

COMMUNICATION FROM NMEU TO EU OBSERVATORY FOR THE SUPPLY OF Mo-99

I-131 Supply during the period September 2022 through February 2023

Brussels, 24 August 2022

Nuclear Medicine Europe advises the nuclear medicine community that there is an elevated chance of periodic I-131 supply disruptions from September 2022 through February 2023 due to a lengthy planned outage of one of the reactors producing I-131.

There are three major international suppliers of I-131: IRE (Belgium) and NTP (South Africa), via nuclear fission-produced I-131 (by-product of Mo-99 production); and POLATOM (Poland) via neutron activation of tellurium targets. The University of Missouri Research Reactor in Columbia, MO USA has also been producing I-131 via tellurium targets for customers in the United States only. There are a number of other small-scale producers.

During the 2017-2019 extended unplanned NTP Mo-99 production outages, I-131 market demand was adequately satisfied when two of the three producers were able to provide supply. The MARIA research reactor (irradiator for POLATOM) has a planned six month outage from September 2022 through February 2023. NTP has a planned reactor outage from October 2 till October 14. IRE plans to produce I-131 continuously based on irradiations at three reactors.

IRE is in the process of completing conversion of its I-131 production from High Enriched Uranium targets to Low Enriched Uranium targets. As a result of close collaboration over the past year, most of IRE's customers are able to receive LEU-produced I-131, or will soon be able to do so. IRE will maintain for the duration of the MARIA shutdown a significant portion of its HEU-based I-131 production in order to support customers that have not yet been able to receive regulatory authorization for LEU-produced I-131. In order to avoid supply disruptions, IRE also may increase I-131 production by irradiating and dissolving targets only for the purpose of producing I-131.

Accordingly, while Nuclear Medicine Europe believes there is a potential risk to I-131 supply from September 2022 through February 2023, any possible shortage should remain limited.

NMEU will carefully monitor the situation and will provide further communications to the nuclear medicine community based on developments potentially impacting I-131 production.

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