(12) INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION PUBLISHED UNDER THE PATENT COOPERATION TREATY (PCT)

(19) World Intellectual Property Organization
International Bureau

(43) International Publication Date
15 December 2011 (15.12.2011)

PCT

(10) International Publication Number
WO 2011/154767 A1

(51) International Patent Classification:
A61M 25/06 (2006.01) *A61M 5/32* (2006.01)

(21) International Application Number:
PCT/IB2010/052239

(22) International Filing Date:
20 May 2010 (20.05.2010)

(25) Filing Language: English

(26) Publication Language: English

(30) Priority Data:
917/DEL/2010 16 April 2010 (16.04.2010) IN

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(81) Designated States *(unless otherwise indicated, for every kind of national protection available)*: AE, AG, AL, AM, AO, AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BH, BR, BW, BY, BZ, CA, CH, CL, CN, CO, CR, CU, CZ, DE, DK, DM, DO, DZ, EC, EE, EG, ES, FI, GB, GD, GE, GH, GM, GT, HN, HR, HU, ID, IL, IN, IS, JP, KE, KG, KM, KN, KP, KR, KZ, LA, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LY, MA, MD, ME, MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, MY, MZ, NA, NG, NI, NO, NZ, OM, PE, PG, PH, PL, PT, RO, RS, RU, SC, SD, SE, SG, SK, SL, SM, ST, SV, SY, TH, TJ, TM, TN, TR, TT, TZ, UA, UG, US, UZ, VC, VN, ZA, ZM, ZW.

(84) Designated States *(unless otherwise indicated, for every kind of regional protection available)*: ARIPO (BW, GH, GM, KE, LR, LS, MW, MZ, NA, SD, SL, SZ, TZ, UG, ZM, ZW), Eurasian (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM), European (AL, AT, BE, BG, CH, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, HR, HU, IE, IS, IT, LT, LU, LV, MC, MK, MT, NL, NO, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI, SK, SM, TR), OAPI (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, GQ, GW, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG).

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— *as to applicant's entitlement to apply for and be granted a patent (Rule 4.17(ii))*

— *as to the applicant's entitlement to claim the priority of the earlier application (Rule 4.17(iii))*

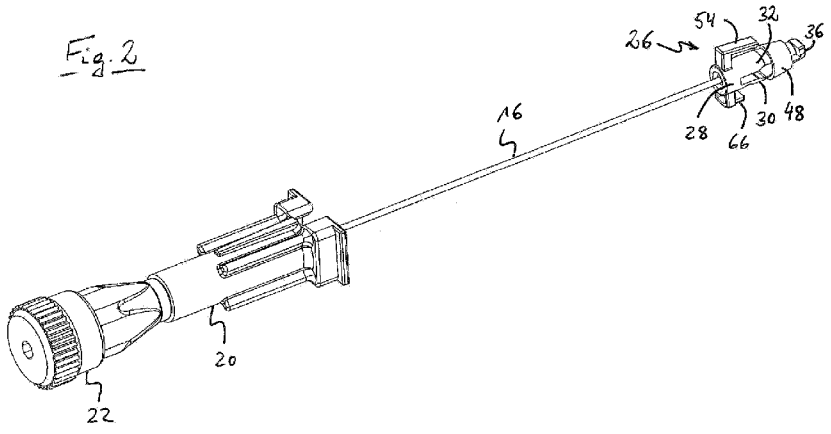
— *of inventorship (Rule 4.17(iv))*

Published:

— *with international search report (Art. 21(3))*

WO 2011/154767 A1

(54) Title: CATHETER APPARATUS



(57) Abstract: Catheter apparatus (10) comprising: a catheter (12); a catheter hub (14) having a distal section and a proximal section, wherein the distal section is joined to the catheter and the proximal section defines a chamber (24); a needle (16) extending through the catheter hub and the catheter and defining an axial direction, wherein the needle has opposite proximal and distal ends, the distal end forming a needle tip (18); a needle hub (20) attached to the proximal end of the needle; and a needle guard (26) slidably arranged on the needle, wherein the needle guard is retained in the chamber of the catheter hub when the needle extends through the catheter hub and the catheter, and wherein the needle guard is removable from the catheter hub once the needle tip is received in the needle guard upon withdrawal of the needle from the catheter.