

April 19, 2001

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE PNO-II-01-014

This preliminary notification constitutes EARLY notice of events of possible safety or public interest significance. The information is as initially received without verification or evaluation, and is basically all that is known by Region II staff (Atlanta, Georgia) on this date.

Facility

Radiation Oncology of Palm Beach, P.A.
(An Agreement State Licensee)
West Palm Beach, FL
License: 2842-1

Licensee Emergency Classification

Notification of Unusual Event
Alert
Site Area Emergency
General Emergency
X Not Applicable

Subject: MEDICAL MISADMINISTRATIONS

The Florida Bureau of Radiation Control notified the NRC Region II office that the licensee had reported treating 18 patients since November, 2000, who may not have received the intended radiation dose. The patients were treated for prostate cancer with a Nucletron High Dose Rate applicator. The licensee believes that during this period of time an incorrect setting may have been programmed into the applicator's computer. In November, the licensee began using a new transfer tube that was 200 millimeters longer than the previous tube and the computer setting was not adjusted for the longer tube. This would have resulted in the patients receiving less dose than prescribed since the source would remain shielded. The licensee's physicist is currently out of the country and not available.

The Bureau will conduct an on-site investigation next week and the licensee has discontinued treatments using this applicator until the issues have been resolved.

Region II received initial notification of this occurrence electronically from the Florida Bureau of Radiation Control at 9:00 a.m., on Thursday, April 19, 2001. This information presented herein has been discussed with the State and is current as of 1:45 p.m. Thursday, April 19, 2001.

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