

OTHER METHODS

Other methods for identifying reportable cancer cases can be developed to assure complete case reporting. Since the patient's medical record is the primary source of information, arrangements should be made so the appropriate charts can be routed to the personnel responsible for reporting. These charts could be stamped and placed on a shelf marked for Tumor Registry review.

Pathology

The pathology department reports must be routinely checked. The best procedure is to have a copy of ALL pathology reports routed to the personnel responsible for reporting. All pathology reports (both positive and negative) must be reviewed by the reporter to ensure all eligible cases are identified. The reporter should request that all cytology, hematology, bone marrow biopsies, and autopsies be included. Both computerized and manual methods of reviewing pathology reports must include a way to track reports to ensure that every report has been included in the review. Facilities that send all pathology specimens to outside labs should keep a log of all specimens, to include date sent out, date received, and the diagnosis. The reporter should be given a copy of all reports.

Radiation Oncology

For facilities with radiation oncology departments, a procedure must be established to identify patients receiving radiation therapy. This should include all inpatient and outpatient treatments. Different options, such as providing copies of the treatment summary, a treatment card, or even a daily appointment book may be available to identify these cases. Many cancer patients are seen in the outpatient department, hematology clinic, laboratory, emergency room, nuclear medicine, and diagnostic radiology and oncology departments. A method to identify reportable cases from these departments must also be established.

Oncology/Hematology

Many facilities now have a designated oncology/hematology unit where patients receive chemotherapy treatments as an inpatient. In some cases, patients receive chemotherapy in an ambulatory setting, a freestanding facility, or a physician's office. The registrar/reporter must establish a policy and procedure for identifying patients who receive chemotherapy in these settings if affiliated with their facility.

Suspense File

A reportable case should be abstracted after review of the patient's complete record, not just from the unit record for the admission in question. If reportable cases are identified at the time of discharge, the complete medical record may not be available at the time the case is abstracted. A suspense file should be compiled of all cases identified as eligible or potentially eligible for abstracting. The suspense file can be something as simple as a manila folder to hold the various casefinding source documents (monthly disease index, pathology reports and outpatient log sheets and so forth) in alphabetical order and/or by date of diagnosis to assess timeliness of the abstracting process.