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## NEWS BRIEFS

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### NRC Clarifies Patient Excreta Disposal

In a memorandum to its regional offices, the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) headquarters recently clarified the agency policy regarding disposal of excreta from individual patients undergoing diagnostic or therapeutic procedures involving radioisotopes.

If excreta is collected for analysis or storage, it is subject to the labeling and safe storage requirements of 10 CFR Part 20 and the licensee's possession limit. Licensees may dispose of collected excreta without regard to its activity. No record of excreta disposals is required.

Norman McElroy, a health physicist in the NRC's Division of Fuel Cycle and Material Safety, cautioned, however, that licensees should carefully review their applications and license conditions for site-specific requirements. ■

### AMA Studying Assessment Programs

The American Medical Association (AMA) is soliciting descriptions of medical technology assessment criteria.

Announced in *The Blue Sheet* on May 1, the AMA is seeking this information from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Office of Medical Applications of Research and other U.S. Health and Human Services Department (HHS) offices, including the Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA), the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and the Office of Health Technology Assessment.

"HCFA is the only HHS agency which has not yet agreed to detail its

assessment criteria," said an AMA staff member.

One issue of concern to the medical community is a possible linkage between FDA approval of new medical devices and Medicare reimbursement policies.

"Without Medicare assessment criteria being publicly disseminated, it often appears that criteria are inconsistently and subjectively applied, causing confusion among both physicians and device firm product managers," said the AMA. ■

### SNM President Urges Response to VA

Michael J. Welch, PhD, president of The Society of Nuclear Medicine, said he would urge SNM members to write to Veterans Administration (VA) officials and request a reconsideration of the decision to eliminate the position of Director of Nuclear Medicine Service at the VA Central Office (see p. 553).

Letters should be addressed to: John W. Ditzler, MD, Chief Medical Director, Dept. of Medicine and Surgery, Veterans Administration Central Office, 810 Vermont Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20420, and to The Honorable Harry N. Walters, Administrator of the Veterans Administration, at the same address.

### International Congress of Radiology

The International Congress of Radiology (ICR) will hold its 16th quadrennial meeting on July 8-12 in Honolulu, Hawaii.

With an expected attendance of over 5,000, the meeting will include 850 scientific sessions.

C. Douglas Maynard, MD, chairman of radiology at the Bowman Gray

School of Medicine of Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem, NC, and chairman of the ICR's nuclear medicine section, said that the meeting will cover: cardiovascular studies (Mon.), liver and lymphatic studies (Tue.), endocrine and oncology studies (Thur.), and renal and other studies (Fri.).

David E. Kuhl, MD, professor of radiologic sciences at the University of California in Los Angeles, will give a lecture on single-photon emission computed tomography and positron emission computed tomography.

John McAfee, MD, director of radiologic sciences at Upstate Medical Center in Syracuse, NY, will speak on radiopharmaceuticals. ■

### ICRU 1985 Agenda

The International Commission on Radiation Units and Measurements (ICRU) considered new projects, including studies of phantoms, accident dosimetry, dose specification in interstitial therapy, and units and measurement techniques for nuclear magnetic resonance, at its meeting this month in England.

The ICRU also plans to review drafts of reports on clinical dosimetry for neutrons, and definitions of physical parameters to specify performance of imaging instruments in nuclear medicine, among several other topics.

Recently published reports include "Dose and Volume Specification for Reporting Intracavitary Therapy in Gynecology," "Stopping Powers for Electrons and Positrons," and "Microdosimetry."

For more information, contact the ICRU, 7910 Woodmont Ave., Suite 1016, Bethesda, MD 20814. (301) 657-2652. ■