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AEC's Medical Exposure Quality Assurance Program for Gamma Knife, Cyber Knife and Tomotherapy

To enhance the quality of radiological treatment and reduce patient exposure to radiation, the Atomic Energy Council (AEC) has listed Gamma Knife, CyberKnife and Tomotherapy in the medical exposure quality assurance program in line with Article 17 of the Ionizing Radiation Protection Act.

Due to technological advances, radiological medicine continues to gain popularity. Medical exposure accounts for over 80% of artificial radiation utilized. International radiation protection policies restrict exposure of related workers and the public; the focus now is specifically on exposure to medical radiation.

With regard to implementation of the medical exposure quality assurance program, AEC since 2005 has listed cobalt-60 teletherapy units (5 sets), radiotherapy linear accelerators (114 sets), and remote controlled afterloading brachytherapy (45 sets) in the program. Additionally, AEC supervises and assists in 57 Taiwanese medical institutions equipped with the aforementioned equipment to help with set up of a self management system.

Ionizing radiations are efficient in killing cancer cells. Taiwanese medical institutions, in addition to the three types of equipment, also have Gamma Knife (7 sets), CyberKnife (2 sets) and Tomotherapy (4 sets), which are not yet regulated by the medical exposure quality assurance program. To ensure consistency of the program, AEC designated the Chinese Society of Medical Physics to research articles, frequency, standards and operational procedures for Gamma Knife, CyberKnife and Tomotherapy.

Starting July 1, 2007, AEC will conduct QA assistance at hospitals with Gamma Knife, CyberKnife and Tomotherapy, and schedule its completion by year's end. Based on the results of the QA assistance, AEC will revise the

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corresponding regulations to include the medical exposure quality assurance program for Gamma Knife, CyberKnife and Tomotherapy. The new rule is expected to take force in January 2008.