

2023 NPCR ARKANSAS SUCCESS STORY

Lindsay M. Collins, MPA

Cancer Registry Management Training

National Program of Cancer Registries SUCCESS STORY

SUMMARY

The Arkansas Central Cancer Registry (ACCR), located in Little Rock, AR, operates under the Arkansas Department of Health (ADH). The registry has a total of five employees who conduct daily operations, none of whom are qualified Certified Tumor Registrars (CTR). The registry director explored ideas with registry staff and the ADH leadership team to provide adequate training to noncertified employees and state cancer reporters.

CHALLENGE

- ACCR staff turnover, including losing its only qualified CTR and Education and Training Coordinator in early March 2022.
- There are only about 50 CTRs throughout the entire state of Arkansas.
- ACCR staff do not qualify for the CTR exam through the National Cancer Registrars Association (NCRA) due to no on-the-job training.
- State cancer reporters have limited internship and job training possibilities in the state.

SOLUTION

- Obtained NPCR approval to use carryover funds to fulfill education and training not completed in workplan.
- Reviewed online programs accredited by NCRA that met CTR examination requirements. NCRA American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) Cancer Registry Management (CRM) Program was chosen as Arkansas’ training program. The CRM program consists of 10 courses to be completed over a 12-month period and meets NCRA CTR examination requirements.
- ACCR reached out through the Arkansas Cancer Registrars Association, its facility contact list, and the North American Association of Central Cancer Registries (NAACCR) to locate state cancer reporters interested in the program.

RESULTS

- Enrolled 20 Arkansas state cancer reporters and students, including three ACCR employees and 2 ADH employees, into the NCRA American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) Cancer Registry Management (CRM) Program.
- Purchased 20 *Cancer Registry Management, 4th Edition* books from NCRA and 20 *Introduction to Information Systems for Health Information Technology, 4th Edition* books from AHIMA for students enrolled in the program.
- Enrollees filled out Book Loan Agreements before ACCR mailed books out to participants. Returned books are mailed out to new participants or Arkansas cancer reporters seeking additional training.
- ACCR receives progress updates from AHIMA regarding student course completion and follows up with students to assure timely course completion.
- ACCR staff completed eight of the 10 courses in eight months with an anticipated completion date of December 2023. ACCR staff will be eligible to take the CTR exam in January 2024. The remaining three groups of students should complete the program in April, May, and June 2024.

SUSTAINING SUCCESS

- After program completion and certification, ACCR staff will be able to provide on-the-job training to new registry staff and interns to meet NCRA testing requirements and NPCR education and training requirements.
- Newly certified registrars from the program can enroll in a mentorship program to provide new students guidance and advice.
- ACCR will overcome issues related to CTR turnover by continuing on-the-job training for registry staff. Staff and interns that leave for other opportunities will have a better understanding of central cancer registry operations.

STORY QUOTE

“I have worked in casefinding, follow up, and entering suspense cases for eight years at CHI St. Vincent Cancer Center in Hot Springs as well as I am a radiation therapist. I really want to become a CTR.”
– Phyllis Wright, NCRA-AHIMA Cancer Registry Management Program enrollee. ACCR’s program has provided her with the opportunity to obtain certification as a tumor registrar with an anticipated completion date of April 2024.

REGISTRY CONTACT

<https://www.healthy.arkansas.gov/programs-services/topics/arkansas-cancer-registry>



U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention