

By Hajarah Nalwadda

Uganda Cancer Institute has secured support from the French government to establish a modern cancer treatment centre in Mbarara, a facility expected to serve not only western Uganda, but also the wider East African region.

On Thursday, the institute's executive director, Dr Jackson Orem, signed an agreement with Tyllium SAS for the design, construction and equipping of a state-of-the-art Diagnostic and Oncology Centre in Mbarara.

Orem described the agreement as a major milestone in Uganda's efforts to decentralise cancer care, reduce the burden of long-distance travel for patients, and improve timely access to life-saving treatment.

"Most of the affected Ugandans in the countryside do not have access to care. They cannot currently reach where the care is being given," Orem said.

Arnauld Le Forestier said the project goes beyond

# Cancer Institute to establish treatment centre in Mbarara



**The centre will be established at Mbarara University and will benefit from technical support from Gustave Roussy.**

infrastructure, calling it a practical response to a pressing public health challenge by



Orem (second-right), Le Forestier (second-left) after signing an agreement to set up a cancer treatment centre in Mbarara as Virginie Leroy (left), French Ambassador to Uganda (right) and Jeje Odongo, left look on

bringing world-class cancer services closer to communities in western Uganda and neighbouring regions.

The centre will be established at Mbarara University of Science and Technology and will also benefit from technical

support from Gustave Roussy, one of Europe's leading cancer institutions.

French Ambassador to

Uganda, Virginie Leroy, reaffirmed France's commitment to supporting Uganda's health sector, describing the project as a reflection of the growing partnership between the two countries.

"Setting up a new oncology centre in Mbarara will enable people from the western region and neighbouring countries to access treatment and early diagnosis closer to home," Leroy said. She added that the partnership will give Uganda access to advanced technology, research and some of the latest developments in cancer treatment.

Once completed, the Mbarara Diagnostic and Oncology Centre is expected to improve regional cancer care, ease congestion at existing treatment facilities and strengthen Uganda's position as a regional hub for specialised oncology services.