

February 4, 2015

Dear Cancer Program Leadership,

We would like to clarify the Commission on Cancer's (CoC's) policy regarding accredited facilities use of National Cancer Data Base (NCDB) survival reports obtained from the web-based survival reporting tool in CoC DataLinks and the Cancer Quality Improvement Program (CQIP) reports. The survival reports are intended for internal quality improvement purposes. Major findings from these reports should be reviewed at your facility's Cancer Committee meetings, and any interventions for improvement in quality of care should be recommended.

Some facilities have asked to publicly report their five year survival rates derived from the NCDB online survival tool or CQIP. The CoC's formal policy is to **not** permit public reporting of survival rates from CQIP or from the NCDB tools. Survival rates can differ from one facility to another for a variety of reasons, including differences in age distribution, co-morbidities and other clinical and biologic factors. Our internal assessment of survival revealed that most facilities' unadjusted survival rates are not significantly different from the survival rates for all CoC. Even fewer were statistically different after risk adjustment. Publishing unadjusted survival rates or risk-adjusted survival rates with or without confidence intervals and statistical interpretation can lead to erroneous conclusions. The CoC believes in complete transparency, and there are too many reasons comparative survival rates currently can be misleading.

In response to this, a new NCDB online survival tool will be available in the near future which will require users to agree to not publicly report their survival rates before they are allowed to run the survival application. **If your hospital website currently reports survival rates derived from the NCDB tools or CQIP, we request that you remove these rates from your website and any reference to comparisons of your facility with other CoC facilities.**

An announcement of the release of the new survival tool and the NCDB and CoC's policy on public reporting of any data the CoC holds copyrights for will be announced in an

upcoming *CoC Source* newsletter. The NCDB quality reports are designed to help your program work towards providing high quality cancer care. If you have any questions about the CoC survival reporting policy, please contact us at NCDBCcopyright@facs.org.

Sincerely,



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CC: Cancer Registrars, CoC Surveyors