

APPENDIX Q-1

SAFETY PROCEDURES AND INSTRUCTIONS

Prior to using radioactive material under RH-8630, the Applicant must develop, document, submit, and implement written safety procedures for emergency response. Paragraph RH-8633 requires, in part, that written procedures be developed, implemented, and maintained for responding to an abnormal situation involving a remote afterloader unit, a teletherapy unit, or a gamma stereotactic radiosurgery unit. The procedures needed to meet RH-8633 must include:

- Instructions for responding to equipment failures and the names of the individuals responsible for implementing corrective actions;
- The process for restricting access to and posting of the treatment area to minimize the risk of inadvertent exposure; and
- The names and telephone numbers of Authorized Users, Authorized Medical Physicists, and the Radiation Safety Officer to be contacted if the unit or console operates abnormally.

A copy of the procedures must be physically located at the therapy unit console. The instructions must inform the operator of procedures to be followed if the operator is unable to place the source(s) in the shielded position, or remove the patient from the radiation field with controls from outside the treatment room.

The applicant must establish and follow written procedures for emergencies that may occur (e.g., a therapy source fails to retract or return to the shielded position, or a GSR couch fails to retract). A copy of the manufacturer's recommendations and instructions should be given to each individual performing therapy treatments or operating the therapy device. Practice drills, using nonradioactive (dummy) sources (when possible), must be practiced annually or more frequently, as needed. The drills should include dry runs of emergency procedures that cover stuck or dislodged sources and applicators (if applicable), and emergency procedures for removing the patient from the radiation field. Team practice may also be important for adequate emergency coordination for such maneuvers as removing a patient from a malfunctioning GSR unit and manual movement of the patient treatment table. These procedures, designed to minimize radiation exposure to patients, workers, and the general public must address the following points, as applicable to the type of medical use:

- When the procedures are to be implemented, such as any circumstance in which the source becomes dislodged, cannot be retracted to a fully shielded position, or the patient cannot be removed from the beam of radiation.

- The actions specified for emergency source recovery or shielding that primarily consider minimizing exposure to the patient and health care personnel while maximizing safety of the patient.
- The step-by-step actions for single or multiple failures that specify the individual(s) responsible for implementing the actions. The procedures should clearly specify which steps are to be taken under different scenarios. The procedure should specify situations in which surgical intervention may be necessary and the steps that should be taken in that event.
- Location of emergency source recovery equipment and specification of what equipment may be necessary for various scenarios. Emergency equipment should include shielded storage containers, remote handling tools, and if appropriate, supplies necessary to surgically remove applicators or sources from the patient and tools necessary for removal of the patient from the device.
- Giving first consideration to minimizing exposure to the patient, usually by removing the patient from the room (rather than using tools to attempt to return the source to the off position).

<p>NOTE: If the first step of the emergency procedures for teletherapy units specifies pressing the emergency bar on the teletherapy unit console, the applicant is advised that this action may cause the source to return to the off position but may also cut power to the entire teletherapy unit or to the gantry or the couch.</p>

- Instructing the staff to act quickly and calmly, and to avoid the primary beam of radiation.
- Specifying who is to be notified.
- Requirements to restrict (lock, as necessary) and post the treatment area with appropriate warning signs as soon as the patient and staff are out of the treatment room.

The procedures required by RH-8633 must be included in Item 23 of the Application.