Icon Oncology and Limbus AI partner to pioneer radiation AI software in SA

Leading value-based care (VBC) business, Icon Oncology today announced a partnership with Limbus AI™. The agreement will introduce cutting-edge artificial intelligence (AI) powered software, designed to use in radiation oncology, to Southern Africa.

"We are proud to announce the implementation of Limbus Contour™ software across our national network of radiation oncology facilities. Icon Oncology has always been at the forefront of using new generation technology and software. We believe Limbus AI™ supports our strategy of using technology to deliver the best possible outcomes for our patients," says Dr Ernst Marais, COO of Icon Oncology.
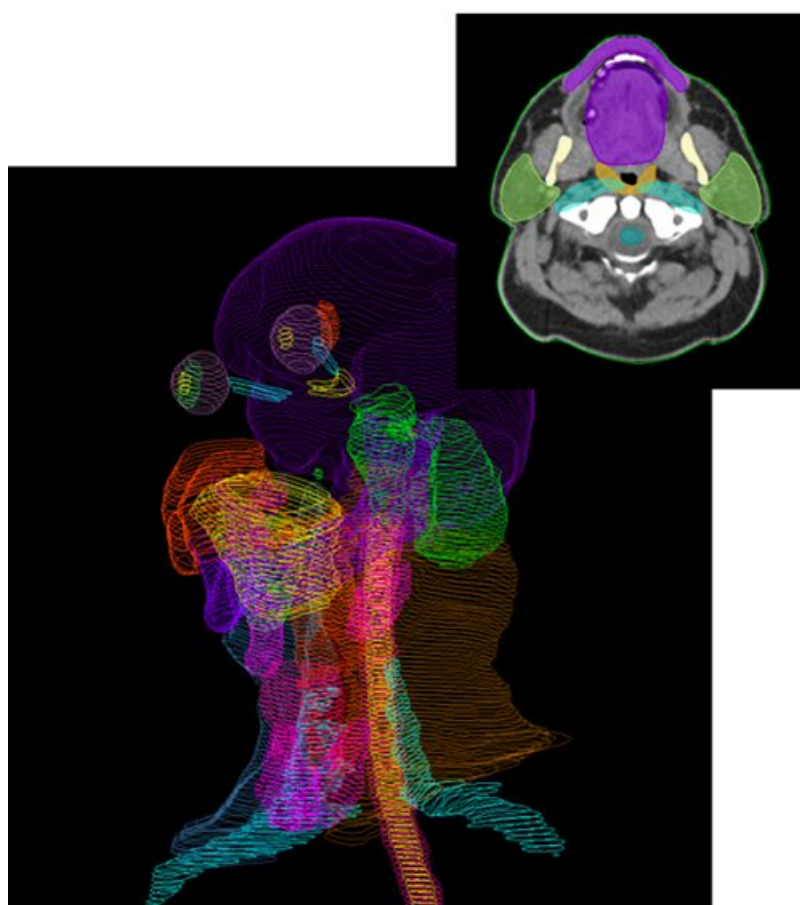

Head and neck organs at risk (OARs)

"At Limbus AI, our goal is design tools that work. Using our own clinical experience as a guide, we've engineered Limbus Contour to save time and improve quality by allowing clinicians to focus on patient care. We believe our partnership with Icon Oncology will help to create much needed capacity in the Southern African region to address the increasing demand for access to cancer care," says Dr Giambattista, founder and medical director of Limbus AI.

The software is designed to reduce the planning time it takes before a patient can start radiation therapy, explains Ivan Oelofse, National Medical Physics manager for Icon Oncology.

Radiation treatment for cancer begins with a CT scan in which radiation therapists set up the patient in precisely the position that will be used to treat their cancer. The scan creates 200 to 300 cross-sectional images of the organ containing the tumour.
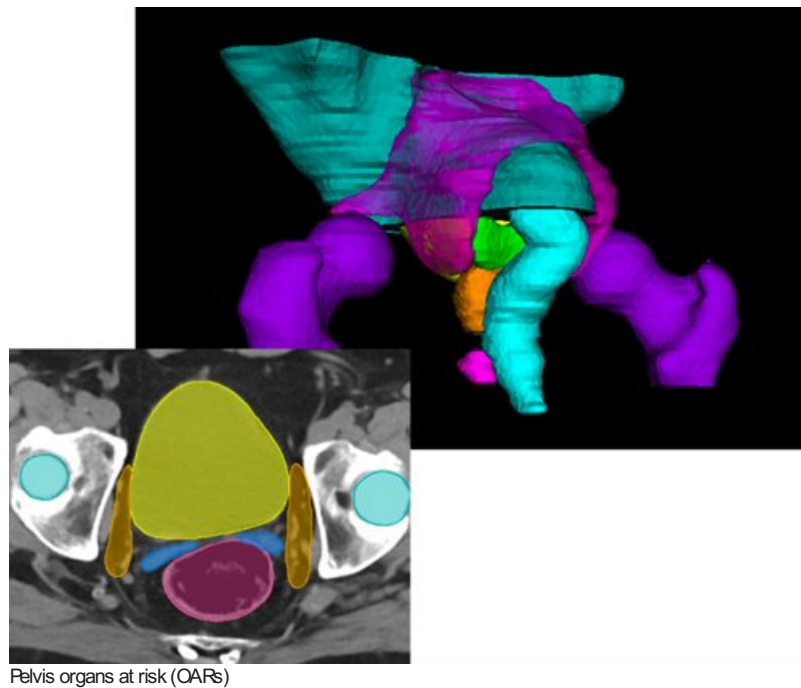
Pelvis organs at risk (OARs)

"The planning process involves complex calculations, and we create a treatment plan based on a process called contour-mapping – a extremely precise drawing and mapping of organs which are at risk (OARs) when high doses of radiation are delivered to a tumour. This ensures that we can avoid damaging healthy tissue and target only the treatment area," says Oelofse.

Thorax organs at risk (OARs)

What distinguishes Limbus Contour from other contour-mapping software is that it uses this information as well as models based on a large database of patient scans to automatically draw critical organs and structures. It also uses deep-learning-based auto-segmentation, which greatly reduces the workload pressures in radiotherapy planning.

"In cancer care timing is critical and the software will help our radiotherapy teams to improve and streamline the contouring process. This reduces the time it takes to get our patients to the planning department and create greater consistency in drawing and mapping of organs at risk." says Oelofse.

Icon Oncology ran a vigorous trial during 2021 to identify a software partner for its 27 radiation therapy units in the country. "Our evidence shows that the Limbus AI™ solution will provide the necessary accuracy and time-savings which allow for greater capacity at our units," says Oelofse who managed the Icon Oncology trial.

Our decision is also supported by independent testing which shows Limbus can speed up the contour mapping process by as much as 80 to 90% with accuracy equal to manual mapping, previously the one and only best practice.

"We are leading the way in addressing the increasing cancer burden in Southern Africa by securing the highest quality, cost-effective cancer care for the greatest number of patients. To this end we will continue to innovate and partner with businesses, like Limbus AI™, that will help us realise this vision," says Marais.

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Icon Oncology

Icon Oncology is a national network of oncology specialists who has pioneered the move to value-based care and are committed to increasing the access to quality cancer care in Southern Africa.

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