

The Criterion



California Cancer Registry

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Donald Gleason, M.D. dies at 88.

[Click to read the full story.](#)

Resourceful Registrars

- Registrars should submit their 2009 cases as soon as their vendor provides the 2009 software update.
- Monthly visual editing reports. In addition to being a communication tool, the discrepancy reports are also an educational tool. We would like to hear how you have used these reports to improve your abstracting skills.

Educational Opportunities

- May 11, 2009: DSCSP Educational Symposium, Loma Linda. Contact: ndyke@llu.edu

About This Issue by Katheryne Vance, BA, CTR

The second issue of The Criterion focuses on the importance of documentation in abstracting valid and quality data in the article Lost In Translation. I would like to acknowledge SEER's Quality Control staff in providing some of the educational materials contained in You Say Transitional, I Say Urothelial; it is written to further clarify the MP/H Ureter, Renal Pelvis, and Bladder rules.



New to this issue is Chirps, a compilation of notations from the DSQC staff and the regional visual editors. Another addition is a listing of educational opportunities open to registrar attendance.

Enjoy the read.

You Say Transitional, I Say Urothelial

What causes so many cancers of the urinary tract? The lining of the urinary tract (urothelium) is exposed to carcinogens from the renal pelvis to the urethra. As a result, the urothelium may start to break down and develop multicentric or multifocal tumors in the different organs. Two possible causes for breakdown of the urothelium have been proposed: the Field Effect and Implantation.

The Field Effect theory suggests that carcinogenic changes have altered the epithelium rendering it more susceptible than "healthy" tissue to developing malignant tumors. The field effect is also called "field defect" or "regional diathesis".

The Implantation theory proposes that multiple tumors are the result of tumor cells that have been shed from an original tumor higher in the urinary tract. The tumor cells then attach to the urothelium in a different site and begin to grow. Implantation is sometimes called "seeding".

- April 14, 2009: The 19th Annual CSP Educational Symposium, Los Angeles, Contact: mking@usc.edu
- May 31-June 3, 2009: NCRA 35th Annual Conference, New Orleans, LA. Contact: registration@ncra-usa.org
- June 13-20, 2009: NAACCR 2009 Annual Conference "Charting the Course to a New World In Cancer Surveillance" Westin San Diego, San Diego. Contact: www.naaccr.org
- October 19-20, 2009: CCRA Annual Meeting, San Diego. Contact: jarmstrong@ucsd.edu

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Prior to 2007, primary sites of the urinary tract cancers were grouped based on ICD-O codes. The MP/H rules group sites of the urinary tract based on function and histology. The renal pelvis, ureters, bladder, and urethra (including the prostatic urethra) all have internal epithelium lined with the same type of cells - transitional cells - preferably called urothelium. The functions of these organs are similar, and therefore these organs are considered as a group for the MP/H rules. The term urothelial carcinomas has been preferred since 1998 when the WHO and the International Society of Urologic Pathologists first promoted the terminology.

Urothelial cancer is further classified by growth pattern; they can be flat or papillary. Papillary tumors are wart-like and attached to a stalk. Non-papillary (flat, sessile, or solid) tumors are most often associated with in situ and are usually more invasive. [Click Here](#)

Remember:

- Non-papillary means flat, sessile, or solid
- Non-papillary = transitional cell
- Flat transitional cell, flat urothelial, in situ transitional cell, and in situ urothelial are synonymous terms
- Transitional = urothelial
- Urothelium = transitional epithelium

Upon review of the types of questions received and visual editing discrepancies, MP/H rules M6, M7, and M8 require review and clarification. Follow the link to view these rules. [Click Here](#)

The following SINQ's help clarify rules M6, M7, and M8. [Click Here.](#)

Lost In Translation

During the early years of quality improvement activities in healthcare there was a saying that "if it was not documented in the medical record, it did not happen". Physicians complained, whined, boycotted committee meetings, and slipped through the hospital halls hoping to go unnoticed by the Director of Medical Records (today's Director of Health Information). They felt that because they were physicians they should not be questioned with regard to the lack of their documentation in the medical record. After all, they knew what they did with regard to patient care! An analogy can be made about registrars and abstract documentation. The statement "I would not have coded it that way, if that was not what I meant" has been part of many conversations.

Wikipedia states documentation "may refer to the process of providing evidence". In other words abstracting is an evidenced based process. As Dr. Gil Grissom on CSI: Crime Scene Investigation states: "The facts never lie". Standardized data collection through uniform coding is one method of this evidenced based process. Providing justification of codes through text is necessary to assure that the information is valid and accurate. Text documentation is used in the following areas:

- Defensive abstracting
- Unusual occurrences
- Edit check verification

- Recoding audits
- Researcher use
- Facility use
- Re-abstraction of historical data

At the CCR, text documentation is a vital part of the visual editing of submitted abstracts. Registrars who would like to improve their abstracting quality and improve their accuracy rates have asked the following questions: [Click here to see the questions.](#)

Chirps!

Our contemporary world has instant messaging, text messaging, blogs, and twitters. Not to be outdone, The Criterion has Chirps! Chirps are observations, comments, and notations that are being passed along with the goal that these chirps are incorporated into abstracting styles. Think of these as friendly reminders, or chirps.

[Chirps!](#)

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