

SAFETY IN STERILIZING MEDICAL PRODUCTS

Use of ionizing radiations for sterilization of materials used in medicine and biology is now well established. Techniques based on them are used industrially in certain countries for sterilizing syringes, instruments and medical materials, for preparing vaccines and for preparing tissues. Work is now advanced on the preparation of a code of practice suitable for international acceptance to assist in ensuring correct procedures for such operations.

In 1964, when scientists from thirteen countries attended a meeting in Denmark to discuss the processes, it was decided that the Agency should organize the preparation of recommendations for an international code of practice. The members of that meeting formed a working party. Another meeting was held in London last April, and in December 1966, by which time the number of Member States of IAEA interested had increased to 20, final recommendations were drawn up at a panel meeting in Vienna.

The recommendations will be discussed again at an important symposium on radiosterilization of medical products to be held during June in Budapest and will later be considered by the World Health Organization.

ENCOURAGING RESEARCH AND TEACHING

In support of the Burmese Government's effort to encourage scientific research and teaching, the Agency provided, under the United Nations Development Programme, the services of an expert in nuclear chemistry. He stayed for three months at the Rangoon Arts and Science University. As a result a radiochemistry laboratory has been set up, where radioisotopes are used in chemical research and where radiochemistry is taught to fourth-year bachelor of science students.