

2023 NPCR MAINE SUCCESS STORY

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Adapting Educational Offerings to Accommodate Limited Staffing During a Global Pandemic

National Program of Cancer Registries SUCCESS STORY

SUMMARY

The Maine Cancer Registry (MCR) provides continuing education opportunities for Certified Tumor Registrars (CTRs) and cancer reporters in Maine. With the COVID-19 pandemic, in-person training was no longer an option. Based on limited staff and challenges with in-person training, MCR had to adapt its approach to education and training.

CHALLENGE

- Over a decade ago, MCR's dedicated Education and Training Coordinator (ETC) position was eliminated, and the responsibilities were added to the Data Quality Manager's work.
- MCR historically provided in-person training opportunities two times per year but had to transition to virtual trainings due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Maine is a rural state and many reporting facilities are more than a one-hour drive from MCR offices in Augusta. Some facilities employ staff from out of state.

SOLUTION

- MCR adapted its training to partner with a contract trainer and provide online training opportunities with live and asynchronous (Zoom recording) learning options that provide continuing education units (CEUs) for participants.
- Online training attendance is strong, and this adjustment has maintained and expanded access to training for hospital reporters in our state.

RESULTS

- In August 2023, MCR conducted an online survey of Maine cancer reporters and attendees at the educational webinars. There are an estimated 30-35 regular attendees for education training webinars and the survey had 29 respondents or over 90%.
- Nearly half of respondents (14, 48%) had worked as a cancer reporter in Maine for over 10 years and only 2 out of 26 respondents had worked for less than 1 year as a cancer reporter in Maine. The vast majority (26, 90%) had their CTR certification, one person was studying for a CTR exam, and two do not intend to get a CTR certification.
- Over half of respondents attended five or more webinars per year and one-third attended 3-4 webinars.
- Most respondents attend the webinars in real time rather than watch a recording. The top reasons for attending the webinars were:
 - Learning new standards and changes in cancer reporting (97%).
 - Maintaining CEUs (83%).
 - Reviewing existing topics in cancer reporting (86%).
- Over 90% reported they were very satisfied with the content of the webinars, the timing and frequency of the webinars, and the trainers.

SUSTAINING SUCCESS

- Participants recommended several topics for future webinars, and these will inform our plans for 2024.
- MCR will continue to offer virtual webinars and consider a potential hybrid meeting in
- partnership with Cancer Registrars Association of Maine in 2024.
- All webinars are recorded and available for viewing online, upon request.

STORY QUOTE

This is anonymous participant feedback about the trainings:

“These webinars are well thought out, speaker is knowledgeable and find that they are very useful to all CTR/reporters no matter their skill level.”

“I greatly appreciate the professionalism of the supporting documentation and the presentation slides.”

“You are doing a wonderful job - topics are varied to meet everyone's needs.”

REGISTRY CONTACT

<https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/mecdc/public-health-systems/data-research/vital-records/mcr/about/index.htm>



U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
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