

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

(19) World Intellectual Property
Organization
International Bureau

(43) International Publication Date
09 February 2023 (09.02.2023)



(10) International Publication Number
WO 2023/014994 A1

(51) International Patent Classification:

A61M 25/00 (2006.01) A61M 25/09 (2006.01)
A61M 25/06 (2006.01) A61M 25/01 (2006.01)

(21) International Application Number:

PCT/US2022/039614

(22) International Filing Date:

05 August 2022 (05.08.2022)

(25) Filing Language:

English

(26) Publication Language:

English

(30) Priority Data:

63/229,862 05 August 2021 (05.08.2021) US

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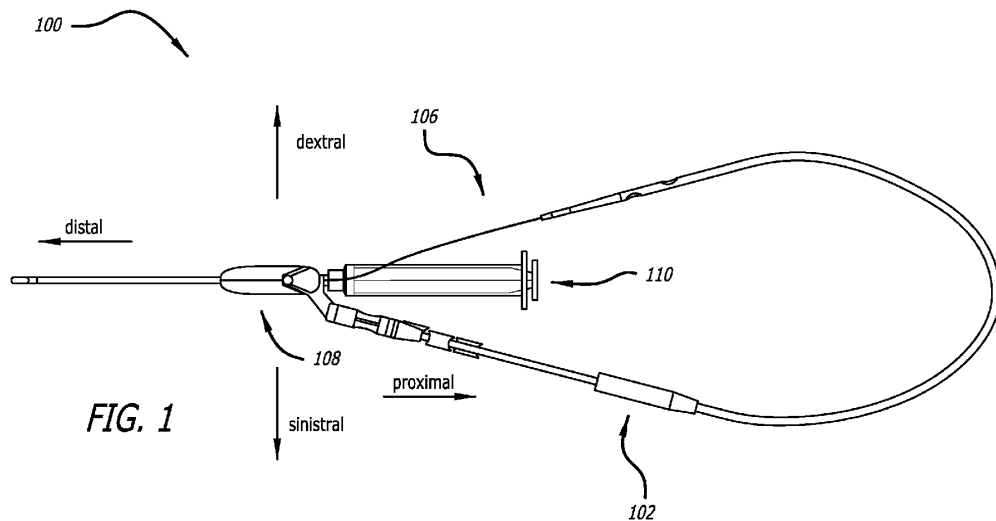
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(81) Designated States (unless otherwise indicated, for every kind of national protection available): AE, AG, AL, AM, AO, AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BH, BN, BR, BW, BY, BZ, CA, CH, CL, CN, CO, CR, CU, CV, CZ, DE, DJ, DK, DM, DO, DZ, EC, EE, EG, ES, FI, GB, GD, GE, GH, GM, GT, HN, HR, HU, ID, IL, IN, IQ, IR, IS, IT, JM, JO, JP, KE, KG, KH, KN, KP, KR, KW, KZ, LA, LC, LK, LR, LS, LU, LY, MA, MD, ME, MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, MY, MZ, NA, NG, NI, NO, NZ, OM, PA, PE, PG, PH, PL, PT, QA, RO, RS, RU, RW, SA, SC, SD, SE, SG, SK, SL, ST, SV, SY, TH,

(54) Title: RAPIDLY INSERTABLE CENTRAL CATHETER INSERTION ASSEMBLIES AND METHODS



(57) Abstract: Disclosed are rapidly insertable central catheter ("RICC") insertion assemblies and methods. For example, a RICC insertion assembly (100) can include a RICC (102), an access guidewire (106), an introducer needle (104), and a coupler (108) coupling the foregoing components together. The introducer needle (104) can include a needle shaft (140) and a sheath (142). The needle shaft (140) can include a longitudinal needle slot (148). The sheath (142) can seal the needle slot (148) thereunder except for a sheath opening (162) thereto in a proximal portion of the sheath (142). The coupler (108) can include a coupler housing (178) and a valve module (180) disposed in the coupler housing (178). The valve module (180) can seal the needle shaft (140) and the sheath (142) therein. The access guidewire (106) can include a proximal end coupled to the coupler (108) and a distal end disposed in the introducer needle (104), thereby enforcing a loop in the access guidewire (106). The RICC (102) can be disposed over the loop in a ready-to-deploy state of the RICC insertion assembly (100).

[Continued on next page]

TJ, TM, TN, TR, TT, TZ, UA, UG, US, UZ, VC, VN, WS,
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, RW, SD, SL, ST, SZ, TZ, UG, ZM, ZW), Eurasian (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, 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, RS, SE, SI, SK, SM, TR), OAPI (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, GQ, GW, KM, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG).

Declarations under Rule 4.17:

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

Published:

- *with international search report (Art. 21(3))*
- *before the expiration of the time limit for amending the claims and to be republished in the event of receipt of amendments (Rule 48.2(h))*