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LONDON, UK (GlobalData), 25 July 2012 - While the increasing incidence of **cancer** is supporting the market for all cancer
treatments
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brachytherapy
is succeeding on its own terms, as an economical, convenient and effective outpatient procedure which can provide treatment tailored to individual patient's needs, states a new report* by healthcare experts GlobalData.

Brachytherapy is a type of radiation therapy used for the treatment of cancer, and involves placing a radioactive material inside or near the tumor. This is also known as internal radiation therapy, and allows the physician to treat a small area with a higher dose of radiation in a shorter time than for external beam radiotherapy (EBRT). Technological advancements such as three-dimensional (3D) treatment planning solutions allow physicians to administer incredibly accurate and precise doses, resulting in a dramatic decrease in treatment and recovery times. Permanent brachytherapy involves the insertion of radioactive pellets inside or near the tumor to then be left inside the body, while a temporary brachytherapy involves placing a highly radioactive material inside a catheter or slender tube for a specific amount of time.

The brachytherapy devices market is expected to be driven by the increasing incidence of cancer. Brachytherapy is a highly effective, outpatient procedure that is easily customizable to patients' individual needs, and offers many benefits to the increasing numbers of patients opting for non-invasive treatment options. Brachytherapy is a high-value treatment option, which costs substantially less than those for radical prostatectomy and Intensity-modulated Radiation Therapy (IMRT).

The positive outcome associated with temporary High Dose Rate (HDR) brachytherapy for gynaecological cancers have made brachytherapy standard treatment protocol, and a similar trend of acceptance for the treatment of other types of cancer may drive future growth of the US brachytherapy devices market. Brachytherapy is currently used to treat prostate, cervix, head and neck, skin and breast cancers, but the higher adoption of brachytherapy for the treatment of cancers such as brain tumour, liver cancer and macular degeneration will continue to drive demand for brachytherapy devices in the future.

However, a more impressive track record would help to promote brachytherapy, and defend the effectiveness of the treatment against opposing evidence. A study published in the Journal of the American Medical Association claimed that older women treated with brachytherapy suffer more complications and are at a higher risk of recurrence, and are more likely to require a mastectomy later in life. Further research and more long-term studies are needed, therefore, in order to prove brachytherapy as an essential weapon against cancer.

The global brachytherapy devices market is forecast to grow from $268.2m in 2011 to $322m by 2018 at a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 3%.