

03-017462

October 25, 1985

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE PNO-II-85-101

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 the Region II staff on this date.

FACILITY: Metropolitan Hospital

License No. 52-16033-02
San Juan, PR

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

SUBJECT: TELETHERAPY UNIT MALFUNCTION

On October 25, 1985 the licensee notified NRC Region II that their Siemens Gammatron 3 teletherapy unit containing approximately 4000 Curies of Cobalt-60 malfunctioned at 9:50 a.m. on October 24, 1985. They were unable to return the source to the shielded position.

Two nurse/technologists entered the treatment room to remove the patient and to attempt; unsuccessfully, to manually return the source to the shielded position. The film badges worn by the nurses were express mailed to the supplier for evaluation.

The licensee's physicist estimated that the whole body exposures to the nurses were between 3 and 5 rem. As of 2:30 p.m., October 25, 1985 the source remained in the unshielded position; however, the treatment room has been locked and sealed. The source supplier was expected to be on site at approximately 3:00 p.m. October 25, 1985 to return the source to the shielded position and determine the cause of the malfunction. Region II will follow-up to determine dose to patient, cause of the malfunction and exposures to personnel. Neither the licensee nor Region II plans to issue a Press Release at this time.

The Commonwealth of Puerto Rico will be notified.

This information is current as of 3:30 p.m. on October 25.

Contact: R. Brown, 242-5554

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