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RULES AND DIRECTIVES
BRANCH
LISNEC

Gallagher, Carol

Subject:

FW: Patient Release Comment - After RAI 2017

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From:

Sent: Tuesday, July 25, 2017 5:06 PM

To: Gallagher, Carol <Carol.Gallagher@nrc.gov>

Subject: [External_Sender] Patient Release Comment - After RAI

RECEIVED

I understand that the comment period has expired, but I was hoping that the administration would consider addressing how a patient leaves the hospital to get to their isolation destination. I would like to submit these comments as 'anonymous'.

I believe that my experience caused the unsuspecting public to be exposed to radiation. My hope is that there would be a requirement for providers who give this treatment to provide an alternative way to leave the property so as to not expose others.

I received my RAI treatment at a hospital in downtown Chicago. It was a larger dose of 150.6mci in November 2012 and I was told to return home after I drank the RAI to begin my isolation. I felt that I had prepared well to begin my isolation. However, what I did not expect was the difficulty in returning to my vehicle that was parked in the hospital parking garage. The hospital where I received treatment shared a parking garage with the Lurie's Children's Hospital and I was instructed to stay as far away from people as possible. I had asked what I needed to do if someone attempted to enter the elevator with me and I was instructed to simply leave the elevator. However, I would still need to pass by the individuals entering the elevator at a close distance. Needless to say, there wasn't an easy way to get to my car. I had to walk past individuals in the lobby who were unaware that I had just received treatment, which would not be obvious even by the blue latex gloves I was wearing.

Perhaps there could be a specific time period that the dose is administered to reduce the number of individuals who would be around the hospital at a particular time? Or require the individuals to leave the hospital using a special exit (out the back door possibly) so as to not endanger others? It was traumatizing being alone and knowing that I needed to protect others as I tried to leave the facility. And it was crowded in the lobby and parking garage and I did the best that I could. And as I left the parking garage, there were a group of people who passed right next to my car which would have been less than 3 feet of distance. I left the garage thinking that I could have impacted several people's health that day and I'm one of the careful patients.

While patients may be instructed about what to do when they get home for their isolation period, I belong to a Facebook group where there are a number of patients who travel long distances to get to their treatment centers. They arrive for their treatment in a hypothyroid state, not being on their thyroid medication for a period of time. As a result, some of the patients consider being driven to the facility by their friends or family members. There is a challenge for them about how to get the patient back home without causing themselves harm. Not everyone will own a car that can allow a 6 ft distance between them and the driver. So I wonder how many other patients choose to drive themselves and potentially cause harm to others through their driving (since there have been studies that a hypothyroid patient is the equivalent of driving drunk). And how many family members/friends who sacrifice their health to take care of their loved one.

Overall, I think that the public is being harmed when a newly radiated patient is allowed to walk out of the doors of the hospital and travel towards their isolation point. Perhaps a patient doesn't need to be hospitalized after treatment, but we should be addressing how the public is protected from the point in time a patient receives their RAI and when they arrive 'home' for isolation.

Thank you for your time,

SUNSI Review Complete

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