



# CoC Flash

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



**March 2006**

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## National Cancer Registrars Week April 3–7

Congratulations! The week of April 3–7 marks NCRA's annual recognition of Cancer Registrars Week. This year's theme, "Cancer Registrars...Advocates in Action," aptly describes the registry community's ongoing efforts and commitment to ensuring the collection of quality cancer data. The CoC congratulates cancer registrars across the country, and recognizes your commitment to cancer program management activities that promote the provision of high quality care.

## Welcome New CoC State Chairs

The College is pleased to announce the appointment of two new Commission on Cancer State Chairs:

- Marianne Lange, MD, FACS—Spectrum Health, Grand Rapids, MI
- Hubert Spears, MD, FACS—Baptist Memorial Hospital, Oxford, MS

The Committee on Cancer Liaison seeks a CoC State Chair for Puerto Rico and South Carolina. If you are interested or would like to recommend someone for this position, contact Kate Phair at [kphair@facs.org](mailto:kphair@facs.org).

## Additional Cancer Programs Earn Initial Approval in 2005

In the February issue of *CoC Flash*, the CoC recognized programs that received initial CoC approval of their cancer programs during 2005. Two facilities were inadvertently omitted from this list. They are:

- Marshall Hospital, Placerville, CA
- Fort Walton Beach Medical Center, Fort Walton Beach, FL

We regret the oversight, and congratulate these two programs along with the 21 other newly approved programs added during 2005.

## ***Cancer Program Standards 2004 Revised Edition is Available***

The revised edition of *Cancer Program Standards 2004* is now available for use by all CoC-approved cancer programs and facilities working toward approval. This revision incorporates all changes made to the standards since the original release of *Cancer Program Standards 2004*. In addition, it includes modified interpretations and requirements for pediatric facilities, pediatric components within larger facilities, Veterans Affairs (VA) facilities, and NCI-designated Comprehensive Cancer Centers. The revised edition replaces all previous publications, including *Cancer Program Standards 2004*, and is required for use in all programs beginning January 1, 2006.

### **Available in two formats:**

A **complimentary, electronic copy** is available online at <http://www.facs.org/cancer/coc/programstandards.html>.

A **published, hard copy** can be purchased online through the American College of Surgeons Publications Catalog at <http://www.facs.org/commerce/2004/catsplash.html>. The price is \$30.00.

## **Announcing the Upcoming Release of CoC Special Studies**

The CoC will release two special studies to programs in April. The two studies are:

- **Glioblastoma Multiforme: Relationship between Resection and Survival and Implications for Phase II Trial Design for Novel Surgically Implanted Agents**
- **Chemoradiation and Treatment of Nasopharyngeal Cancer**

The glioblastoma study will include the participation of 382 CoC-approved cancer programs, while the nasopharyngeal study will invite the participation of over 950 programs. Compliance with Standard 3.8 requires program participation in these studies, if requested.

Each cancer program asked to participate in one or both of these studies will be contacted via e-mail on April 17, 2006, and should expect to receive materials in the mail shortly thereafter. Communications will be directed to both the cancer registrar and the cancer liaison physician at each program. These materials will include:

- (1) A synopsis describing the study (both, if applicable) and the eligibility criteria for cases that are to be entered into the study(ies)
- (2) Instructions for completing the study(ies)
- (3) A list of the cases identified for inclusion in the study(ies)
- (4) A copy of the bubble form to be completed and returned **by mail** to the NCDB.

*(Additional bubble forms can be copied for recording your responses. All of these materials will be available on the Web at <http://www.facs.org/cancer/ncdb/registrars.html> on April 17.)*

Questions related to the studies can be sent to [NCDB@facs.org](mailto:NCDB@facs.org).

## **The Commission on Cancer 2006 and Beyond: Measuring the Quality of Your Cancer Care**

### **June 19–20, 2006, Chicago Hilton and Towers**

Come join us in June! A complete conference brochure is now available online describing the content

of this program, as well as providing hotel and transportation information. The two-day event focuses on delivering quality care and will feature topics including a look at CoC quality initiatives; the spectrum of supportive services available to patients and care givers; clinical trial participation and the delivery of quality care; and methods for making a cancer program more effective.

Targeted towards all cancer program team members, health care executives and administrators, quality managers, and payers, the conference will focus on the tangible means for measuring the level of quality care provided by a cancer program.

There are three easy ways to register— online, by fax, or by mail. For information go to our Web site at <http://www.facs.org/cancer/index.html>.

## Revised 2006 SAR Training Guide Available

The SAR Training Guide has been revised to correspond with the 2006 Survey Application Record (SAR). For your reference, it is now available online. "Survey Special Instructions" are included throughout the SAR Training Guide for programs preparing for survey in 2006. For this reason, the CoC recommends that all programs review this document before accessing the SAR for survey completion. The 2006 SAR Training Guide replaces the previous online version.

Several Web links to the SAR Training Guide are available to help you. They can be found on the:

CoC main menu at <http://www.facs.org/cancer/index.html>

Approvals Program menu at <http://www.facs.org/cancer/coc/sarguide.html>

CoC Datalinks Activity Menu (within the password-protected section of the Web site)

## Staging Information for Physicians and Registrars

The American Joint Committee on Cancer (AJCC) is *the* source for publications and tools to assist registry staff and clinicians with TNM staging. From slide presentations to posters and PDAs—the AJCC has a host of educational products to choose from.

Download these slide presentations **free of charge** from the AJCC Web site:

### Staging Moments

*Downloadable, site-specific case presentations to be used at your cancer conferences!*

### AJCC TNM Schema Slide Library

*Site-specific slide presentations for 44 of the sites contained in the AJCC Cancer Staging Manual. TNM, stage grouping, and pertinent survival data included.*

From Springer, order the new **AJCC Cancer Staging Atlas**, and be sure to review other useful resources available to those involved in the care of cancer patients, including:

### **AJCC Cancer Staging Manual**

### **AJCC Cancer Staging Handbook**

**Cancer Staging Forms for Microsoft Word**—customizable for your electronic health record!

**EZTNM for the AJCC Cancer Staging Manual**—PDA staging references at your fingertips!

And, finally, don't forget our *easy-to-understand* patient education brochure—**Cancer Staging: What You Need to Know**. Available in Spanish and English, this brochure explains cancer staging in a simple, non-clinical manner for patients, family, and caregivers.

Full product descriptions, costs, and ordering information, are available on the AJCC Web site at

<http://www.cancerstaging.org>.

## **Participate in Reliability Study of Multiple Primary and Histology Coding Rules**

Cancer registrars in CoC-approved cancer programs are invited and encouraged to participate in a reliability study that will test the proposed site-specific multiple primary and histology coding rules and five new data items. This study will be conducted through the SEER Web site, and will open for participants to code the *practice cases* at 8:00am Eastern time on Monday, April 10. The Web site will be open for participants to complete the *study cases* at 8:00am Eastern time on Monday, April 17. At 8:00am Eastern time on Monday, May 1, the study will close. Detailed information about participation is available below.

### **Study Participation Information**

Registration begins at 8:00am Eastern time on April 3, 2006 on the SEER Web site at [http://seer.cancer.gov/reliability\\_mph](http://seer.cancer.gov/reliability_mph).

### **Speaker Requests**

In light of other educational opportunities available from the CoC, we have suspended our formal Speakers Bureau as of June 2006. If, however, there is a topic that your registry group wishes to have presented that is not already available to individuals through our soon-to-be released Online Education Center or the numerous online educational resources of the AJCC, please contact Kelly Hecht at [khecht@facs.org](mailto:khecht@facs.org). Our staff will review requests on a case-by-case basis. If presentation material is available or we determine there is a broad need for education on the topic, we will try to arrange for a speaker to address the subject.

### **Senate Approves Amendments to Fund Cancer Research**

On March 15, the CoC issued a special edition of *CoC Flash* calling on you to help secure support for the SPECTER-HARKIN and FEINSTEIN-MIKULSKI amendments. These programs have been cut by \$7 billion, and the SPECTER-HARKIN amendment would restore health and education funding to the same levels they were two years ago. The FEINSTEIN-MIKULSKI amendment called for increases in the budgets for the NCI, the Comprehensive Cancer Control initiative, the National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program, and many other CDC cancer-specific programs.

On March 16, we were notified that the Senate voted 73 to 27 in favor of the SPECTER-HARKIN amendment. In addition, the Senate approved the FEINSTEIN-MIKULSKI amendment to provide an increase of \$390 million for cancer research and prevention programs in the FY '07 budget.

The House still needs to act, and final funding decisions won't be made until the fall. However, on behalf of One Voice Against Cancer (OVAC), we want to thank those CoC constituents who contributed to the passing of these amendments. The success of both puts the Senate on record as strongly opposing the President's cuts to cancer funding. Thank you for your support.

### **Instant Access to Frequently Used Registry Manuals**

Registry Plus Online Help (RPOH) provides online versions of current editions of *FORDS*, the SEER coding manual, the *Collaborative Staging and Coding Manual*, ICD-O-3, and other resources in an easy-to-use package provided free for download by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Division of Cancer Prevention and Control, Cancer Surveillance Branch. An updated version has just been released.

RPOH is an integrated and user-friendly, Windows-based Help system for abstractors and others who work with cancer data. The manuals within RPOH are cross-referenced, indexed, and hyper-

linked, making the information quickly and readily available to the user. The use of RPOH can reduce or actually eliminate the need to reference the manuals in hard copy form.

This new version can be accessed from <http://www.cdc.gov/cancer/registryplus/rpoh.htm>. If you have an earlier version of the program installed, follow the instructions on that page for updating it. If you do not have it installed, scroll down to "Download Online Help" and follow the instructions from there. When you have installed the program, a shortcut icon will be placed on your desktop to access the program.

## **Role of the Cancer Liaison Physician Web Conference**

Join us for the next Web conference to better understand the responsibilities of the Cancer Liaison Physician (CLP). All Web conferences are offered on Central Time (CT).

- Tuesday, April 4, 2006—9:00am to 10:00am
- Thursday, June 8, 2006—5:00pm to 6:00pm

These sessions last approximately 50 minutes and require 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 questions to Carolyn Jones at [cjones@facs.org](mailto:cjones@facs.org).

## **NEW Cancer Liaison Program Brochure**

Two copies of the newly revised Cancer Liaison Program brochure were recently sent along with a letter to all Cancer Committee Chairs in CoC-approved programs. The brochure describes the changes to the role of the CLP that were initially introduced to all cancer programs through *CoC Flash* in October 2005. (Subsequently, in November, CLPs were sent accompanying materials, including an executive summary of their role, a list of detailed strategies to assist them in their role, and a checklist of how to get started. These materials can also be downloaded from the Web site.)

For informational purposes only, Cancer Registrars in approved programs received a copy of the letter sent to the Cancer Committee Chairs, not the brochures.

Download the Cancer Liaison Program brochure from the Web site at <http://www.facs.org/cancer/coc/liaison.html> or order color-printed copies from the Publications and Services Catalog at <http://www.facs.org/commerce/2004/catsplash.html>.

For questions about the Cancer Liaison Program, contact Kate Phair at [kphair@facs.org](mailto:kphair@facs.org).

## **UICC World Cancer Congress 2006**

### **July 8-12, 2006, Washington DC**

By bringing together scientists, the medical community, and public health practitioners, the UICC World Cancer Congress will translate groundbreaking research into health care practices that work to fight cancer in diverse communities worldwide.

#### *Program Highlight: Cancer Research, Detection and Treatment*

Noted researcher Robert A Weinberg is slated to present on the biology of cancer and its future clinical implications.

A founding member of the Whitehead Institute and professor of biology at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Dr. Weinberg is a pioneer in cancer research who is most widely known for his discoveries of the first human oncogene, a gene that causes normal cells to form tumors, and the first tumor suppressor gene.

The evolving understanding of the molecular mechanisms that control cell proliferation and the formation of tumors serves as a foundation for a changing paradigm in the management of cancer. Dr. Weinberg will present his research in this area and will describe how advances in science and molecular biology apply to the next generation of clinical research and patient care advances. Dr. Weinberg's keynote will be the first contribution on July 11, in Track 1, which will focus on cancer research.

Early registration rate ends April 1, 2006. Register online today at <http://www.2006conferences.org/register.php>.

### **NAACCR Offers Collaborative Staging Workshop**

The North American Association of Central Cancer Registries (NAACCR) is presenting the "NAACCR Cancer Registry Data Collection and Management Institute" on May 23-24, 2006 in Boston, MA. The workshop will be hosted by the Massachusetts Cancer Registry. The workshop will focus on site-specific Collaborative Staging and is relevant for data collectors in both hospital-based and population-based cancer registries. The sites covered include corpus uteri, ovary, breast, lymphoma, head and neck sites, and lung. All Collaborative Staging data fields will be addressed.

You can register for the workshop on the NAACCR Web site at <http://www.naaccr.org>. A registration form, program agenda, and program description are provided. Class size is limited to 30 participants.

If you have any questions about this training, please contact Shannon Vann, CTR, NAACCR Program Manager of Education and Training, at [svann@naaccr.org](mailto:svann@naaccr.org) or (315) 682-6543.

### **In Remembrance**

It is with much sadness that we inform you that Dr. David K. King passed away on March 21, 2006 following a brief, but serious, battle with cancer. He was 65.

Dr. King served as a Commission on Cancer member representing the Association of Community Cancer Centers (ACCC) from 1994 through 2003. Dr. King was a long-standing member of the Committee on Approvals, and served as both the Chair of the Program Review Subcommittee and the Committee on Approvals during his tenure. Under his leadership, the 151 standards for cancer programs were revised to eliminate duplication, establish definitions for the standards and the compliance ratings, and focus on activities related to quality of care. This work culminated in the release of *Cancer Program Standards 2004* and the 36 standards and ratings in use today.

Dr. King was a leader in the cancer program at Banner Good Samaritan Medical Center in Phoenix, AZ where he held the role of Cancer Liaison Physician. He also served as the past President of the Arizona Division of the American Cancer Society.

His contributions and humor will be missed.

### **Did You Know...?**

You can download a free 20-minute video—"Promoting the Best in Cancer Care"—from the CoC Web site at <http://www.facs.org/cancer/index.html>. Learn what medical professionals and administrators from several CoC-approved cancer programs think are the benefits of being Approved by the CoC.

### **Spotlight on CoC Member Organization: Association of Oncology Social**

## Work (AOSW)

The Association of Oncology Social Work (AOSW) has been a member of the Commission on Cancer since 2003. The current representative is Virginia Vaitones, MSW in Tenants Harbor, ME.

Created in 1984 by social workers interested in oncology and by existing national cancer organizations, AOSW is an expanding force of psychosocial oncology professionals. Its mission is to advance excellence in the psychosocial care of persons with cancer, their families, and caregivers through (1) advocacy, (2) education, (3) networking, (4) research, and (5) resource development. Some of the ways the AOSW seeks to accomplish its goals are: increasing awareness of the psychosocial effects of cancer, advancing the practice of psychosocial interventions that enhance quality of life and recovery of persons with cancer and their families, fostering communication and support among psychosocial oncology care givers, and advocating for programs and policies to meet the psychosocial needs of oncology patients and their families.

We invite you to learn more about the AOSW and its programs by visiting its Web site at <http://www.aosw.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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto:coc@facs.org).

## Mission

The Commission on Cancer is a consortium of professional organizations dedicated to improving survival and quality of life for cancer patients through standard-setting, prevention, research, education, and the monitoring of comprehensive 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>.

**CoC Flash**

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