

The Criterion



California Cancer Registry

July, 2009 - Vol 2, Issue 2

In This Issue

Clues to the Cancer Riddle

Is Your Abstract Patient-Friendly?

Why is Death Clearance So Important?

Chirps!

Editorial Board

Katheryne Vance - Editor
Viccel Belen - Assistant Editor

The Criterion Advisors
Karen Homan - Region 1/8, NCCC
Crickett Dyke - Region 5, Desert Sierra CSP
Michelle King - Region 9, CSP
Cynthia Creech - CCR
Winnie Roshala - CCR

SEER*Rx - Interactive Drug Database

Version 1.3.0 released May 1, 2009
[Link to SEER Rx Update Information](#)

CNExT 1.9.1 Correction Records

In CNExT 1.9.1, the Reason for Change dialog has a cleaner look and a new button. Click on the Mark NCDB button if the field was changed in order to satisfy an NCDB edit. As before, when the correction was made based on information from the region, click on the Mark REGION button. Any correction marked with either of these two reasons will not be transmitted to the region.

New Casefinding List for 2009 in Volume I, Appendix K

The html version is posted to the

About This Issue by Katheryne Vance, BA, CTR

Cancer Registrars have been collecting information on sex for every case report since the beginning of cancer registries. In *Clues to the Cancer Riddle*, Dr. John Morgan, Epidemiologist at the Desert Sierra Cancer Surveillance Program (Region 5), provides us with some understanding why this long-standing data item remains a critical piece of epidemiological information.



Were you aware that the abstract you prepare for case submission can be disclosed to the patient upon their request? Yes, indeed! Dr. Dennis Deapen, Director of the Los Angeles Cancer Surveillance Program (Region 9), thoughtfully reminds us that case abstracts may be viewed by patients in the article *Is Your Abstract Patient-Friendly?*

The regions and the CCR are in the midst of annual death clearance activities. Cynthia Creech, Unit Chief, Data Collection, describes why the CCR performs death clearance and why facilities become involved in the process of death clearance follow-back. *Why Is Death Clearance So Important?* contains two links, so be sure to click on the questions and answers link for responses to common questions registrars have asked about death clearance.

Also in this edition, you will find *Chirps!*, educational opportunities, *SEER*Rx update information*, and a *CNExT announcement*.

On behalf of the CCR, I would like to thank you for all the work you have done in assisting the CCR in

CCR web site and the PDF version will be posted shortly. This new list is for cases diagnosed 1/1/09 forward.

Educational Opportunities

October 19-20, 2009: CCRA Annual Meeting, San Diego. Contact: Jan Armstrong, [E-Mail](#)

December 9, 2009: SCCRA Annual Meeting, Hoag Memorial Hospital, Newport Beach. Contact: Stephanie McClure, [E-Mail](#)

Quick Links

[California Cancer Registry](#)
[California Department Public Health](#)
[Public Health Institute](#)

[Join Our Mailing List!](#)

obtaining the NAACCR Gold Standard for certification presented at the annual meeting of the North American Association of Central Cancer Registries on June 17, 2009, in San Diego. The CCR could not accomplish this honor without the high quality data provided by cancer registrars. You are golden to us!

This issue marks Viccel Belen's last issue as Assistant Editor. Vic has been the person that worked magic with the layout, design, and files for *The Criterion* this past year. Vic is staying with the CCR and moving over to the CNExT Unit to work on electronic pathology reporting. Thank you Vic for all you have done for *The Criterion!*

Clues to the Cancer Riddle by John Morgan, DrPH

All prostate and testis cancers occur in males, while malignancies of the ovary, corpus uterus, and cervix uteri afflict only females. The reasons for these differences are so obvious that no explanation is required. But does sex matter for other cancers? Epidemiologists have described a simple pattern that is as predictable as it is perplexing. When data for all cancer types are combined, males consistently experience higher age-adjusted risk of cancer than females.

[Open Main Article: Clues to the Cancer Riddle](#)

Is Your Abstract Patient-Friendly? by Dennis Deapen, DrPH

California's cancer reporting regulations furnish great detail on what data are to be included in the report and how they are to be coded. However, there are some areas where an abstractor can be creative, such as text fields. As you can imagine, use of these fields varies considerably. Some abstractors have a lot to say and some, very little. Some never met an abbreviation they didn't like and some need to buy a vowel or two. And some may believe that the only other people who will ever see the abstract are cancer registry professionals.

[Open Main Article: Is Your Abstract Patient-Friendly?](#)

Why Is Death Clearance So Important? by Cynthia Creech

The California Cancer Registry (CCR) along with all incidence registries is always concerned about completeness of case reporting. We are aware that not all patients with a diagnosis of cancer are seen in a hospital, and that not all physicians who diagnose and treat these patients are aware of their obligation to report this information. In addition, patients seen in hospitals are sometimes missed, either because of miscoding, or simply by chance. For these reasons and more, it is a standard of both the CDC's National Program of Cancer Registries and the NCI SEER Program that central registries perform death clearance.

"Death clearance is an integral part of data quality in incidence cancer registries, and a high proportion of Death Clearance Only (DCO) cases is an important indicator of poor registry data quality. In addition, DCO cases contain limited information on the patient and the cancer and are routinely excluded from research studies. The annual Death Clearance efforts in California

have consistently resulted in a low percentage of DCO cases in California, a clear indication of quality data, and an important contribution to research."

-Rosemary Cress, DrPH
Unit Chief, Cancer Epidemiology Research Unit

[Open Main Article: Why is Death Clearance So Important](#)
[Open Frequently Asked Questions](#)

Chirps!

Chirps are observations, comments, and notations that are being passed along with the goal that registrars will apply these chirps to their abstracting styles. Think of these as friendly reminders, or chirps.

[Chirps!](#)

[Forward email](#)

✉ **SafeUnsubscribe®**

This email was sent to dcurran@ccr.ca.gov by vbelen@ccr.ca.gov.

[Update Profile/Email Address](#) | Instant removal with [SafeUnsubscribe™](#) | [Privacy Policy](#).

Email Marketing by

