. News and World Report's Best Hospitals. UAB is the state of Alabama's largest single employer and an internationally renowned research university and academic health center; its professional schools and specialty patient-care programs are consistently ranked among the nation's top 50. UAB is the largest academic medical center in Alabama and one of the top four largest academic medical centers in the United States. UAB's Center for Clinical and Translational Science is advancing innovative discoveries for better health as a two-time recipient of the prestigious [Center for Translational Science Award](#). Find more information at [www.uab.edu](http://www.uab.edu) and [www.uabmedicine.org](http://www.uabmedicine.org).

## **About Proton International**

Proton International (PI) [www.protonintl.com](http://www.protonintl.com) has an experienced team dedicated to bringing proton therapy to patients. The company works with hospitals and physician groups to develop one- and two-room proton therapy facilities, as well as larger facilities, on a turnkey basis. The PI team has developed and operated large centers and as well as the smaller alternatives. PI has centers under construction with Beaumont Hospital, Royal Oak, Mich., and the University Medical Center in Groningen, The Netherlands; as well as an upcoming project with Delray Medical Center, Delray Beach, Fla. PI's business model ensures that projects are completed on time, on budget, and within the scope and needs of the Institution. Services include business planning, organizational structure, financing, building design and construction, installation and commissioning, equipment, staff training and more.