

June 27, 2017

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U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Washington, DC 20555-0001

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Dear Ms. Bladey:

What follows are my comments on the issue of Patient Release—Home or Hospital after Receiving Radioactive Iodine (RAI) Treatment, Docket ID NRC-2017-0094. Rather than respond individually to the six questions, I would just like to make some general points about my own experience with RAI treatment as a thyroid cancer survivor and from hearing many stories from other survivors as a longtime facilitator of thyroid cancer support groups.

My experience of being sent home after receiving two separate treatment doses of 100+ mCi of i131 was traumatic, primarily because of my concern for contaminating others. One factor of concern was having only one shared bathroom in my home. Guidelines also did not cover how to dispose of radioactive trash or handle laundry.

I'm aware that current practices vary from facility to facility and mitigate against hospital stays, even when it means some patients will go to hotels or motels where they contaminate unsuspecting staff and guests; some will go to home situations where they have small children, a shared bathroom, or share a wall with a neighbor who may be pregnant or have small children; some must travel long distances to and from the treatment facility, risking contaminating the person driving them; and some become nauseated as a result of treatment. Based on my personal experience and hearing from many thyroid cancer survivors, I don't believe these issues are consistently and/or satisfactorily addressed prior to treatment.

I urge those considering this issue to take measures to ensure that patients receiving radioactive iodine treatments are not sent to hotels and motels; get thorough and consistent explanations of precautions required as well as careful evaluations of living situations; and, ultimately, that isolation for patients undergoing treatment be available to those whose living situations require it.

I appreciate your careful consideration of this issue.

Sincerely,

*Roselle Kovitz*

Roselle Kovitz

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