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UCT launches pioneering liver centre to transform patient care in SA

The University of Cape Town (UCT) has launched a first-of-its-kind, multidisciplinary liver centre set to reshape how liver disease is diagnosed and treated in South Africa.

The centre, led by UCT clinicians, operates across Groote Schuur Hospital, UCT Private Academic Hospital in Cape Town and Netcare Greenacres Hospital in Gqeberha. It brings together leading expertise in hepatobiliary surgery, hepatology, gastroenterology, oncology and interventional radiology to deliver coordinated, patient-centred care within a single framework.

Pioneered by UCT's [Division of Radiology](#) in partnership with the [Division of General Surgery](#) and the [Division of Hepatology](#), the initiative introduces a coordinated liver care model not previously available in the country. It also strengthens clinician training aligned with international best practice.

By integrating public and private healthcare, the centre combines the scale and complexity of public sector cases with the advanced technology and efficiencies of private care, supported by UCT's academic and teaching platform.

From early diagnosis to tailored treatment

Speaking shortly after the launch, project lead and UCT clinician Dr Dale Creamer said the centre addresses a long-standing gap in patient understanding and care. "Here we empower patients to learn about their liver disease and to understand it and provide them with world-class collaborative care that they need to treat it," said Dr Creamer.

The centre applies an evidence-based, individualised approach. Services range from early diagnosis and personalised treatment plans to minimally invasive procedures and complex surgeries, including liver transplants.

"Liver disease is complex and should receive subspecialist, multidisciplinary care. The liver centre offers exactly this, and this is what really makes it unique because patients have never received this level of care under one roof in the country," added Dr Creamer.

Setting a new standard for care

Equipped with advanced technology and staffed by experienced clinicians across two provinces, the centre delivers a fully integrated model focused on improving patient outcomes.

“Multidisciplinary care is essential to make evidence-based decisions for our patients. Our approach is patient-centred and means that treatment plans are integrated, which ultimately improves outcomes for patients. It’s the gold standard of care,” he said.

Access to the centre is streamlined. General practitioners can refer patients directly via the centre’s website, while individuals with existing liver conditions can also seek care through the same channel. Each patient is assessed and referred to the appropriate specialist within the network.

“It [receiving care] is a seamless process with no unnecessary back and forth. And because we are an experienced, multidisciplinary team and operate as a centre of excellence, we offer the highest level of care and our patients’ well-being and safety are our top priority every step of the way,” Dr Creamer said.

Story by Niémah Davids, UCT News.

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