



Radiation Health Committee

14-15 March 2007

Agenda Item 2.3: Medical Applications of Ionizing Radiation

Decision

The Radiation Health Committee:

- Considered the issues raised by the proposal for a single Code of Practice for radiation protection in the medical applications of ionizing radiation (supported by three Safety Guides);
- Noted from correspondence to ARPANSA and the RHC and other feedback to members that there was considerable opposition to the concept of a single Code of Practice from the medical and allied professions and considerable dissatisfaction with the process and progress to date;
- After consideration, reiterated its view that:
 - The purpose of the Code is to establish the regulatory requirements for radiation protection in medical applications that flow from the fundamental radiation protection principles;
 - These principles and much of their application as enforceable regulatory requirements are consistent across the different modalities; and
 - The accompanying Safety Guides would provide the context of good practice in radiation protection specific to each modality in which the regulatory requirements would achieve the radiation protection outcomes;
- Acknowledged the extensive and valuable work undertaken to date by the members of the working groups formed to draft the Code and Safety Guides in each of the three areas;
- Agreed that it is important that the views of the medical and allied professions be fully taken into account in the formation of the regulatory requirements and especially in the accompanying Safety Guides and acknowledged that the RHC's communication with the professions to date has been deficient;
- Agreed that:
 - Taking into account the discussion at the meeting, a revised version of the current draft of the Code be prepared by ARPANSA as the regulatory requirements for radiation protection in medical applications of ionizing radiation

- An accompanying explanatory paper be prepared by ARPANSA explaining that the regulatory requirements implement the stated radiation protection principles that involve the protection of workers, the public and patients and that they do this by imposing enforceable legal responsibilities on the responsible person, the medical practitioner and the operator as defined; that many of these responsibilities are able to apply to radiation protection in all three modalities, but it is recognised that relevant differences between the practices also need to be taken into account appropriately
- The revised draft code (regulatory requirements) and the explanatory paper be cleared by the RHC out of session by Thursday 5 April and then be circulated widely amongst the professions
- ARPANSA edit the three draft Safety Guides prepared by the working groups to achieve an appropriate and consistent structure in the light of the regulatory requirements and that these edited documents then be put to professional review by members of the working groups
- A program of presentation and discussion of the documents be arranged with representative professional bodies in all states and territories during May-July
- A Regulatory Impact Statement (RIS) be drafted during this period
- That the Code, edited Safety Guides, and draft RIS be considered by the RHC at its next meeting in July and amended as necessary in the light of the outcomes of the discussions above, with a view to circulating the revised versions for formal public comment, including for discussion at the proposed national conference on radiation protection in medicine in October, to be followed by final consideration by the committee at its November meeting.