

Cancer Registry..... - What is that?

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Faculty Disclosure

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I have no relevant financial relationship that would be considered a conflict of interest.

A cancer registry is an information system designed for the collection, storage, and management of data on persons with cancer.

Cancer Registries play a critical role in cancer surveillance, which tells us where we are in the efforts to reduce the cancer burden. Surveillance data may also serve as a foundation for cancer research and is used to plan and evaluate cancer prevention and control interventions.

Who uses registry data?

Health officials, researchers, hospital administrators, physicians and others use cancer surveillance data to answer questions like: Are we seeing more types of a certain cancer? Are we seeing less of another? Are people getting cancer at younger ages?

Cancer registries receive and collect data about cancer patients. There are two major types of cancer registries: population-based registries and hospital-based registries (Bryan Medical Center). Cancer registrars are the people who collect and report cancer data.

Population-based registries

Record all cases in a defined population (most frequently a geographical area such as a state or metropolitan area), with an emphasis on use of the data for epidemiology—the science used to find the causes of health outcomes and diseases in populations—and public health purposes. Population-based registries are designed to:

- determine cancer patterns among various populations or sub-populations
- monitor cancer trends over time
- guide planning and evaluation of cancer control efforts
- help prioritize health resource allocations
- advance clinical, epidemiological, and health services research

Hospital-based registries:

Maintain data on all patients diagnosed and/or treated for cancer at a particular healthcare facility. The focus of the hospital-based cancer registry is on improving patient care at that hospital. These registries also focus on administrative processes, clinical research, and professional education.

Cancer Registrars

Cancer registrars—also known as tumor registrars—are highly trained data management experts who collect and process cancer data. The primary responsibilities of the cancer registrar are to collect and consolidate accurate data on cancers diagnosed and/or treated within an institution or other defined population while making important decisions related to those activities – **ABSTRACTING.**

Cancer Registrars (cont.)

Cancer registrars' work goes far beyond simply collecting cancer data. They also work closely with physicians and other healthcare professionals, administrators, researchers, and healthcare planners to provide support for cancer program development, ensure compliance with reporting standards, and serve as a valuable resource for cancer information.

The journey of a colon cancer diagnosis, from initial biopsy to an accessioned and reported cancer in a hospital cancer registry.

- Casefinding
- Abstracting
- Reporting
- Follow - Up

CASEFINDING

The cancer registry staff work closely with the Pathology Department. Cancer registrars review EVERY pathology report. When they identify a malignancy, they check to see if the patient is already in their cancer registry data base, and if so, is this the same cancer? If so, they update the last date of contact and cancer status (**Follow-Up**). If this malignancy is NOT already in the data base, then the registrar will add the case to the registry data base, in this case a new colon cancer diagnosis.

ABSTRACTING

In our example of colon cancer, the initial diagnosis may come as a result of a screening colonoscopy. The patient may then go on to receive neoadjuvant chemotherapy and definitive surgery and with some cancers radiation therapy. All of this data, will be collected by the registrars, often taking 6 months or more - as therapy may take that long. Once they have all of the information on the patients disease and their treatment, all of this information will be entered into the cancer registry data base (**ABSTRACTING**) .

Abstracting (cont.)

That information will then be collected (Reporting) by the State Cancer Registry, who will use it for state reports and also report it to National Registries. The registry will also send data on its own to other repositories, such as NCDB (National Cancer Data Base).

Lifetime FOLLOW-UP

From the date of diagnosis on, the patient will be followed by the registry (Follow-Up) at required intervals to maintain survival data. This goes on for the rest of the patients life. There are some occasions when patients move and leave no forwarding information and those individuals are “Lost to Follow-Up”. In our example of colon cancer, the registry will send letters to the patients PCP or Gastroenterologist for follow-up information.

What training does a cancer registrar receive?

Currently there are several programs offering cancer registry training. Once prerequisites are met the curriculum is generally around 24 months including an extensive practicum. At the conclusion of the program the candidate may sit for the certification exam. If the exam is passed they will become **CERTIFIED TUMOR REGISTRARS (C.T.R's)**

If you would like additional information on the profession, please contact me.

Thank you!

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