



Veritas helps Nigerian cancer center achieve founder's vision of world-class treatment

MARCELLE RUTH

CANCER CENTRE & SPECIALIST HOSPITAL

PROJECT

Marcelle Ruth Cancer Centre and Specialist Hospital
Linear Accelerator Expansion

LOCATION

Lagos, Nigeria

GC/PROJECT MANAGER

Interkel Group

VERITAS SCOPE OF WORK

Design, construct and install Veritas SmartSuites™

SITE LOCATION

Location between two existing buildings with limited building space and access

COMPLETED

January 2021

The Challenge

When Bolaji Odunsi's wife, oncologist Modupe Elebute-Odunsi, asked him to help her realize her dream of constructing a state-of-the-art cancer center in Lagos, Nigeria, both partners knew they had some formidable obstacles to surmount. It took two and a half years to find a site that the country's regulatory authorities would approve. When they did find a site (on Victoria Island in Lagos), existing buildings left only a small space for a state-of-the-art linac facility (and certainly not enough for a maze entry).

Obtaining the building materials like high-quality steel and getting the sophisticated linear accelerators through customs would also be a challenge – government regulators had little familiarity with such advanced equipment and facilities. Local contractors only had experience with poured concrete, which would weigh too much, consume too much space, take too much time to cure, and thereby delay the launch of the facility and its life-saving treatment. Plus, the rainy season was fast approaching. And then came the pandemic.



The facility was desperately needed. According to World Health Organization estimates, Nigeria should have two thousand linac units. The Odunsi's center would be only the country's sixth.



The Solution

Bolaji Odunsi admits he had never heard of a modular bunker for a state-of-the-art linac machine. But when the idea was broached to him, he conducted some research and found Veritas Medical Solutions. The company immediately pitched in, taking its customary, multi-disciplinary approach, by enlisting physicists, architects, engineers, and construction specialists to design and build a radiotherapy facility.

In a three-month iterative process, Veritas developed detailed drawings of the bunker design, including the adjoining spaces and reception area, even planning out the flow of patients through the unit. It also provided valuable assistance in meeting the electrical, cooling, access control and water supply requirements of the Varian TrueBeam equipment. The company also assumed sole-source responsibility for the environmentally friendly, ultra-high-density shielding, providing its standard 100% shielding guarantee.

Because the coronavirus was still raging as construction was about to begin, travel restrictions prevented the company from supervising construction on site. Fortunately, modern technology came to the rescue. The on-site team sent photographs of the 70 shipping containers as they arrived so that Veritas personnel could coordinate the construction process. Regular inspections and contract supervision occurred via WhatsApp.

The last major hurdle was getting the TrueBeam accelerator through the doorway. The onsite team removed the skirting boards and the linac cleared the doorway by about half a centimeter. Yet another miracle.



The Results

The Veritas solution was “absolutely perfect,” Bolaji said. And the results confirm it: an onsite inspection prior to opening revealed total radiation containment. More importantly, the founders formed a bond with the company that spans continents.

“Their people were extremely patient, extremely kind,” Bolaji said. “Without Veritas, we simply couldn’t have done it.”

Marcelle Ruth has truly become the world-class, one-stop-treatment center Modupe envisioned. It’s staffed by a team of skilled health practitioners who, like her, were born and raised in Nigeria, but traveled abroad for advanced training and clinical experience.

The facility expects to be running two shifts and treating 80 patients a day. And they hope to add another linac machine in the near future. Plus, the time savings alone allowed the center to generate at least \$250,000 in additional revenue, because it began operation sooner than it might have without the Veritas solution. More important are the lives saved.

“When they walk through the door, the healing starts,” Modupe said.

To learn more about how Veritas Medical Solutions can benefit your next project, contact us at info@veritas-medicalsolutions.com

