

# Quality Improvement in the Surveillance, Epidemiology, and End Results (SEER) Program

<http://seer.cancer.gov>

## Overview

The Surveillance, Epidemiology, and End Results (SEER) Program of the National Cancer Institute (NCI) is the quality standard for cancer data around the world. The Program was expanded in 2000, and a comprehensive Quality Improvement (QI) process was implemented to advance SEER's reputation as the authoritative source of population-based information on cancer incidence and survival in the United States.



SEER QI is unique in its decentralized structure. The process relies on the expertise of the Data Quality Team within the NCI SEER Program, staff from each of the SEER registries, and external contractors to achieve its purposes. Evaluation of SEER data and data gathered from specific quality assessment studies are used to identify opportunities for improvement and to propose and implement effective solutions.

### SEER QI Mission

- Establish, perform, and manage Quality Improvement/Quality Control projects.
- Identify standards and systematically measure those standards.
- Develop measurement and evaluation tools.
- Assess outcomes and performance measures.
- Develop quality enhancement strategies.
- Assess registry needs and satisfaction.
- Provide education and training to improve data quality.

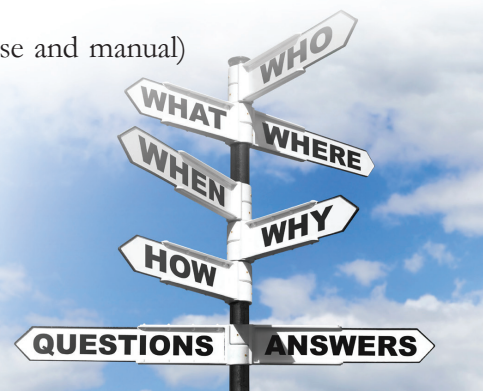
## Quality Improvement Activities



### *Ask A SEER Registrar*

Submit a question on the following topics to **Ask a SEER Registrar** at <http://seer.cancer.gov/registrars/contact.html>, and you will receive an answer from subject matter experts:

- Hematopoietic & Lymphoid Neoplasm Rules (database and manual)
- Multiple Primary & Histology Coding Rules
- SEER\*Rx – Interactive Drug Database
- SEER Manual
- SEER Inquiry System
- ICD-O Coding



## *Data Quality Activities and Products*

### **2010 Hematopoietic Rules (database and Manual):**

- Established new reportability instructions and data collection rules for th neoplasms.
- Rules used to determine number of primaries, site and histology, and the cell lineage or phenotype.



### **2007 Multiple Primary & Histology Coding Rules:**

- The first site-specific multiple primary and histology rules developed to promote consistent and standardized coding.

### **SEER\*Rx:**

- An interactive, downloadable antineoplastic drug database developed as a one-stop resource for coding oncology drug and regimen treatment categories.

### **SEER Program Staging and Coding Manual (SPSCM):**

- Provides codes and coding instructions for SEER data items.

### **SEER Inquiry and Response System (SINQ):**

- An interactive Web repository of questions submitted by SEER registries or selected from Ask a SEER Registrar and answered by SEER experts.
- These questions and answers can be searched and viewed by all registrars and reports can be generated.

### **Data Quality Profile:**

- Created annually for each SEER registry.
- An assessment of the extent to which registry data meet SEER data quality standards.

### **SEER Edits:**

- An extensive set of inter- and intrafield edits used to identify and correct errors in the data.

## *Standardized Abstracting and Coding Activities*

### **Reliability Study:**

- An online tool that enables registrars to abstract and code the same medical records using the same references.
- Designed to evaluate the consistency and accuracy of coding as measured against performance goals.
- Evaluation of study results identifies opportunities for improvement in documentation and targets educational needs.
- From study results, the SEER Data Quality Team plans and implements revisions to documentation and educational presentations.

## *Education and Training Programs*

SEER QI offers various educational opportunities throughout the year, including the SEER Workshop, held annually with the National Cancer Registrars Association conference. The workshop provides advanced, in-depth training for registrars on a variety of topics. Additionally, many educational opportunities such as free online presentations are available through the SEER Web site: <http://seer.cancer.gov/training>



## *Publications*

SEER QI produces publications on quality issues and updates publications, such as the SPSCM, which promote a continuous QI process. These SEER-related publications can be viewed at <http://seer.cancer.gov/publications> (reports/monographs) and <http://seer.cancer.gov/registrars> (education/training manuals).

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