September 9, 2008

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE --PNO-IV-2008-009

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 IV, Arlington, Texas, staff on this date.

Facility
Department of the Air Force
Wilford Hall Medical Center
Lackland Air Force Base
San Antonio, Texas

Docket No. 030-28641
License No. 42-23539-01AF

Licensee Emergency Classification

___ Notification of Unusual Event
___ Alert
___ Site Area Emergency
___ General Emergency
_X_ Not Applicable

SUBJECT: UNINITENDED DOSE TO AN EMBRYO/FETUS

DESCRIPTION:

This Preliminary Notification augments the information provided in Event Notice No. 44468 dated September 5, 2008, involving a report by the U.S. Air Force of an incident in which the embryo/fetus of a patient received a radiation dose of approximately 31.5 rads.

NRC inspectors first learned of this incident on September 5 while conducting a routine, unannounced inspection of the 59th Medical Wing (MW) located at the Wilford Hall Medical Center on Lackland Air Force Base (a permit holder with the US Air Force Master Materials license). The incident occurred on June 4, 2008, and involved a female patient that underwent a therapeutic administration of radioiodine-131 for ablation therapy. Two days prior to administration of the radioiodine, a pregnancy test had been given which yielded a negative result. The hospital's radiation safety staff became aware of the pregnancy on August 13, 2008, when the patient contacted the radiation safety staff and wanted to know the consequences of the ablation therapy on her embryo/fetus.

The hospital staff immediately conducted an investigation utilizing third party experts to assist in the evaluation. The hospital, in consultation with the third party, determined that the fetus (in the zygote phase of development) would have been seven days old (post conception) at the time of the radiation therapy, and concluded that there would be no immediate health effects, however, it is possible there could be latent health effects. The patient and her physician have been consulted regarding the hospital's conclusions.

The NRC is obtaining the services of a medical consultant to assist in its ongoing special inspection of this incident.

The State of Texas has been informed of this occurrence.

The information presented herein is current as of 2:15 P.M. CDT, September 9, 2008.

ADAMS ACCESSION NUMBER: ML082530557

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