

CTR CONTINUING EDUCATION HOURS

It's that time of year again. For those of you who passed your CTR exam in an odd year, the current cycle ends on December 31st. The submission deadline for CE Summary Forms in January 31st.

For those of you who attended the NAACCR-sponsored webinars, extra copies of the CE certificates are available for your files. Please contact Kara Lockett at (602) 542-7592 or locketk@azdhs.gov.

You may find detailed instructions for completing and submitting the necessary forms at <http://www.ncra-usa.org/certification/maintenance.htm>

CHANGES TO TNM STAGING REQUIREMENTS ISSUED BY COMMISSION ON CANCER

The American College of Surgeons' Commission on Cancer (CoC) issued a revision to their requirement that "Staging appropriate to the category is assigned by the managing physician, or other approved medical professional, and is recorded in a standardized location in the medical record for 90% of eligible annual analytic cases." (Standard 4.3). The College made the decision to change the standard based upon the conclusion that it was not achieving its intended effect of using staging to plan patient care, because stage was often recorded long after treatment was actually provided.

Pathologic staging information is considered to be adequately collected by the Collaborative Staging items. Therefore, physician-assigned pathologic TNM staging will no longer be required to be collected. If Pathologic T, N, M, and/or Stage Group are available, the National Cancer Database recommends that they also be coded in the registry along with the relevant Descriptors and Staged-by items.

Clinical T, N, and M, Stage Group, Descriptors, Staged-by, and TNM edition will be required to be collected based on pre-treatment information. Registrars are encouraged to record physician-assigned clinical items where they are available. But where that information is not available, registrars will be required to assign the clinical items listed above based on information available in the patient record.

WHAT THE CHANGES MEAN FOR CoC NON-APPROVED PROGRAMS

The ACR has never required that AJCC staging be performed by a physician, and so this update does not impact ACR requirements.

WHAT THE CHANGES MEAN FOR CoC APPROVED PROGRAMS

The change will impact College-approved programs or programs that are seeking approval. Beginning with cases diagnosed January 1, 2008, registrars will no longer be required by the CoC to copy physician-assigned AJCC staging into the registry abstract. Cases diagnosed prior to 1/1/2008 are not affected. Cancer committees will need to put the following processes in place:

- Set the required accuracy rate for the Collaborative Stage derived through the collection of the Collaborative Stage data items
- Annually evaluate the accuracy of the Collaborative Stage derived stage
- Correct the information recorded in the Collaborative Stage data items to obtain a correct derived stage
- There must be a process to promote and document physician use of AJCC Staging in treatment planning.

FOR BOTH APPROVED AND NON-APPROVED PROGRAMS

The CoC has issued temporary replacement pages for FORDS 2007 manual pages 20-21, 112-123, 289, 290, 295-297. Please add these pages to your manual for the sake of consistency. You may download the pages from <http://www.facs.org/cancer/coc/fordsmanual.html>, under the "Update 2008" heading. The ACR will issue new labels for the replacement pages. The content of the labels will remain the same.

Minor edits modifications are being developed to handle the changes in data requirements. It is anticipated that these will be distributed in the same package containing the necessary edit changes for the new CS version (01.04.00). The following edits are affected. (They will be altered to allow *TNM Path Stage Group* and *TNM Path Staged By* to be blank after 2007. All other pathologic TNM items are already allowed to be blank.).

- Primary Site, AJCC Stage Group - Ed 6, ICDO3 (COC)
- TNM Clin Stage Group, TNM Path Stage Group (COC)
- TNM Edition, TNM Clin Stage, TNM Path Stage (COC)
- TNM Path Staged By (COC)
- Hematopoietic, TNM, ICDO3 (NAACCR)
- Lymphoma, TNM, ICDO3 (NAACCR)

For complete information on the update, read the *Flash: Special Announcement* dated December 3rd. You may find this at <http://www.facs.org/cancer/cocflash/standard4.3flash120307.pdf>

CTR EXAM PREPARATION WORKSHOP

The NAACCR CTR Exam Readiness Webinar Series will help you and/or your staff prepare for the March 2008 Certification Exam for Cancer Registrars. The NAACCR CTR Exam Readiness Webinar offers real-time interactive instruction with a live instructor in a small group setting. The course includes seven 2-hour sessions carefully prepared to reflect the changes to the [2008 CTR Exam](#); a timed practice exam and a short follow-up post exam session.

Due to budget constraints, the ACR will not be sponsoring this series. However, it is available to interested individuals or facilities who have available funding. The cost for the course is \$400. This includes “live” lectures presented by experienced instructors, Q&A sessions, study materials, quizzes and a timed practice test.

Please note that the eligibility requirements for the 2008 CTR Exam have changed. Route 1 now requires a minimum two years full-time (24 months or 3,900 hours) or equivalent experience in the Cancer Registry field and a passing grade (not audited) in two semesters (3 quarters) of college-level courses in Human Anatomy and/or Physiology. Exam content and information concerning eligibility routes can be found at ctrexam.org.

You may find a syllabus and a registration form at NAACCR.org. Lists of study resources as well as technical requirements are listed on the course syllabus. For additional information please contact Shannon Vann, CTR at svann@naaccr.org or Jim Hofferkamp, CTR at jhofferkamp@naaccr.org.