

# Cancer cure camp to kick off in Darj

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With a view to helping common people detect and treat cancer at an early stage, the Medica Cancer Hospital in Siliguri is launching the 'Community-based Cancer Screening' programme in north Bengal. The camp will kick off in Darjeeling town on Friday.

"With the screening programme and free cancer detection camps, Medica Cancer Hospital aims to reach out to as many people in the region as possible for early detection of cancer, enabling cure from this deadly disease," Dr Pankaj Chowdhary, the medical director and chief oncologist of the Centre, told a press meet here today.

According to him, the state of the art healthcare facility at Rangapani, 14 km away from Siliguri, receives around 1500-2000 cancer patients every year, and that 25% of them are head and neck cancer cases.

The general manager, operations, of the hospital, Soma Ghosh, said cancer patients in north Bengal often go to big cities for treatment and spend 50-60% more.

"The hospital is a fully equipped centre with advanced facilities for can-

cer treatment and detection, namely surgical oncology, radiation oncology, medical oncology and palliative care, all available under one roof," Ms Ghosh said.

According to her, the Rangapani centre is managed by Medica Hospitals, a reputed hospital chain in Kolkata run by a group of healthcare specialists with expertise of operating super-specialty and multi-specialty hospitals in West Bengal, Jharkhand and Assam.

The community screenings will consist mainly of detection processes for head and neck cancer, cervical cancer and breast cancer. While the CT scan during the camp will be done for a mere Rs 400, mammography for detecting breast cancer will be done for Rs 200, far less than what hospitals normally charge.

"Cancer does not always mean death. Early detection can help, and screening is just a simple process," Dr Salil Dutta, Senior Gynae Surgeon of Medica Hospital, Siliguri, said, adding that people should not wait for symptoms to develop. "Screening is for healthy people, and every person, mainly above the age of 40, should have a screening done once in a while," he added.