Letters

Liquid test and sudden death in dialysis patients

Sir,

To prevent any misunderstanding of the editorial entitled ‘Performance liquid test as a cause for sudden deaths of dialysis patients: perfluorohydrocarbon, a previously unrecognized hazard for dialysis patients’, reporting on the dramatic events related to the use of the A (Althane) series dialyzer from Baxter [1], I would like to clarify the purposes and the intent of this manuscript.

This editorial was written to inform and update the nephrology community on the progresses made in the understanding of these dramatic events. This editorial should be considered as a preliminary report, relating a series of working hypotheses and taking into account clinical facts and experimental data obtained in vitro. It was written by the author after discussions with the European Experts Panel. It was not endorsed by the panel or any scientific society including the International Society of Nephrology (ISN) or its representative. It should not be considered as the final conclusive report on all the facts and circumstances surrounding this event. The expert panel is still receiving and analyzing information that may validate the original findings regarding the mechanisms of the performance fluid.

It was not the author’s intent to accuse any persons, care givers or organization of being responsible for the patients’ injuries. Baxter has accepted responsibility in this event as the manufacturer of the dialyzers. However, it is important to recognize that such a hazard is frequently aggravated by the interaction of multiple and synergistic factors. The editorial, I believe, insisted correctly on the fact that quality dialysis requires multiple checking at several levels.
For those who may have been offended inadvertently by the terms of this Editorial, please accept my apologies. The only intention of this Editorial was to inform the nephrology community in order to enhance the safety of hemodialysis and to improve the quality of patient care.

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