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ASSURING PROPER USE AND EFFECTIVE MONITORING OF PATIENTS RECEIVING AN ESA AT THE NMVAHCS (B4), Daniel Eyre, Nina Resch. New Mexico VA Healthcare System, Albuquerque, NM (daniel.eyre2@va.gov) IRB approval not needed – no human subject data.

The erythropoietin-stimulating agents, epoetin alfa and darbepoetin alfa, have been approved for the correction of anemia in patients with chronic renal failure, cancer patients receiving chemotherapy, and zidovudine-treated HIV-infected patients as well as for the reduction of allogeneic blood transfusion in surgery patients. Recent FDA updates have shown that increasing a patient's hemoglobin level too aggressively can predispose a patient to serious adverse events including increased mortality, serious cardiovascular and thromboembolic events, and increased risk for tumor progression. After review of current literature on the proper use and monitoring of the ESAs, educational sessions were provided to ensure that providers in renal, hematology/oncology, and internal medicine units at the New Mexico VA Health Care System were aware of these safety concerns and recent updates in FDA regulation of these agents. Following the education sessions, parameters were established in both the renal and hematology/oncology units to ensure all patients receiving an ESA are being properly followed and monitored. The educational session along with the final parameters established for monitoring these patients at the New Mexico VA Health Care System will be presented.

