

DEC 21 1990

Docket No. 030-09588
CAL No. 1-90-020

License No. 08-03604-04

Washington Hospital Center
ATTN: Rosemary Clive
Executive Director,
Cancer Institute
110 Irving Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20010

Dear Ms. Clive:

Subject: Confirmatory Action Letter No. 1-90-020

On December 21, 1990, Mr. David Dickey of your staff reported to NRC Region I an incident involving the malfunction of a teletherapy machine operated at your facility. The malfunction of the machine resulted in the addition of a small increment of time (7.2 seconds) to the desired patient exposure time. Pursuant to a telephone conversation between Mr. David Dickey of your staff and Dr. M. Shanbaky of this office on December 21, 1990, it is our understanding that you have taken or will take the following actions with regard to the use of the Theratron 780 (T-780) teletherapy machine involved in that incident.

1. Immediately terminate ongoing treatment and suspend future treatment.
2. Prior to the resumption of patient treatment determine the cause(s) of the teletherapy machine malfunction and take appropriate corrective action, including all necessary repairs and calibrations to ensure safe conduct of teletherapy operations.
3. Prior to the resumption of patient treatment, make a determination as to why the September 1990 repairs did not appear to be effective in mitigating this problem and improve the machine reliability, and why in light of the September incident, continued use of the machine is warranted.
4. Prior to resumption of patient treatment, notify the NRC Region I directly (215-337-5000) or through the NRC Headquarters Operations Center (301-951-0550) of the cause of the teletherapy machine malfunction, repairs performed and other corrective actions completed.

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Since a malfunction of the teletherapy machine occurred at your facility on September 18, 1990, which appears to be similar to this incident, we emphasize the importance of a comprehensive evaluation of the machine's systems operation and verification of reliability of the machine following the repairs.

Further, we understand that all actions established by this letter will be adhered to and will not be changed unless you receive authorization from the Regional Administrator, NRC Region 1.

The response directed by this letter is not subject to the clearance procedures of the Office of Management and Budget, as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1980, PL 96-511. In accordance with 10 CFR 2.790(a), a copy of this letter will be placed in the NRC Public Document Room.

Issuance of this Confirmatory Action Letter does not preclude the issuance of an Order formalizing the above commitments. If your understanding differs from that set forth above, please call me immediately.

Sincerely,

Malcolm R. Knapp, Director
Division of Radiation Safety
and Safeguards

cc:
Public Document Room (PDR)
Nuclear Safety Information Center (NSIC)
District of Columbia

bcc:
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