

Executive Summary of a Roundtable meeting on

Medical exposures to ionizing radiation: a world priority in radiation protection

As a side event at the 52nd IAEA General Conference a roundtable meeting was organized by the IAEA in cooperation with the French Permanent Mission to IAEA bearing in mind the French Presidency of the European Union. Invited presentations were given, followed by comments and discussion from the floor. Over 80 persons were in attendance.

Mr. D. Ristori, European Commission Deputy Director General DGTREN participated in the opening of the meeting.

The presentations provided the current status of and trends in radiation safety in the medical field from IAEA perspective, information on the review of European Basic Safety Standards from EC view, the first cause analysis of accidental overexposures from French Authority of nuclear Safety (ASN) viewpoint and information on the Belgian system to upgrade medical practices

The main conclusions from the meeting are:

- Medical exposure continues to be overwhelmingly the most significant manmade source of exposure to the population from ionizing irradiation.
- It is imperative for all the stakeholders in radiation protection of the patient to remain vigilant as new technology and complex medical exposure procedures are introduced into practice at a rapid pace.
- It is essential that in Member States there are close interactions between the national nuclear/radiation regulatory body, national health authorities and national labor authorities in relation to radiation protection and safety in this crosscutting activity. Further, the IAEA should ensure that its interactions with Member States involve all relevant authorities.
- There is a need for the IAEA to provide support in Member States for the creation/development of technical service organisations capable of providing the requisite services that support radiation protection and safety in medical exposures.
- Training in radiation protection across a wide spectrum of health professionals continues to underpin radiation protection of the patient. Collaboration with professional bodies will enhance efforts in this respect. Consideration needs to be given to tailoring the training to regional needs.
- The IAEA should make efforts to ensure that all health professionals are given the opportunity to learn from accidental, unintended and unnecessary medical exposures and to share information in expert networks and educational reporting systems.
- Information and guidance need to reach all facilities where medical exposures are performed.
- Special consideration needs to be given to issues in connection with second hand equipment delivery and the delivery of very advanced technology to end-users with less advanced training.
- The global impact of IAEA initiatives with respect to radiation protection of the patient will be enhanced with continued international collaboration (e.g. WHO and ILO).

- The principles of justification and optimization are not well understood by health professionals outside of radiology, nuclear medicine and radiotherapy.
- There is also a strong need for improved co-operation and collaboration between Regulatory Bodies, Health Authorities and professional societies on national and regional level.

The discussions arising during the roundtable also contributed to the wording of the resolution to General Conference on measures to strengthen international cooperation in nuclear, radiation and transport safety and waste safety. The many conclusions from the roundtable will help improve on-going and future IAEA initiatives in this priority area of radiation protection and should also be used by Member States Authorities in the different related areas when planning future activities.