

Safeguard public from widespread unsafe use of “Mild hyperbaric oxygen therapy”

Whereas, there has been a recent proliferation of “mild hyperbaric” facilities in chiropractic offices, wellness centers and health spas within the USA and elsewhere overseas.

Whereas, such centers have elected to provide dangerous and ineffective hyperbaric exposures employing inadequate doses of hyperbaric oxygen for disorders in which standard hyperbaric oxygen has proven to have an appropriate therapeutic role.

Whereas, these centers are often providing hyperbaric oxygen for indications for which there is no proven role for hyperbaric oxygen at any dose including autism, cerebral palsy, stroke, general wellness and many more, often preying on vulnerable populations.

Whereas, the vast majority of these centers are providing, without physician prescription or oversight, medical treatments which are recognized as requiring appropriate physician involvement and for which subspecialty board certification offered by the American Board of Emergency Medicine (ABEM) and the American Board of Preventive Medicine (ABPM) sanctioned by the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) is strongly recommended

Whereas, these centers do not provide medical supervision or adequately trained nursing or technical staff or equipment to address in-chamber medical emergencies and complications including barotrauma to the lung, sinuses, or ears; hyperbaric induced hypoglycemia; congestive heart failure; or hyperbaric oxygen induced grand mal seizures.

Whereas, unapproved, non-compliant and inappropriately designed and manufactured chambers employing materials prone to failure and resultant explosive decompression are commonly used in these facilities to the great peril of clients receiving hyperbaric exposures. Virtually none of the employed chambers and housing facilities meet the established standards of either the NFPA (National Fire Protection Association) or PVHO (Guidelines for Pressure Vessels for Human Occupancy) of the ASME (American Society of Mechanical Engineers).

Whereas NFPA regulations for hyperbaric facilities including fire suppression and extinguishing equipment and availability of lighted signage for egress are routinely not provided.

Whereas these centers commonly both provide and advertise hyperbaric exposures for non-FDA approved indications in defiance of FDA regulations.

Whereas, the sum total of these findings are consistent with the practice of medicine without licensure in an unsafe environment providing ineffective and unapproved exposures to inadequate doses of hyperbaric oxygen to their clients constituting a public health menace.

Resolved that our State Medical Society oppose the operation of unsafe “Mild Hyperbaric Facilities” and be it further resolved that our medical society work with the FDA and other regulatory bodies to close these facilities until and unless they adopt and adhere to all established safety regulations; adhere to the established principles of the practice of hyperbaric oxygen and restrict treatment to proven indications under the prescription and oversight of a licensed and adequately trained physician; and ensure that staff are appropriately trained and adherent to applicable safety regulations.

Adopted by NHMS Council on April 12, 2023