Informational Abstracts: A Guide to Quality Abstracting

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NCRA Education Committee
NCRA Strategic Planning and Education
Member CTRs dedicated to providing educational opportunities for NCRA members
Focus on abstracting

OBJECTIVES
- Learn the best way to approach the text section of an abstract and what information is important to include for each site;

- Learn the most effective way to use the informational abstract tool as a guide to what text needs to be included to help staging the case;

- Learn more about the variety of sites that have had informational abstracts developed.
GUIDE TO THE IA
After reviewing the medical record:
- Follow the outline and complete all the sections.
- Be concise by using phrases, not sentences.
- Make sure to use text relevant to the disease process and the specific cancer site and to use NAACCR Standard Abbreviations.
- Review text to ensure accuracy when the abstract is completed.

REFER TO THE MEDICAL RECORD – BREAST

CASE: BREAST
PHYSICAL EXAM/HISTORY
This is a 71 year old female who regularly checks her breasts. No abnormalities on self-exam. Doctor found mass in the UOQ of left breast. Mammo found suspicious mass—need follow up.

History:
She has had a benign meningioma in the past. Sister has had breast cancer. Non-smoker, denies use of recreational drugs. Alcoholic beverages on a daily basis.

X-RAYS/SCANS
4/30/20xx Bil. Diagnostic Mammo with U/S exam of left breast: new speculated mass in UOQ of left breast suspicious for malignancy. Mass is 1.5 by 1.3 by 1.4 cm in size- 1 o'clock position.
5/18/20xx Chest x-ray: no definitive acute cardiopulmonary disease.

LABS
ER at 100% (5/24/20xx)

DIAGNOSTIC
5/16/20xx Left Breast Needle Core Bxs
CASE: BREAST

PATHOLOGY
5/18/XX #xx-02258SP:
Left breast needle core bx: Infiltrative ductal carcinoma, Grade I, with associated low grade cribriform ductal carcinoma in situ (DCIS).

5/27/XX #xx-02356SP:
Infiltrating ductal carcinoma, well differentiated (Nottingham Grade I), with component of DCIS, cribriform pattern, low nuclear grade (about 15% of tumor), 1.9 cm, margins negative, 1 mitotic figure per 10 hpf, no angiolymphatic space invasion seen. Vascular microcalcifications present. 0/1 LNs (non-sentinel left axillary).

PRIMARY SITE
Left Breast, UOQ

HISTOLOGY
Infiltrating ductal carcinoma with DCIS component, cribriform pattern.

TREATMENT
Surgery:
5/24/XX Left breast lumpectomy with sentinel axillary node dissection.

Radiation
7/18/XX to 8/28/XX 4500 cGy to left breast in 25 fx of external beam radiation; followed by a cone down to tumor bed for an additional 10 fx of an additional 1600 cGy via an electron boost.

Hormones:
9/6/XX Tamoxifen started, to continue for the next 5 years.

Chemotherapy:
No recommendation.

Other:
None.

REFER TO THE MEDICAL RECORD – COLON
CASE: COLON

PHYSICAL EXAM/HISTORY

Chief Complaint (CC): 56-year-old African American female teacher's assistant w/fatigue, low blood count, change in bowel habits & L sided abd pain.


PE: 3-21-20xx PE neg.

X-RAYS/SCANS
3-29-20xx post op CT chest, abd, pelv neg.

SCOPES
PTA 3-3-20XX Colon-R sided colon ca.

LABS
PTA CEA NR. 3-29-20XX CEA 26.4 (0-5)

DIAGNOSTIC PROCEDURES
OP report: 3-22-20xx Exp lap Lge mass in R colon distal to IC valve. No other evi of tumor. Liver unremarkable. No obv palp LN.

PATHOLOGY

PTA 3-3-20xx R colon bx carcinosa NOS. 3-22-20xx T5 4 cm. R colon MD adenoca. Tumor penetrates thru muc propria into subserosal fibroadiposetiss. 0+/35 LN. Margins neg PT3 N0.

PRIMARY SITE
Colon Ascending C18.2.

HISTOLOGY
MD Adenocarcinoma B140/32.

TREATMENT
Surgery: Right Colectomy Code 30.

Radiation None

Chemotherapy Dr. Platin plans CPT-11 & 5-FU x 6 mo.

CLINICAL TRIALS None noted.

FINAL DX Colon cancer T3 N0 Mx per hem onc.

CASE: COLON

HELPFUL TIPS

Use your reference books and websites. Don't rely on your memory!

Try to do those that you consider the most difficult cases first, when your mind is fresh.

If you run out space in one section of the abstract (often the XR/scan section) put in an * & indicate where you will put the rest of the text, such as SCOPES. In the SCOPES section put *XRCONTD: It will make it easier for someone to follow the documentation.

It's okay to shorten words, BUT, make sure they are understandable. Use approved NAACCR abbreviations when possible.
HELPFUL TIPS

If your EMR allows it, try to complete one section of the abstract at a time. For example, do all the x-rays, then all the pathology, etc. If that is not possible, make notes so you can return to the correct section of the abstract to enter more test.

Working remotely? Build relationships with those who are on-site in the facility.

SUMMARY

We have discussed:
- Reviewing the complete record to get a "big picture" before beginning an abstract.
- The best way to approach the text section of an abstract.

We have demonstrated:
- An acceptable way to enter text into an abstract that conforms to NAACCR standards for abbreviations.
- How and why we used the information we did.
- The most effective way to use the informational abstract tool.

We have shared:
- Helpful tips to ensure your abstracts meet the requirements for data submission.
- Ideas on where to find required material for the abstract.
- The variety of sites that have had informational abstracts developed.