

Texas Cancer Reporting News

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Texas Cancer Registry

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TCR Updates

By Katie Dahlquist, MEd

Calls for Data and National Recognition

In November, the Texas Cancer Registry will complete the annual calls for data. At that time, we will submit almost 2.5 million Texas resident cancer cases diagnosed from 1995–2018 to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention National Program of Cancer Registries and the North American Association of Central Cancer Registries.

We expect to meet the requirements to maintain NAACCR Gold Certification and achieve NPCR High Quality Data Standards. This includes reaching the goal of submitting at least 95% of expected cases for 2018. As of October 6, 2020, we are at 94.0%.

We thank all Texas Cancer Reporters for helping us meet our goals, especially with the extraordinary circumstances of 2020. Reaching a high level of data quality and completeness is not possible without your dedication and hard work.

Timely Reporting Calendars for 2019 and 2020

We know COVID-19 has presented challenges for cancer reporters and registries. We updated the [2019 Timely Reporting Calendar](#) to allow for more time to report cases. All 2019 admission year cancer cases are now due by October 31, 2020.

Also, the [2020 Timely Reporting Calendar](#) is available. All 2020 admission year cancer cases are due by June 30, 2021.

In these extraordinary times, TCR recognizes the dedication and hard work of the Texas Cancer Reporting community.

Epidemiology Corner

By Saroj Rai, PhD, MPH

Retrospective Study Identifies Disparities in Incidence and Survival for Hematologic Cancer Patients Living in US/Mexico Border Region

This year, TCR data was used in a retrospective study that looked at disparities in hematological malignancies along the US/Mexico border in Texas. Alfonso E. Bencomo-Alvarez, PhD, led the team from Texas Tech University Health Science Center El Paso. They presented their findings at the American Association for Cancer Research Virtual Meeting in June.¹

The study found that Hispanic patients with certain blood cancers had lower overall survival than non-Hispanic white patients in Texas. Also, Hispanic patients living at the border had lower overall survival than Hispanics in other parts of Texas.

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Cancer is the second leading cause of death in the US. It's the leading cause of death among Hispanics. The researchers used data from 62,756 cases of blood cancers diagnosed in Texas between 1995 and 2016. Of these cases, 10,822 patients were Hispanic, and 42,756 were non-Hispanic white. Hispanics and non-Hispanic whites had a similar risk for developing blood cancers, but Hispanics were diagnosed at a significantly younger age. For ages 40 years and younger, Hispanics had higher incidence rates of hematologic malignancies. Non-Hispanic whites had higher incidence rates for ages over 40 years.

The researchers also wanted to understand how living at the border might impact survival. They compared 10-year survival rates of 1,160 Hispanic patients residing in El Paso to that of 9,662 Hispanic patients living elsewhere in Texas. They found that the 10-year survival rates for Hispanic patients with acute lymphoblastic leukemia, acute promyelocytic leukemia, or chronic myeloid leukemia were lower for those who lived in El Paso compared to Hispanics living elsewhere in Texas.

The researchers stated that future research is required to determine factors that are responsible for the disparities in survival. They also said more research will help identify ways to address the differences.

The presentation abstract is available on the [AACR 2020 Virtual Annual Meeting website](#).

¹ Bencomo AE, Rubio AJ, Gonzalez MA, et al. Retrospective study of incidence and survival for patients with hematological malignancies residing at the U.S./Mexico border. Presented at American Association for Cancer Research Virtual Annual Meeting II, June 22-24, 2020.

Training Corner

By Elizabeth Harvey, CTR

Tip from the Training Team: Text Documentation

Text documentation is an important component of a complete abstract. It's critical for quality assurance and special studies. It supports the coded information and provides additional information regarding the case. We use the text documentation to tell the clinical and pathological story of the cancer. It helps us understand where it started, where it spread, how it was diagnosed, and how it was treated.

We recommend that you begin the abstracting process by documenting the pertinent information in the text fields first. You can use this information to quickly find the data needed for the required fields. After you have completed the abstract, be sure to do a visual review of the text documentation and the data items. Make sure they are complete and consistent.

Check out NCRA's [Center for Cancer Registry Education site](#) for a series of informational abstracts and the presentation *Using the Informational Abstracts in Your Registry*.

Meet our new Training Specialist

Suneela Nune joined TCR as a Training Specialist in September. She recently graduated from San Jacinto College with a degree in cancer data management. She is also CTR eligible. While working in healthcare for 14 years, she developed a passion for health information management. She is looking forward to sharing her knowledge and experience with others as part of the TCR Training Team. Suneela says that "the impact of cancer data in patient care inspires me to learn and do better each day!"

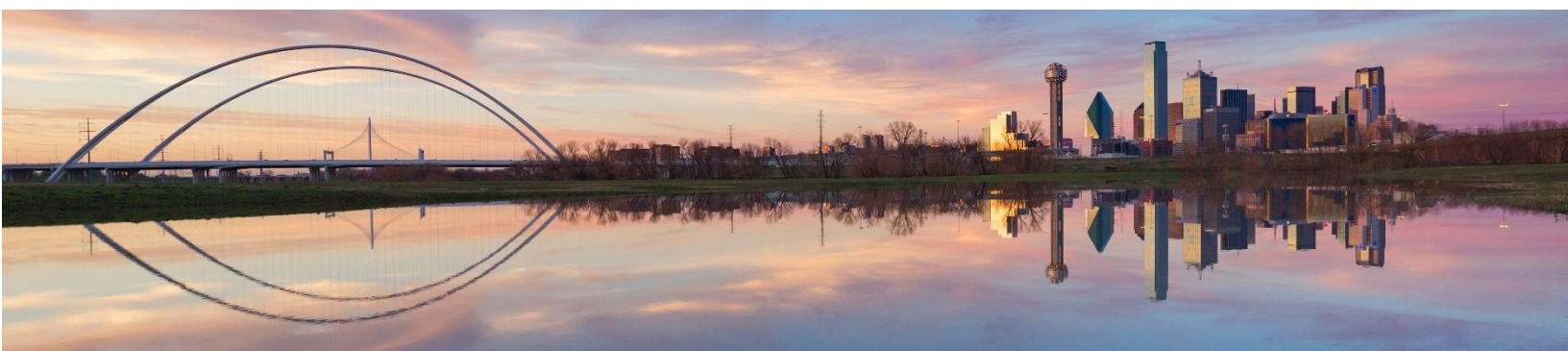
Suneela will be moving to Austin from Dallas with her husband, 2 children, and their pet dog Alphy. Her hobbies including cooking, travelling, and watching movies.

2020-2021 NAACCR Webinar Series

The 2020-2021 NAACCR Webinar Series begins this fall. TCR is once again hosting this webinar series for free for Texas cancer reporters. For more information, visit our [NAACCR Webinars](#) webpage.



Have a question about TCR education and training opportunities? Email us at TCR.training@dshs.texas.gov.



Cancer Reporting Manuals and Resources

Cancer reporters know the importance of using reporting manuals and resources to ensure complete, accurate, and consistent coding. We also need to be aware of the multiple updates, clarifications, and changes made to the documents after publication. Here's a list of links to find the errata, revisions, and clarifications for commonly used resources. We recommend bookmarking them for quick reference.

- [AJCC 8th Edition Errata](#)
- [ICD 0 3 Implementation Guidelines](#)
- [CTR Guide to Coding Radiation Therapy Treatment in the STORE](#)
- [STORE Manual Clarifications](#)
- [Solid Tumor Rules Revisions](#)
- [SSDI/Grade 2018](#)
- [EOD v1.7 changes](#)



TCR Data Products

We recently published three updated reports on cancers associated with modifiable risk factors on our website. Additional reports, including one of tobacco-associated cancers, will be available later this year.

- [Alcohol-Associated Cancers in Texas](#)
- [HPV-Associated Cancers in Texas](#)
- [Overweight- and Obesity-Associated Cancers in Texas](#)

If you would like to be notified when new TCR products are available, [sign up](#) for email updates.

TCR Staff Availability

TCR staff are working from home while our physical locations remain mostly closed due to COVID-19. We continue to provide training and technical assistance for reporters, as well as assistance and fulfillment of data requests for our cancer community.

Contact information for TCR staff, including email addresses, is available on our [Contact TCR webpage](#).

COVID-19 Mental Health Support Line

If you or someone you know is feeling overwhelmed by the coronavirus pandemic, help is available. You can call the HHSC COVID-19 Mental Health Support Line at 833-986-1919. Mental health professionals can help deal with stress, anxiety and depression.

