



FALL NEWSLETTER



PR & COMMUNICATIONS

Stay Connected

If you would like to help with this newsletter, either as an editor or contributor, please email us:

TRAC@trac-ct.org

Our Organization's Website

www.trac-ct.org

Follow us on Facebook! Our page is public and has 40 likes with 42 followers.

EDUCATION

Annual Educational Meeting

Featuring Louanne Currence on topics using the new coding manuals, coding Breast and Lung cases in 2018. There will be an ornament exchange as well as raffles. We will have a business meeting to discuss annual topics like dues and fees. Pre-registration is required.

MEMBERSHIP

2019 Membership Drive

It's that time of year!

Renew your membership or become a member with our Annual Membership Drive. It's easy and there is great benefit from being an active member.

MIDTERM STATE ELECTIONS

**your VOTE
is your VOICE**

Remember to VOTE on NOV 6th. We have the opportunity to choose who we want as our Governor and Lieutenant Governor. Did you know there are 5 sets of candidates? Beyond that, we are choosing a Secretary of State, an Attorney General and the CT General Assembly. This is a BIG election. Besides selecting your candidates, you will be asked about the Special Transportation Fund and the regulation of how our state manages its real property.

President's Message

Brooke Chang, BA, CTR

You Are Powerful. In the face of challenge be strong, be courageous and always try to be kind. But also, be proactive and learn as much as you can. This will better equip you to overcome challenges when change happens. I was fortunate enough to attend the annual CRANE meeting this year. There were plenty of presentations on the new manuals. The keynote speaker this year was from the American College of Surgeons COC, Dr James Frank. He was asked to speak on Standards related to using the data we collect for Quality Studies that could in turn result in Quality Improvement.

Drivers in our industry (our administrators and accrediting organizations) want us to help, but not too much. That was the message I received from the keynote speaker, Dr. James Frank, at the CRANE annual meeting this year. He tried his best to convey that although you hold the data and the knowledge to supply that data, what we do with it is not a registrar's responsibility. Our specialty is in curating the most relevant and complete information of a patient's care in the diagnosis and treatment of cancer. It is up to administrators and clinicians on how they use that data to drive change. We hold the keys to the vault, so to speak. Please don't misconstrue the message. If we have ideas or opinions, we should be comfortable in sharing them. However, we need to share the weight of our organization's endeavors. Highlight your ability to stay organized and communicate effectively. Earn respect from your professional counterparts by allowing leaders the opportunity to best leverage the data you expertly supply.

Own what is yours, the quality of the data you supply, whether it be to the COC or to the data collectors. Strive to be the best at what you do and encourage others to do the same. "Knowledge is Power" and how we use and share our knowledge sets us apart as leaders and role models. Be a leader in your career. Get involved. Take opportunity when it presents itself. Volunteer, you will learn more by doing and showing others what you think you know. This year has definitely had its challenges. Next year is looking just as tough with the delay in the release of changes by our standard setters and the expectation we will all do more with less. Even so, overcome the challenges, resource to each other and don't be afraid to share what you learn. We are all human before we are anything else.

I hope to see you all soon.

-Brooke

"Gaining knowledge, is the first step to wisdom.

Sharing it, is the first step to humanity." –Unknown

It's coming...

We've all been told this a time or two in this past year. But really, software vendors are working to get the latest version out to us all. Some registrars from Yale were able to participate in the Alpha-testing for Metriq®. It won't be too much longer before it's released. The developers want to ensure the software works for its users!





THANK YOU to all who helped with the TRAC basket for CRANE this year. We included several items from Staehly Farm & Winery in East Haddam, some Bigelow Tea from Fairfield, local honey from Lisbon, and a UCONN T-shirt.

Vice President's Message

Sheri Amechi, CTR

I have been working to complete the application for credits for our November Educational meeting. We are hoping to earn 6.5 CE's for this meeting. The registration deadline is Friday November 9, 2018. Please mail your completed form with payment to our Treasurer, Michele, payment made payable to TRAC, Inc.

NCRA Mentorship Program

I joined the NCRA Mentorship program and attend a monthly call. We discuss ways to help students gain a mentor and recruit other CTRs who may want to be a mentee. Through the Mentor program I was introduced to the Independent Clinical Advisor Program (ICA Program) which is a virtual practicum to help students get 40 of the required 160 hrs. I am currently working with a student from Florida. SEER Educate is utilized for case finding and abstracting modules. I encourage other CTRs across our state to participate. This is a great way to keep updated on coding and put rules into practice.

If you have questions about the ICA Program, contact Mary Maul at mmaul@ncra-usa.org.

WEBSITE <http://www.ncra-usa.org/Education/Independent-Clinical-Advisor-ICA-Program>

I've kept a quote on my wall since the 2018 changes.

"It's all about finding the calm in the chaos." -Donna Karan

From the Treasurer's Desk

Michele Wojewodzki, CTR

There are 20 people registered for this year's Annual Meeting. Please register as soon as possible.

Membership Drive

The membership drive will commence following our Annual Meeting. Membership Forms will be made available following the annual business meeting and by email. We will be accepting 2019 TRAC Membership provided there are no changes to fees after the annual business meeting.

I keep a quote with me at work shared years ago by Mary Drago.

“Well behaved women rarely make history.”

REMEMBER

There will be an ornament exchange at the Annual TRAC Meeting this year.



TRAC Inc Annual Meeting is Friday November 16, 2018.

You must pre-register.

Past President's Message

Donna Lanphear, BA, CTR

Please share my thanks for cards and the contribution to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital in memory of my mother made in September. It was especially meaningful as September was Childhood Cancer Awareness month. Also, thank you for the gift received in August this year.



I have decided to scale back next year. I am done volunteering with NCRA. I may even cut back on my travels across the country. I want to spend my time really enjoying life on the west coast. I hope all is well in CT, I plan to return to the state for the Thanksgiving and Christmas.

"THE ROAD NOT TAKEN"

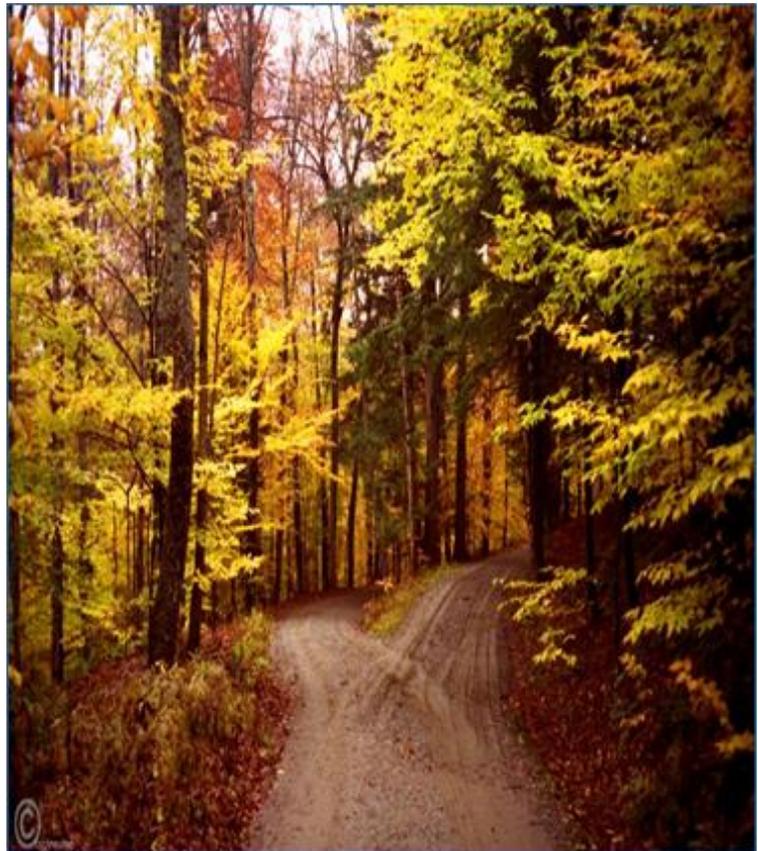
ROBERT FROST

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth.

Then took the other, as just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim,
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
Though as for that the passing there
Had worn them really about the same.

And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black.
Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, And I--
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.



FROM THE STATE

IARC Project

A message from Cathy Phillips, CT Tumor Registry:

The Connecticut Tumor Registry (CTR) has agreed to partner with researchers at the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) to examine recurrences of breast cancer in women, and most specifically, metastatic recurrence. Population based information on recurrences after initial diagnosis is typically scarce, and although the CTR has collected this information since 2004, we are aware of its incompleteness. In order to characterize the limitations of our recurrence data, we are asking that you complete a short survey regarding collection and reporting of recurrence data. We would like to thank you in advance for your responses and support in this endeavor. Please try to submit a response for each question.

The survey link is: [Connecticut Tumor Registry- Recurrence Survey](#)

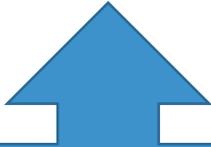
If anything is unclear and you have questions, please contact

Lou Gonsalves, Ph.D.

lou.gonsalves@ct.gov

Cathryn Phillips, CTR

cathryn.phillips@ct.gov



DID YOU KNOW? This study is the first of its kind! The study is aimed at comparing information obtained from registries in Canada, Ireland, the Netherlands and Norway, and the USA. Connecticut was selected as the only US registry to participate. Every facility should take a moment to complete this survey. More participation is better than less and it's ok if more than one person from a given facility responds.

WEBSITE <https://portal.ct.gov/DPH/Tumor-Registry/CTR-Home>

NAACCR

There is an extensive series of slide presentations and webcast recordings related to the implementation of the 2018 coding rules and guidelines. Have you seen them? These are FREE and can be accessed at your convenience.

WEBSITE <https://education.naacr.org/2018-implementation>

SEER

SEER*Educate

Home 2018 Coding Exercises are now available. SEER*Educate has made 30 practice cases available in groups of 5. This new content is available from the Training Menu in the Practical Application section. NCRA awarded 2.25 CEs for each set of 5 cases, and these were approved as Category A.

Log in or sign up at SEER*Educate today by visiting <https://educate.fhcrc.org/> and Learn by Doing!



COC Cancer Program News

2019 Call for Data

Due to the many changes and implementation delays in 2018, the NCDB 2019 Call for Data schedule will be adjusted to allow software vendors time to install v18 for their customers and registries an opportunity to catch up with abstracting the new data items and resubmit RQRS cases. At this time, the 2019 Call for Data is scheduled for April 1–June 30, 2019, and both NAACCR v16 and v18 layouts will be accepted for submission.

RQRS is being replaced

As the NCDB prepares to roll out the Rapid Cancer Reporting System (RCRS) with our new technology partner IQVIA next year, we continue to build out the needed technological infrastructure to support this new system. RCRS will replace RQRS and other NCDB tools while introducing a single source of data submission for all of our hospital registries. RQRS has been down recently as some of these new development efforts have been integrated and tested.

The NCDB is looking for programs that would like to be part of the pilot project for our new reporting structure (RCRS). Cases submitted to RCRS will include all disease sites and years, and will display the NCDB reporting tools in real time. We are currently compiling a list of volunteers, and if you would like to be part of the pilot project, please email us at ncdb@facs.org, and we will add you to the list.

WEBSITE <https://www.facs.org/quality-programs/cancer/news/corner-store-101618>

NCCN

From the NCCN publication *Oncology Times* [Oncology Times: NCCN Previews New Policy Initiative to Address Changes in Cancer Care](#) (10/20/2018) This article discusses how stakeholders are “to address realities and opportunities of changing paradigms in cancer care delivery.” As a result of the changing paradigms, organizations are having to start with baseline data and find a way to get access to or deliver “innovative treatments, team based coordinated care, delivery of that care under a value based payment model, and address shortages and diversity in the cancer care workforce.”

Linda Weller-Newcomb, PhD (Lahey Health Cancer Institute), who presented at the annual CRANE meeting this year, shared an example: Implementing the Oncology Care Model (OCM). This endeavor required a huge overhaul in infrastructure. She identified key stakeholders in the “OCM” as the patients, the providers, and the payers (primarily CMS). The message was clear, the long term benefit outweighs the upfront cost to implement change. Even early on we are able to see a reduction of cost by reducing unplanned re-admissions, a way to help manage drug costs and a benefit to end of life palliative care. There are improvements in communication with all the stakeholders as well as improvements in experiences and outcomes.

Why does this matter and how does it relate to cancer registry? The registry data is highlighted in the process! The registry data alongside operational data is used in conjunction with billing information. Key pieces of data we collect include diagnosis date, current clinical status, cancer stage, and disease specific data like tumor markers, grade, histology, etc. Then quality measures are set in place and used to monitor the quality of care for performance based payments. Stay tuned, because value based care is only going to expand.

2018 TRAC Social Event

Thank you all who participated in the survey. We had about 17 people respond. Despite the interest there were not many who attended. I was very happy to spend the afternoon with Mary Jeanne Pierce. We shared a meal, did some fun seasonal activities and even found some items to include in the CRANE basket. I hope to see more participation and interest in the future.



Condolences

TRAC would like to extend our sympathy to Jaci Hood, CTR on the recent loss of her grandchild. Although she is not a current member, Jaci was a TRAC member in the past and worked with several facilities in our state. She contracts with Precyse.

THANK YOU

Judy Keating, CTR

Dear TRAC Friends,

Thank you so much for the generous donation to the Smilow Cancer Hospital in honor of my brother. We are so appreciative of the care he received there. Your cards and emails meant so much to me as well. I'm sure we've all lost someone we love to this terrible disease and being able to share in each other's joys and sorrows is what makes each of you so special. I know we are contributing to the fight against this terrible disease. Keep up the good work!

Peace,

Judy