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Improving Patient Safety for Ultrasound-Guided Percutaneous Procedures in the ED

Panel session at EN24 will highlight practical applications of aseptic technique and ultrasound probe disinfection

HARTWELL, Georgia—At the upcoming [annual meeting of the Emergency Nurses Association \(Las Vegas, September 4-7\)](#), PICC Excellence CEO Nancy Moureau, PhD, RN, CRNI, CPUI, VA-BC, will lead a session and panel on evidence-based policies and practices to reduce the risk of infection when using ultrasound technologies in ED settings.

The [“Deep Dive” session](#) will include the first presentation of results from a recent survey conducted in conjunction with the Emergency Nurses Association to assess real-world experience in implementing insertion and infection control recommendations for ultrasound-guided peripheral IV (UGPIV) procedures.

Attendees at Moureau’s ENA 2023 session on disinfecting ultrasound equipment received the survey, which covered UGPIV insertion training, aseptic technique, equipment disinfection, and probe protection. Four survey respondents were selected for follow-up interviews.

“The ED nurses surveyed were interested in learning about specific patient safety recommendations, but especially how clinicians at other facilities were implementing those recommendations,” says Moureau.

“In a fast-paced ED, it can be challenging to implement safety recommendations and maintain proper supplies for quick access,” says Moureau. “So, it’s encouraging when the clinicians we surveyed are committed to learning about and applying best practices to make UGPIV insertions safer for their patients.”

Insertion of a peripheral intravenous catheter is the most performed invasive medical procedure among hospitalized patients. In North America, an estimated 12 million ultrasound-guided PIV insertions are performed each year, and the number is increasing as additional specialty fields adopt UGPIV techniques.

Ultrasound visualization to guide minimally invasive medical procedures helps to speed vascular access, facilitate diagnoses, and decrease overall healthcare costs. However, if the aseptic technique is not maintained, bacteria can colonize the insertion site, insertion track, catheter, and bloodstream, leading to serious bloodstream infections.

In her upcoming session, Moureau will describe the principles and practice of [Aseptic Non-](#)

[Touch Technique \(ANTT\)](#), a fast, safe, and cost-effective process that has been widely adopted across Europe to promote safety during medical and surgical procedures.

Recommendations from clinical and professional organizations universally emphasize the use of some form of probe protection, such as a sterile sheath or a sterile barrier dressing that separates the ultrasound gel and transducer from the sterile insertion site. But such approaches can only be effective if they are used consistently.

Although the majority of survey respondents reported using some type of probe protection, nearly a fifth of respondents said they use no probe protection. Equally disturbing, another fifth of respondents reported using transparent dressings whose adhesives can damage the ultrasound transducer viewing face and may contribute to cracking.

Moureau will engage with a panel of clinicians to explore guidelines and recommendations for cleaning and disinfecting ultrasound transducers, including manufacturer instructions for use. She will be joined by Tiffany Wiksten, DNP, RN, CIC, associate director for the standards interpretation group in the division of healthcare improvement at [The Joint Commission](#), who will describe how the commission's surveyors score hospital practices related to transducer use and disinfection.

Moureau will also discuss the importance of UGPIV training programs and ongoing competency assessment. "One of the biggest challenges with UGPIV insertions is their significant learning curve," says panel participant and emergency vascular access expert Jon Bell, RN, MSN, VA-BC, CEN, director of emergency services at Mount Desert Island Hospital.

"Placing IVs under ultrasound guidance isn't a one-and-done skill; it takes practice," says Bell. "Teaching the procedure in a structured, methodical way sets the expectation that mastering this skill requires time and effort and provides a clear pathway which people can commit to from the beginning."

Following the opening presentations, Moureau will moderate a roundtable discussion with Wiksten and a panel of ED clinicians representing a diverse array of emergency department clinical environments, including a small rural hospital, a children's hospital, and a large multi-hospital system.

The Deep Dive session, "Advancing Quality and Safety for Ultrasound-Guided Peripheral IV Procedures: Exploring the Evidence for Practical Applications," will take place on Saturday, September 7, from 8:00 to 9:45 am.

About Dr. Nancy Moureau and PICC Excellence

Nancy Moureau, RN, PhD, CRNI, CPUI, VA-BC, is the owner and CEO of PICC Excellence, a vascular access education company that provides effective, easy-to-understand in-person onsite training and web-based online education for clinicians worldwide. A new [Ultrasound UGPIV Mastery Learning Certificate Training program](#), released by PICC Excellence, has received national attention through the award of the Seal of Approval from the Infusion Nurses Society.

Recognized as an international expert in vascular access, Moureau is widely published in the [medical literature](#), including recent [guidelines](#) that define appropriate indications for the insertion, maintenance, and care of peripherally inserted central catheters (PICCs). She is also

a member of the Alliance for Vascular Access Teaching and Research (AVATAR), based in Australia.

For more information about PICC Excellence, visit www.piccexcellence.com.

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