



Commission
on Cancer

Flash



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

November/December 2007

(Note: The November/December issue is the final CoC Flash for 2007)

The Commission on Cancer staff wishes you a happy and healthy holiday season.

Highlights for the Month:

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- Announcing New Surveyors and Consultants
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Special Study on Staging Now Open

On December 3, 2007, the Commission on Cancer (CoC) and American Joint Committee on Cancer (AJCC) released a special study on the "Impact of Neoadjuvant Therapy on Staging for Breast and Rectal Cancer Cases." The study focuses on the collection of clinical stage prior to neoadjuvant therapy and the extent of disease following neoadjuvant therapy/surgery to assess the degree of tumor response.

Participation in this study is required by select cancer programs accredited by the CoC, and will fulfill each facility's requirement for Standard 3.8. As with past CoC studies, information about the number of cases identified for the program, the submission date, and the program's response will appear in the Survey Application Record (SAR) for evaluation during the program's next survey.

Cancer registrars, cancer committee chairs, and cancer liaison physicians from facilities selected to participate were notified by e-mail on December 3. The study will close January 31, 2008, and will be applicable as a 2007 CoC special study. Results of the study will be reported in 2008. More information can be found at <http://www.facs.org/cancer/ncdb/specialstudies.html>.

Questions should be directed to the AJCC at AJCC@facs.org.

Changes to CoC Staging Requirements (Standard 4.3) Announced

The CoC recently released changes to the staging requirements that affect all CoC-accredited cancer programs. For complete details, please review the Special Announcement issued on December 3, online at <http://www.facs.org/cancer/cocflash/cocflash.html>.

Here is a brief summary of the changes:

Physician staging in the medical record is no longer required.

Each facility's cancer committee will develop and implement two processes:

1. Evaluate the accuracy of the Collaborative Stage derived stage.
2. Promote and document physician use of AJCC TNM Staging in treatment planning.

The clinical stage, as recorded by the physician or assigned by the registrar, will be recorded in the cancer registry abstract for all analytic cases.

The changes to the staging requirement affect Standards 4.3 and 2.10 as set forth in *Cancer Program Standards 2004, Revised Edition* and the AJCC TNM Staging data items outlined in *FORDS*. Replacement pages for these standards and data items are available at <http://www.facs.org/cancer/coc/standards.html>.

The Committee on Approvals is in the process of developing a new staging standard for implementation in 2009. The new standard will focus on the quality of physician staging and methods for effectively using AJCC TNM Staging in treatment planning. The Committee on Approvals will take action to approve the new standard during its meeting in May 2008. The new standard will be released in mid-2008, and revised pages for *Cancer Program Standards 2004, Revised Edition* will be made available online. This will enable programs to begin implementing the new standard during the second half of 2008, if desired.

A free Web conference explaining these changes will be offered on January 14, 2008, at 11am (ET); 10am (CT); 9am (MT); 8am (PT). Details regarding the program are posted online at <http://www.facs.org/cancer/coc/webconf8.html>. For questions, contact Asa Carter at acarter@facs.org.

Announcing New Surveyors and Consultants

The CoC is pleased to welcome the following new surveyors and consultants to our team for 2008.

Surveyors

- James R. Daniel, MD, FACS, surgeon from Fredericksburg, VA
- Thomas L. Eisenhauer, MD, FACS, surgeon from Hendersonville, NC
- Arnold H. Herman, MD, FACS, surgeon from Providence, RI
- Nick Sarap, MD, FACS, surgeon from Nashport, OH
- Stephen Seagren, MD, radiation oncologist from La Jolla, CA
- David P. Winchester, MD, FACS, surgeon from Evanston, IL

Consultants

- Sharon L. Metzger-Gaud, CTR, from Baltimore, MD
- Shirley Jordan-Seay, MSN, MEd., RN, CNA, BC, OCN, CTR, from Garfield Heights, OH
- Karen Monahan, MHA, CTR, from Middletown, NY
- Linda Jund, BS, CTR, from Orange, CA

More information about these individuals is available at <http://www.facs.org/cancer/coc/surveyresources.html>.

Call for 2007 CLP Outstanding Performance Nominations

The Cancer Liaison Physician (CLP) Awards Program recognizes outstanding performers who go above and beyond their regular scope of duties. The call for 2007 nominations is now open.

This year, we have implemented an electronic Nomination Form accessible online at <http://www.facs.org/cancer/coc/liaison.html> (we are no longer accepting forms via fax). All nominations must be received by March 31, 2008. Cancer program staff, state chairs, surveyors, and American Cancer Society staff may nominate a CLP for excellence in one or more of the following areas in 2007:

- Developed and/or implemented an idea(s) that improved the quality of care delivered at his/her facility
- Significantly contributed to the approval status of the cancer program
- Worked above and beyond normal CLP expectations to strengthen the cancer program
- Demonstrated leadership and support for cancer control activities in the community and with the ACS
- Served as a role model for other staff and exhibited characteristics that truly make him/her a physician champion for the cancer program

The Committee on Cancer Liaison and state chairs will review all submissions between May and June 2008, and award recipients will be notified by July 1, 2008. For more information about the nomination process, contact Carolyn Jones at cjones@facs.org.

Committee on Cancer Liaison Defines CLP Focus Areas

The Committee on Cancer Liaison has defined five priority areas for Cancer Liaison Physician (CLP) activity in 2007-2008. These focus areas include:

- Quality Improvement
- Advocacy
- American Cancer Society Partnership
- Clinical Trials
- Comprehensive Cancer Control

Drs. Greif and Bleznak, chair and vice-chair of the Committee on Cancer Liaison, recently hosted a Web conference highlighting specific activities CLPs could initiate within each focus area. The slide presentation along with audio is now available at <http://www.facs.org/cancer/coc/clpwebconferences.html>. A document defining the focus areas and provides more examples of activities to initiate is available at <http://www.facs.org/cancer/coc/liaison.html>.

We recommend that all CLPs who did not join this Web conference or attend the CLP Annual Meeting in New Orleans, log on and listen to this Web conference at your earliest convenience. This is useful information to share with your cancer committee and/or cancer program leadership.

Note: If the online version does not appeal to you, an additional Web conference on the CLP Focus Areas will be scheduled for January 16, 2008 at 6:00pm (ET); 5:00pm (CT); 3:00pm (PT). During this live program you will have the ability to ask questions.

For questions related to the CLP focus areas, please contact Kate Phair at kphair@facs.org.

CoC Issues Call for Abstracts

The CoC is now accepting abstracts for the 2008 Commission on Cancer Paper Competition. The competition is open to general surgery residents, surgical specialty residents, subspecialty residents, and oncology fellows in the United States. The papers should describe original research in cancer care in either: (1) basic laboratory research; (2) clinical investigation; or (3) quality of care/health services research.

Residents or cancer fellows should submit a structured abstract to the CoC by March 15, 2008. CoC state chairs will review the submitted abstracts by region and select a first-, second-, and third-place winner by July 15, 2008. The first-place winner from each of the 10 regions will move on to a national competition. First-, second-, and third-place winners of the national competition will be selected and notified by August 15, 2008.

First-place winning residents and/or fellows of the national competition will receive a \$1,000 award and present their abstract during the CoC Annual Meeting on Sunday, October 12, 2008, in San Francisco, CA. Second-place winners will be recognized at the Annual Meeting and will receive a \$500 award.

This competition has been funded by the CoC and by a memorial gift from Mrs. A. Lee Campione in honor of her late husband, Matthew P. Campione, MD, FACS.

For information, please see our Web site at <http://www.facs.org/cancer/cannews.html> or contact Carolyn Jones at cjones@facs.org.

New Features Added to I&R System

Several enhancements were recently made to the Inquiry & Response (I&R) System to help users navigate and easily find answers to their questions. More than 3,000 questions were submitted to the I&R in 2006, and we expect to reach or exceed that amount in 2007.

Three percent (3%), or about 90 individuals, submit 30 percent (30%) of the questions each year. That's more than 20 questions each. The average user submits five questions annually. For this reason, it is assumed that these enhanced search capabilities will be more effective in helping a user find an existing answer to their question and eliminate the need to submit a new question.

Here are the recent enhancements:

- Search categories have been broken out to clearly identify the topic you want to search— AJCC, Approvals, FORDS, Collaborative Staging, and SEER multiple primary and histology questions. In addition, users can search for questions and answers posted after a specified date.
- Two links have been added at the top of the search page which display: (1) a list of questions and answers that others have found useful, and (2) a list of the most recent questions and answers posted to the site.
- When you submit a question, we will now ask: (1) if you are from a CoC-accredited cancer program, and (2) which reference(s) was used by you to research the answer to the question you're submitting. The latter item is meant to encourage users to use their standard references before submitting a question. It will also help the CoC to identify areas where it may need to clarify, add, or expand the content of its publications or educational programs.
- Finally, when you submit a question, I&R will begin displaying the total number of questions you have submitted to the system in the given calendar year.

To access the I&R System, go to <http://web.facs.org/coc/default.html>. We hope you find these enhancements useful and we welcome feedback on site. Please direct comments to CoC@facs.org.

CoC 2008 Web Conference Series to Start in January

The CoC will debut a new, easier to use Web conference format in January 2008. We've listened to your comments and redesigned our program to meet your needs! For a small \$35 fee, you will now be able to do so much more.

- You'll have an easy to use a registration page to guarantee your spot.

- CME/CE's will now be available with each Web conference.
- You can watch at your convenience. It's your choice, register and watch the live presentation on the date scheduled OR register and watch the archived video up to 90 days later! Either way, the Web conference now fits *your* schedule.

Included in the 2008 Web Conference Series* will be:

January 15: Collaborative Staging: Stay on Top of the Latest Changes
 January 22: Ready, Set, Go! Preparing for Survey from the Surveyor's Perspective
 February 12: Tip Time: Strategies for Successful SAR Completion
 February 26: Navigating and Interpreting the NCDB Survival Reports
 March 11: Overcoming Barriers to Implementation of TQM/CQI
 May 6: Resolving Issues of Case Eligibility
 June 24: Comparative Reporting: Quality of Care Measures for Breast and Colorectal Cancers
 August 12: Get Ready! Preparing for the NCDB Call for Data

*More programs may be added as needed.

Information regarding registration, program content, and fees will be available on our Web site the first week of January. For questions, contact Tracy Rausch at trausch@facs.org.

CoC to Host National Forum on Cancer Care

On July 14–15, 2008, in Baltimore, MD, the CoC will host, "Coming Together 2008: A National Forum on Cancer Care in the United States." During this two-day event, the program will bring together leading researchers, advocates and policymakers to raise awareness of proposed health care legislation and regulatory initiatives that will affect cancer patient care, and to educate and strengthen the participation of the cancer care community in advocacy efforts related to these issues. Now, more than ever, it's time to get you, the cancer care community, involved in activities that will affect the future delivery of care to cancer patients.

Join us in Baltimore! More information about the program and registration will be available online in January.

Visit December Meeting Exhibits

The National Accreditation Program for Breast Centers (NAPBC) will be exhibiting at the following meeting in December:

San Antonio Breast Cancer Symposium
 Table Top Exhibit #12
 Staff attending: Cindy Burgin
 December 12-15, 2007
 Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center; San Antonio, TX

If you are attending this meeting, stop by the NAPBC booth to speak with Cindy Burgin, and see the materials the NAPBC has to offer.

New Member Representatives Appointed to AJCC

The American Joint Committee on Cancer is pleased to announce the appointment of the following individuals to membership on the AJCC during its annual meeting on September 29, 2007. Each person is a member organization representative.

Ermilo Barrera, MD—Glenbrook Hospital, Glenview, IL (American Cancer Society)
Alan G. Thorson, MD, FACS—Colon & Rectal Surgery, Inc., Omaha, NE (American Cancer Society)
Al B. Benson, III, MD—Northwestern University, Chicago, IL (American College of Physicians)
Mary Kay Washington, MD, PhD—Vanderbilt University Medical Center, Nashville, TN (College of American Pathologists)
Carolyn C. Compton, MD, PhD—National Cancer Institute, Bethesda, MD (National Cancer Institute)

Michael Bishop, MD, FACP—National Cancer Institute, Bethesda, MD (National Cancer Institute)
Sheila Prindiville, MD, MPH—National Cancer Institute, Bethesda, MD (National Cancer Institute)
Susan Sabatino, MD, MPH—Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Atlanta, GA (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)
Karen Ledford, RHIT, CTR—Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Atlanta, GA (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)

Collaborative Staging and Coding Manual Version 01.04.00 Available

Don't forget, the *Collaborative Staging and Coding Manual* Version 01.04.00 was released on October 31, 2007. If you haven't had a chance, be sure to review the changes. It may be downloaded and saved to your computer for use in daily abstracting. This new version includes, for the first time, Part I and Part II in the same file for ease of use. It has been set up so that you can add your own comments and highlights to various text. You can also type in a word or phrase to quickly locate a particular rule. Replacement pages are also available. The indexed version of the Collaborative Staging (CS) manual is now available for download at <http://www.cancerstaging.org/cstage/manuals.html>.

CS manuals and replacement pages can also be ordered from the National Cancer Registrars Association's Store, <http://www.ncra-usa.org/store/index.htm#pubs6>.

General questions regarding the CS release can be submitted to Donna Gress, RHIT, CTR, AJCC Technical Specialist at AJCC@facs.org. All technical and coding questions regarding CS should be submitted to the CoC's Inquiry and Response (I&R) System at <http://web.facs.org/coc/default.htm>.

AND remember, the CoC will offer a Web conference on these changes on January 15, 2008. See Web conference series information previously mentioned in this issue.

Implementing Evidence-based Interventions

Implementing an evidence-based health promotion program can seem like a daunting challenge, but it doesn't have to be. The National Cancer Institute's (NCI) Cancer Information Service Partnership Program partners with professionals interested in moving science into practice by utilizing two vital tools: Cancer Control P.L.A.N.E.T. and Using What Works: Adapting Evidence-Based Programs to Fit Your Needs.

Cancer Control P.L.A.N.E.T. is a Web site that provides access to data and research-tested resources that help physicians, planners, program staff, and researchers to design, implement, and evaluate evidence-based cancer control programs. P.L.A.N.E.T. stands for Plan, Link, Act, Network with Evidence-based Tools, and is accessible at <http://cancercontrolplanet.cancer.gov>. P.L.A.N.E.T. is a collaborative effort designed to provide access to data and resources for program planning. It is co-sponsored by the NCI, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the American Cancer Society (ACS), the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), and the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ).

Using What Works is a training course designed to assist health promoters and educators plan and adapt evidence-based programs. Such programs, also known as research-tested interventions, can be obtained from P.L.A.N.E.T. As some of the first public health professionals trained on Using What Works, the NCI's Cancer Information Service Partnership Program staff increase partners' knowledge about the use of evidence-based programs.

After completing Using What Works training, participants are able to choose and modify evidence-based programs to meet the unique needs of their audiences. Also, they will know how to evaluate their success.

For more information about Cancer Control P.L.A.N.E.T. and Using What Works and how to link these resources for comprehensive cancer control, locate your nearest Partnership Program by contacting the National Cancer Institute's Cancer Information Service at 1-800-4-CANCER (1-800-422-6237).

NCI Develops Web Site for Ductal Carcinoma In Situ (DCIS) Investigators

The Applied Research Program in the NCI's Division of Cancer Control and Population Sciences announces the launch of its new DCIS Web site, which is the product of a successful 2007 NCI-sponsored workshop on strategies for integrating tumor biology and population sciences. This site was created in an effort to facilitate collaborations and stimulate ideas among DCIS researchers, as well as encourage more rapid examination and discovery of promising biomarkers of diagnosis and prognosis at the population level. On this site, investigators will find important information, including:

- Challenges and priorities in DCIS research
- Funding opportunities
- Resources for collaboration
- Summaries and presentations from the workshop
- Selected reviews from the peer-reviewed literature

Please visit <http://appliedresearch.cancer.gov/dcis/> for more information.

Salary & Compensation Publication Now Available from NCRA

The NCRA announces the availability of its newest publication available through the NCRA's online Store. *Salary and Compensation Considerations for Cancer Registrars* derives data from an extensive workforce study completed by the NCRA and presents multiple charts and tables along with other information to help assess salary ranges and compensation values by various demographics, experience, and education. The publication is designed for both cancer registrars and cancer registry managers to better understand the dynamics and conditions of the cancer registry workforce and to make quality decisions on salary and compensation. The NCRA hopes this will lead facilities to improve their recruitment and retention policies for cancer registrars.

The 50-page publication is supplemented with a CD of additional resources, including:

- A collection of position descriptions
- Tips on resume development and interviewing
- Various skills building for professional development articles
- A copy of the NCRA 2006 Workforce Study's Executive Summary

To purchase, visit the NCRA Web site at <http://www.ncra-usa.org/store>.

Mark Your Calendar for NCRA's CTR Exam Prep Workshop

The NCRA will offer a CTR Exam Prep Workshop on February 9–10, 2008. If you plan to sit for the March 2008 CTR Exam and you are looking for a comprehensive CTR Exam Prep Workshop, then don't miss this opportunity. Space will be limited so mark your calendars and visit <http://www.ncra-usa.org/education/index.htm#workshops> to watch for location details and registration information.

Registration Open for NAACCR Webinar Series

Registration for individual Webinars in both the hospital and central registry series is now open. The schedule, topics, and registration can be accessed from the NAACCR Web site, <http://www.naacr.org>. The next central registry webinar, Melanoma Cancer Surveillance Data Collection, will be presented on December 13, 2007, and the next hospital registry Webinar, Hospital Cancer Registry Operations, will be presented for January 10, 2008. Recordings of all Webinars are also available for purchase.

NAACCR Seeks Executive Director

The North American Association of Central Cancer Registries, Inc., (NAACCR) is accepting applications for the position of Executive Director. NAACCR is a not-for-profit professional organization that develops and promotes uniform data standards for cancer registration; provides education and training; certifies population-based registries; aggregates and publishes data from

central cancer registries; and promotes the use of cancer surveillance data and systems for cancer control and epidemiologic research, public health programs, and patient care to reduce the burden of cancer in North America. Much of this work is accomplished through the volunteer efforts of its members.

The Executive Director (ED) oversees all technical and administrative operations, processes, and procedures necessary for the conduct of NAACCR business and activities, which can include budget planning and fund raising. The ED manages the human, financial, and physical resources of the organization, which includes day-to-day supervision of staff and operations of the NAACCR office. A major responsibility is consensus building among organizations, the public, and the community at large.

The successful candidate will have experience in epidemiology, management of cancer registry activities, and organization of collaborative biomedical research. Of particular interest are the candidate's achievements within professional or other collaborative organizations through participation in and leadership of goal-oriented groups and committees.

A search committee has been convened to review applications for the position and invite candidates for interviews. Salary is commensurate with experience. The position requires substantial travel. NAACCR is an equal opportunity employer. Please send a cover letter summarizing your interests and a CV, preferably by e-mail, for receipt prior to February 28, 2008 to: Susan T. Gershman, PhD, CTR; President, NAACCR; Massachusetts Cancer Registry; Department of Public Health; 250 Washington Street, 6th Floor; Boston, MA 02108-4619; Phone: (617) 624-5646; FAX: (617) 624-5695; E-mail: susan.gershman@state.ma.us.

Spotlight on CoC Member Organization: Society of Thoracic Surgeons (STS)

The Society of Thoracic Surgeons (STS) has been a member organization of the CoC since 1995. The current representative is Francis C. Nichols III, MD, FACS from Mayo Clinic in Rochester, MN.

Founded in 1964, the mission of STS is to enhance the ability of cardiothoracic surgeons to provide the highest quality patient care through education, research, and advocacy. The organization represents more than 5,400 surgeons, researchers, and allied health professionals worldwide who are dedicated to ensuring the best possible heart, lung, esophageal, and other surgical procedures for the chest.

We invite you to learn more about the STS and its initiatives and programs by visiting their Web site at <http://www.sts.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 a valid e-mail address. 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 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>.

For easy printing, a .pdf version of each issue is available online within 72 hours of the time Flash is distributed. Go to <http://www.facs.org/cancer/cocflash/cocflash.html>.

LEARN and EARN

The CoC's Online Education Center is available 24/7 to support your educational needs. Go to <http://www.facs.org/cancer/webcast/index.html> for more information. CE and CME credits are available.

SAVE the DATE

CoC to host "Coming Together 2008: A National Forum on Cancer Care in the United States," to be held July 14–15, 2008, in Baltimore, MD.



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