Workshop: “Current issues in the field of surface contamination with oncology drugs”

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Evaluating environmental contamination with oncology drugs in hospitals is one of the fundamental requirements to ensure the safety of all healthcare professionals. Safe handling procedures should be closely monitored in all areas where anticancer drugs are delivered, stored, prepared, administered and disposed of.

There are no official, legal limit values for surface contamination with oncology drugs. In review of publications on wipe sampling, some authors provide safe reference values (e.g. 0,1 ng/cm), guidance values or alerts and action levels. Over the last two decades surface contamination in hospital settings has been very well documented. Numerous studies have shown that traces of oncology drugs are still found on various work surfaces in hospitals and levels vary widely in the wards.

To detect and quantify the presence of those hazardous agents is usually established by surface wipe sampling. These determinations require the use of analytical methods with high selectivity and sensitivity. Over the last two decades, several different analytical techniques have been developed and validated by various laboratories. The sensitivity and specificity of the analytical methods, as well as the reliability of both the sampling and analytical procedures, are crucial in comparing the results from different settings all over the world.