

Coalition Collaboration to Improve Timely Cancer Registry Data Reporting

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SUMMARY

The Arizona Cancer Registry (ACR) is collaborating with the Arizona Cancer Coalition to address delinquent case reporting by mandated reporting facilities. In 1988, the Arizona Revised Statute §36-133 was amended to mandate reporting of cancer cases to the ACR and these rules were put into effect on January 1, 1992. Per the revised statute, hospital facilities are required to report a case to the ACR within 180 calendar days of the date of first release. Physicians and clinics are required to report a case within 30 to 90 calendar days depending on the clinic size.

Between 2023 and 2024, only 27% of cases received by the ACR were reported on time according to regulation. Hospital systems had the most non-compliant case reporting. In response, the ACR collaborated with the Arizona Cancer Coalition to create an objective and strategies to improve timely cancer reporting in the new 2024 to 2029 Arizona Cancer Plan.

CHALLENGES

- The Arizona Revised Statute does not provide any penalties for delinquent reporting. The options for the ACR to address the issue of delinquent case reporting are to work directly with facilities and/or the Arizona Department of Health Services administrative counsel and licensing department.
- Reporting facilities need help to identify barriers to reporting cancer cases on time to the ACR. The reporting facilities can begin to address these barriers internally and in collaboration with the ACR with the understanding that solutions such as training and staffing may be costly and time intensive.
- If reporting facilities are delinquent in case reporting, it degrades the overall completeness and accuracy of ACR data.

SOLUTION

The ACR and members of the Arizona Cancer Coalition Policy work group created an objective to increase the percentage of cancer cases reported on time and in accordance with regulation from 27% to 75%. The strategies to address the objective include:

- Developing materials on the importance of cancer reporting and disseminating them to hospital administrators.
- Developing and implementing a quality improvement process that shares hospital cancer reporting information.
- Increasing electronic cancer reporting from health care professionals and clinics.

The goal of working with the coalition is to raise awareness and garner support that encourages reporting facilities to work internally, and with the ACR, to address the barriers to on-time cancer reporting.

RESULTS

- The results of this work are ongoing as the registry engages with coalition members to implement the strategies in the Arizona Cancer Plan. These strategies aim to encourage hospitals to improve on-time case reporting and promote transparency on cancer reporting by hospitals in Arizona.
- The registry was invited to present on the ACR reporting objective at the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network Summit. At the summit, the registry engaged with partners on how to tackle this issue of delinquent reporting. Summit attendees appreciated the transparency and sharing the effects of delinquent cancer reporting on cancer surveillance.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The decision to include an objective on cancer reporting in the statewide cancer plan highlights the issue's importance. By elevating the concern, we are informing all delinquent facilities that corrective action is needed. The next steps are to continue monitoring case reporting by mandated facilities, and to work with members of the Arizona Cancer Coalition Policy work group to implement strategies proposed in the cancer plan. These strategies are designed to be realistic, attainable, and sustainable within 5 years.

The registry will create materials that share data with hospital systems on the status of their case reporting. We will reward those that meet their targets consistently with a certificate or acknowledgement on our website to show which hospital systems are following cancer reporting guidelines. Improving the timeliness of cancer reporting to the registry will improve the completeness and accuracy of cancer registry data to inform research, treatment, and early detection of cancer.



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