



SERENAGROUP NEWSLETTER

BUILDING THE NATION'S LEADING WOUND CARE TEAM

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WHAT DOES A COMPLIANT SAFETY HYPERBARIC PROGRAM LOOK LIKE?

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Chief Compliance Officer



Recently, there have been a few hyperbaric mishaps that have occurred, and have become newsworthy. The good news is that these mishaps have not occurred within hospitals. Bad news, the most notable and recent mishap in Lehi, Utah was an explosive decompression. The chamber was a hard-shell chamber multi-place and not a soft-shell chamber, which is widely utilized outside of the health care environment.

What and why is the importance of this event? Certainly, it makes for a great news story. However more importantly it points to all things' safety or lack thereof. In this event it blew out an acrylic viewport. The two patients in the chamber suffered serious injuries. From education we all understand acrylic is of utmost importance with our chambers. Its why you inspect it daily for crazing, cracking, and other imperfections. Related to the cause, the results of the investigation will determine the What, Why and How of the mishap. Was this event preventable?

The event happened outside a hospital. Operating HBO chambers outside of medical facilities in itself is not the problem, there are a fair number of chambers in operation outside of the hospital environment and they operate in a safe manner. The concern for this event and others is what was said by the United Fire Authority Fire Marshall, "centers exist in a regulatory gray area, as many local governments haven't required permits or adopted national safety standards in codes that apply to local businesses." "We're kind of at a standstill waiting for codes to change."

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COMPLIANT HYPERBARIC PROGRAM CONTINUED

The UHMS (Undersea and Hyperbaric Medical Society) which the author is a member of has been pushing for changes and adoption of NFPA 99, ASME PVHO 1&2 and other regulatory codes for years! I believe adoption of these codes in those settings may have decreased the potential of this accident from occurring.

As a Hyperbaric Specialist with years of experience, I wonder in the above situation, were there emergency procedures in place and were they followed? Why, it is unclear if NFPA 99 was adopted by the facility. And without adoption, the facility may or may not have known all the morsels of safety included in the guidelines. All of us around HBO chambers know, NFPA 99, chapter 14, is our cookbook for safe operations. It addresses requirement for on-site safety directors, the haves and have nots, checklist, go/no-go checklist, and Emergency Procedures spelled out in Annex B 14.2. SerenaGroup created the Emergency Procedure Quick Reference (QR) cards with NFPA elements. It is why we require the QR cards to be at the swing arm of your chambers. Also, it is why we spend that last minute reviewing the Have/Have Not checklist with the patient prior to closing the door and taking the patient to pressure.

Emergency Procedures are only effective, if practiced. It is why we have monthly safety huddles with topics around those emergency procedures. Also, why NFPA 99 require an annual timed fire drill. Timed Fire Drills should be an event and opportunity to promote your department. As your National Safety Director, I encourage you to include as many departments external to the hyperbaric facility as possible. More often than not it brings the hospital's Environment of Care, Safety Committee, the Security and or onsite Police Department, hospital Leadership and consider inviting the local fire department. The event promotes awareness of what you have in your department. Also, this moment fosters a moment for questions and concerns to be answered by everyone. Some of the questions asked, what additional steps does your department do as it relate to safety, why are there different steps in your fire evacuation plan, what happens if that device explodes.

In conclusion, Emergency Procedures are more than just and after thought in the hyperbaric area. They are a way of life to promote safety, timed fire drills allow for so much more than just checking off a box for an annual requirement. Within SG, it show the Hyperbaric Specialist is a shining star amongst bright lights in your organization.

SERENAGROUP DIRECTOR SUMMIT 2023

SerenaGroup hosted their annual Director Summit October 17-19. It was a great 3 days of networking, education, and celebrating all the hard work our directors do every day.



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Creating a Safe and Comfortable Environment

Community Education Area of Focus

Head, Neck and Oral Surgery

American Diabetes Month

Healthy Skin Month

US Antibiotic Awareness Week

November 18-24

World Diabetes Day

November 14

THIS MONTHS EDUCATION TOPICS & IMPORTANT DATES



SerenaGroup Blue Star Winner



Cheryl Heaton, LPN

Deborah Hospital

Cheryl has an upbeat and refreshing attitude with patients and staff. She is always willing to learn and is eager to jump in and help whenever needed.

Thank you Cheryl
for all your hard work!



UPCOMING

40hr Intro to HBO Courses

Nov 9-12, 2023 | West Palm Beach FL

To register for an upcoming course please go to serenagroupinc.com and click on courses.



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