“Safe Handling of Hazardous Drugs” Technical Paper from Baxa Corporation Now Posted on PublicRelationsNewsroom.com For Media Access

Discussions from a scientific advisory board on the impact of USP 797 and the NIOSH Alert for guiding the safe handling of hazardous drugs in healthcare settings are the topics of a new technical paper posted at the Public Relations Newsroom Web site. This posting joins a related page at the Expert Information for Journalists Web site (Expert411.com) featuring James Jorgenson, RPh, MS, and Martha Polovich, MN, RN, AOCN, industry experts on the subject of safe handling. Polovich was featured recently in the May/June 2005 Journal of Community Oncology explaining the need for safe handling procedures and devices.

Denver, CO (PRWEB) December 24, 2005 -- With hazardous drug handling brought to the forefront of public scrutiny by USP 797 and the recent NIOSH Alert, a new technical paper has been posted at http://www.PublicRelationsNewsroom.com for media access. Baxa Corporation manufactures devices and systems for safe handling, packaging and distributing fluid medications.

The new safe handling technical paper is found at: http://publicrelationsnewsroom.com/_wsn/page13.html

The “safe handling of hazardous drugs” expert information page is found at http://www.expert411.com/_wsn/page9.html.

The Journal of Community Oncology article featuring Marty Polovich and detailing hazardous drug handling risks is found at: http://www.communityoncology.net/journal/articles/0203277.pdf

The NIOSH Alert, "Preventing Occupational Exposures to Antineoplastic and other Hazardous Drugs in Healthcare Settings," reflects years of work by physician, nurse, pharmacist and scientific experts in collaboration with members of the broad-based NIOSH Hazardous Drug Safe Handling working group. Among the findings in the Alert are warnings that previous workplace precautions for containing hazardous drugs have been inadequate. Examples include:

* "Sessink and Bos noted that 11 of 12 studies detected cyclophosphamide in the urine of healthcare workers tested, indicating continued exposure despite safety precautions." (page 17)

* "Considering all the data, the weight of the evidence in occupationally exposed cohorts demonstrates an association between exposures to hazardous drugs and increases in various measures of genotoxicity..." (page 19)

* "Recent evidence summarized in this Alert documents that worker exposure to hazardous drugs is a persistent problem. Although most air sampling studies have not demonstrated significant airborne concentrations of these drugs, the methodology employed in the past has come into question...and may not be a good indicator of environmental contamination of the workplace. All studies that examined surface wipe samples have determined that surface contamination of the workplace is common and widespread." (page 41)

The Alert recommends that employers improve environmental and employee protection where hazardous drugs are handled. The specific benefits of closed systems were called out:
* "An investigation conducted in the US demonstrated a reduction in both the percentage of urine samples with measurable levels of cyclophosphamide or ifosfamide present and the concentration of the drugs in the urine following use of a closed-system device for six months..." (page 18)

* "Transfers from primary packaging such as vials to dosing equipment (i.e., infusion bags, bottles or pumps) should be carried out using closed systems whenever possible. Devices that contain the product within a closed system during drug transfers limit the potential for aerosol generation, as well as exposure to sharps." (page 35)

A leading provider of devices and systems for the preparation, handling, packaging, and administration of liquid medications, Baxa Corporation manufactures and markets a wide range of healthcare products for use in hospitals, critical care units and alternate-site pharmacies. Headquartered in Englewood, Colorado, Baxa has subsidiaries and sales offices in Canada, the United Kingdom and Denmark, and distribution partners worldwide. Further information is available at http://www.baxa.com.

Click the following link to view a presentation by Jim Jorgenson, "Using a Closed System Device to Reduce Occupational Exposure to Hazardous Drugs." Jorgenson is Director of Pharmacy for the Huntsman Cancer Institute and Associate Dean for Professional Affairs at the University of Utah: http://www.isips.org/presentations/PhaSeal/player.html

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