



CoC Flash

A Monthly News Update from the Commission on Cancer of the American College of Surgeons



January 2005

Highlights for the Month:

- Survey Savvy Registration Is Closed
- CoC Colon Cancer Reports: CP³R
- NCDB Call for Data: 1988, 1993, 1998 and 2003
- Enhancing the Visibility and Value of the CoC Approval Award
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- Cancer Staging and the Use of "X"
- Spotlight on CoC Member Organization: American Hospital Association (AHA)

Survey Savvy Registration Is Closed

Please be advised that the CoC is no longer accepting registrants for its Survey Savvy Workshop in February. Registration was closed on January 13.

CoC Colon Cancer Reports: CP³R

The Commission on Cancer (CoC) has developed a Web-based "Cancer Program Practice Profile Report," (CP³R) to provide its 1,420 approved cancer programs with comparative information to assess local utilization of adjuvant chemotherapy (ACT) following the resection of Stage III colon cancers. The release of this set of profile reports reflects the continuing efforts of the CoC to focus on measuring and assessing the quality of care provided to cancer patients in the United States. The CP³R provides a ranking scale that permits each cancer program to compare its local practice to that of aggregated practice measures from similar types of cancer programs nationally, regionally, and at the state level. The rank assigned to each CoC-Approved Cancer Program is based on historical patterns of each cancer program's reported treatment of Stage III colon cancer, using the information reported to the National Cancer Data Base (NCDB). A primary goal of these reports is aimed at supporting the CoC's efforts to develop effective educational interventions and to improve cancer care outcomes at the local level and across the United States. In addition, these reports will support CoC physician surveyors in their efforts to promote standards of care for quality multidisciplinary cancer care delivered at the local level.

For further information, send inquiries to NCDB@facs.org.

NCDB Call for Data: 1988, 1993, 1998 and 2003

December 3, 2004, was the due date for the initial submission of 1988, 1993, 1998 and 2003 NCDB Call for Data reports. The CoC wishes to extend its thanks and congratulations to the 92 percent of approved programs that have completed their data submission in response to this Call for Data. CoC approved cancer programs that failed to meet this deadline are encouraged to complete their data submissions at the earliest opportunity.

Information about the Call for Data—defining which cases are being collected, and describing how to pre-edit and submit them—is posted on our Web site at <http://www.facs.org/cancer/ncdb/index.html>.

For additional questions on NCDB submissions, contact Nancy Etzold, CTR, at netzold@facs.org or 312-202-5339.

Enhancing the Visibility and Value of the CoC Approval Award

We truly value your facility's participation in the CoC Approvals Program and for this reason, we're taking numerous steps to increase the visibility of your CoC Approval Award.

The CoC has implemented a new marketing strategy that will use several new marketing tools to reach national, state, and local community audiences as follows:

- Advertisements in highly regarded cancer publications to emphasize the benefits of CoC Approval (in 2005).
- Exhibits at national cancer meetings to reach large audiences and promote the ways in which CoC Approval can improve cancer program quality and the quality of patient care.
- A promotional CD-Rom that includes testimonials from CoC leadership, representatives from member organizations, and cancer program members at CoC-approved cancer programs which highlights the benefits of program participation. This CD-Rom will be available to new and existing programs.
- A marketing kit for CoC-approved cancer programs that includes an updated press release, new advertising slicks, a promotional CD-Rom, and a revised patient brochure (Second quarter 2005).
- A media campaign focused on increasing the public's recognition and understanding of CoC Approval (Fourth quarter 2005).

The CoC is also working to provide programs with the tools, resources, and support needed to make every cancer program a success.

- A manual is being developed to provide step-by-step directions on how to establish a cancer program (Second quarter 2005).
- CoC educational programs for constituents will be expanded to offer greater topic variety and more delivery formats (Second quarter 2005).
- CoC cancer program standards will be customized for select groups such as the NCI, VA, and pediatric programs (First quarter 2005).
- The CoC's "Benefits of Approval" PowerPoint presentation for use by CoC volunteers and constituents will be reworked to better highlight the valuable advantages of CoC Approval.
- Internal CoC procedures are being developed to help us identify the warning signs of CoC-approved programs that are having difficulty in meeting the standards and enable us to provide immediate feedback and assistance.

For more information on these activities, contact Connie Bura at cbura@facs.org.

CoC-Trained Independent Cancer Consultant List Updated

Cancer programs seeking the services of a CoC-trained independent cancer consultant are encouraged to visit our Web site at <http://www.facs.org/cancer/coc/approval.html> for an updated list of consultants and their contact information.

Research the Research

Is your program really capturing all of the eligible patients for Standard 5.2? Perhaps commendation is only a tip away. The following are eligible patients to include in annual numbers for patient accrual:

- Seen at your facility for diagnosis and/or treatment and placed on a cancer clinical trial through your facility.
- Seen at your facility for diagnosis and/or treatment and placed on a cancer clinical trial through the office of a staff physician.
- Seen at your facility for diagnosis and/or treatment and placed on a cancer clinical trial through another facility.
- Seen at your facility for any reason and placed on a cancer prevention or cancer control clinical trial such as STAR or SELECT.

Here are some simple tips to ensure your program is maximizing enrollment totals and documentation for the Survey Application Record (SAR):

- At cancer conference, ask if this patient is being enrolled in a clinical trial.
- When accessing abstracting information or follow-up, include the statement "was this patient placed on a cancer clinical trial?"
- Include any prevention or cancer control research study information as part of the cancer committee outreach report.
- If allowable, ask the staff medical oncologist and radiation oncologist to fax a list of recently

enrolled patients to clinical trials for comparison to your database.

- Ensure quarterly reporting of research status at cancer committee meetings.

If you have questions or concerns regarding research eligibility, please use the Inquiry and Response (I&R) System located on our Web site at <http://www.facs.org/cancer/index.html>.

CoC Welcomes New State Chairs

The College is pleased to announce the appointment of four new CoC State Chairs:

Alan M. Yahanda, MD – Parkview Hospital, Fort Wayne, IN
James J. Hamilton Jr., MD – St. Francis Health Center, Topeka, KS
Lisa A. Rutstein, MD – Maine Surgical Care Group, Portland, ME
Jefferson R. Edwards, MD – Baptist Medical Center, Jacksonville, FL

“Role of the Cancer Liaison Physician” Web Conferences for 2005

Due to the success of these conferences in 2004, we will continue to offer them every other month in 2005. Join us on either of the meeting dates listed below to better understand the role of the Cancer Liaison Physician. This presentation is open to all cancer program staff interested in learning about the responsibilities of the Cancer Liaison Physician as the Community Outreach Coordinator.

All Web conferences are offered on Central Time (CT)

Wednesday, February 16, 2005, 9:00am–10:00am

Moderator: William Dooley, MD, Oklahoma State Chair

Tuesday, April 19, 2005, 4:00pm–5:00pm

Moderator: Russell Smith, MD, Iowa State Chair

These sessions last approximately 50 minutes and require participants to have Internet and telephone access. Registration is NOT necessary. Visit our Web site at

<http://www.facs.org/cancer/coc/liaison.html> for further instructions. Please direct inquiries to Carolyn Jones at cjones@facs.org.

Cancer Staging and the Use of “X”

Don't miss the February 1 issue of *Cancer*, published by the American Cancer Society. In it, you'll find an informative article entitled, “TNM: Use and Abuse of X,” by authors Frederick L. Greene, MD; James Brierley, MD; Leslie H. Sobin, MD; and Christian Wittekind, MD. The purpose of this article is to clarify the correct use of “X.” As frequently noted, one area of uncertainty in assigning proper staging categories is the use of the “X” suffix when assigned to the tumor (T), lymph node (N), or metastasis (M) categories of the TNM classification system. When “X” is used, patients ordinarily cannot be assigned a stage, e.g., Stage III.

For the full article, see *Cancer*, Vol. 103, Issue 3.

Spotlight on CoC Member Organization: American Hospital Association (AHA)

The American Hospital Association (AHA) has been a Commission on Cancer member since 1978. The current representative is Albert B. Einstein, Jr., MD, FACP, of the Swedish Cancer Institute at the Swedish Medical Center in Seattle, WA.

Founded in 1898, the AHA provides education for health care leaders and is a source of information on health care issues and trends. With its vision of a society of healthy communities, where all individuals reach their highest potential for health and its mission of advancing the health of individuals and communities, the AHA leads, represents and serves hospitals, health systems, and other related organizations that are accountable to the community and committed to health improvement.

This national organization represents and serves all types of hospitals, health care networks, and their patients and communities. Close to 5,000 hospitals, health care systems, networks, other providers of care and 37,000 individual members come together to form the AHA. Through their representation and advocacy activities, the association ensures that members' perspectives and needs are heard and addressed in national health policy development, legislative and regulatory debates, and judicial matters.

We invite you to learn more about the AHA and its programs by visiting its Web site at <http://www.aha.org>.

To Subscribe to CoC Flash

CoC Flash is e-mailed automatically each month to individuals for whom the Commission on Cancer of the American College of Surgeons has an e-mail address. If you wish to continue to receive the newsletter on a monthly basis, you need do nothing. You can discontinue your subscription by writing to coc@facs.org and requesting that your name be deleted from the database. Individuals not currently receiving the newsletter may subscribe to the publication by sending an e-mail containing your name, address, telephone and fax numbers to coc@facs.org, and asking to be added to our electronic distribution database.

To Submit Information

CoC Flash will accept submissions received by the third week of each month. However, the CoC reserves the right to decide whether or not the materials are appropriate for inclusion. Information for CoC Flash should be timely, newsworthy, brief, and of use and interest to the constituents of the Commission, which include cancer registrars, liaison physicians, cancer committee chairs, and other cancer-oriented health care professionals. To submit material, send it to coc@facs.org.

Mission

The Commission on Cancer is a consortium of professional organizations dedicated to reducing the morbidity and mortality of cancer through education, standard setting, and the monitoring of quality care. CoC Flash is a monthly news service for constituents of the CoC provided by the Commission and the Cancer Programs of the American College of Surgeons.

For all the latest information on CoC activities, news, and events, visit our Web site at <http://www.facs.org/cancer/index.html>.

The logo for CoC Flash, featuring the text "CoC Flash" in a bold, italicized, sans-serif font. The "CoC" is in a lighter blue color, and "Flash" is in a darker blue color. The logo is set against a dark blue background bar.

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