



# FALL/WINTER NEWSLETTER

## SEASON'S GREETINGS

We wish you peace, joy and prosperity this holiday season and in the coming new year.

### PR & COMMUNICATIONS

#### Stay Connected

Our Organization's Website  
[www.trac-ct.org](http://www.trac-ct.org) is updated regularly.

Social Media: Network with us on  
**Linked In** and follow us on **Facebook!**

If you would like to help with this  
newsletter, please email us:  
[TRAC@trac-ct.org](mailto:TRAC@trac-ct.org)

### EDUCATION

The November 2019 Annual TRAC  
Educational Meeting earned 6 credits! 52  
people attended. Special thanks to Yale  
New Haven Smilow Cancer Hospital  
Registry for hosting.

Please consider hosting a meeting for  
TRAC in 2020! We have a committee to  
help plan and secure speakers.

If you would like to host, contact Sara  
Mercado or email [TRAC@trac-ct.org](mailto:TRAC@trac-ct.org)

### MEMBERSHIP

#### 2020 Membership

Become a New Member or Renew  
your Membership!

A member of TRAC receives cost  
savings on education, opportunities  
to network with supportive  
professionals, and a chance for  
personal and professional  
development.

Join now!



#### From our last meeting: Quality and Common Coding Issues presented by Javier Perez Irizarry, MPH, CTR

Software vendor manuals have not been updated yet. The new NAACCR Metafile 18D is still pending with vendors, however detailed information regarding edits is available from NAACCR. Use online manual coding instructions. The latest SSDI Manual v1.7 has updates to coding notes and there is a change log to reference. The STORE Manual has an addendum from October 21, 2019. Registrars are not required by standard setters to go back and change previously abstracted cases. From a quality perspective, it is advised to update cases if you can using the newest instructions.

## President's Message

Brooke Chang, BA, CTR

Winter is here in Connecticut and now is a time of reflection and goal setting for the coming New Year. TRAC had a great year of education for our members. NCRA awarded 12 CE credits in total for 2019 TRAC education programs. I want to thank the Executive Board and Standing committee members for their service this past term. Along with some quality education at our recent Annual Education meeting, it was fun to get together with professional colleagues from all over our state and share some holiday cheer with a gift swap and great door prizes. The TRAC Executive board has made a great deal of progress in developing a business operations plan with policies and procedures. We will be passing down these guidelines to future executive board members. Thank you to the outgoing executive board Vice President Sheri and Secretary Rosemary. Your desire to further the professionalism of TRAC membership with education of CTRs is evident by the success of the organization these past two years. I am glad to have had the opportunity to work with you both.

I look forward to the next term as TRAC President and wish all TRAC members and our readers of this newsletter joy and good health in 2020.



### The Annual CRANE meeting:

Thank you Rosemary for putting together the basket this year and presenting it to CRANE on behalf of TRAC.

### TRAC Scholarship - OCT 3, 2019:

Please extend my thanks to the board for the awarding of payment for attending the CRANE meeting.


The meeting was very informative and it gave me the chance to see classmates and teachers I had at the Northeastern University Cancer Program. I appreciate it.

Sincerely,

Deborah Lobb

## Vice President's Message

Sheri Amechi, CTR



I emailed Certificates of Attendance to attendees for the November Educational meeting. In the event of an audit for credits, I'd like to remind attendees, I distributed a paper Certificate of Attendance on the day of the June 2019 Educational meeting. I did not send electronic copies. If anyone needs a copy of their certificate from June, please email me. I plan to remain on the Education Committee for TRAC in 2020.

## Coding Hints

Nicole Tomarchio, CTR

Per page 112 of the Grade Manual for CNS Clinical Grade: "CNS WHO classifications use a grading scheme that is a "malignancy scale" ranging across a wide variety of neoplasms rather than a strict histologic grading system that can be applied equally to all tumor types. Code the WHO grading system for selected tumors of the CNS as noted in the AJCC 8th edition Table 72.2 where WHO grade is not documented in the record."

Helpful reminders from the "Coding Pitfalls" presentation at CRANE, remember to:

- 1) add a suffix for thyroid staging,
- 2) FNA should not be coded in Surg/Diagnostic – always remember the difference between fluid and tissue.
- 3) Code a mediastinoscopy with negative lymph nodes.
- 4) Remember to code I-131 to treatment site other (98).

## From the Treasurer's Desk

Michele Wojewodzki, CTR

The 2020 TRAC membership drive is underway! Nine people have registered for a TRAC Membership in 2020. Active Membership is \$30, due by Jan 31. A late fee will apply for payments received after FEB 15. Membership will be forfeited if dues are not received by July 1.

I am currently working on our Tax-exempt status with the IRS.



## BYLAWS

Committee: Cathryn Phillips CTR, Mary Jeanne Pierce CTR, Brooke Chang CTR



membership.

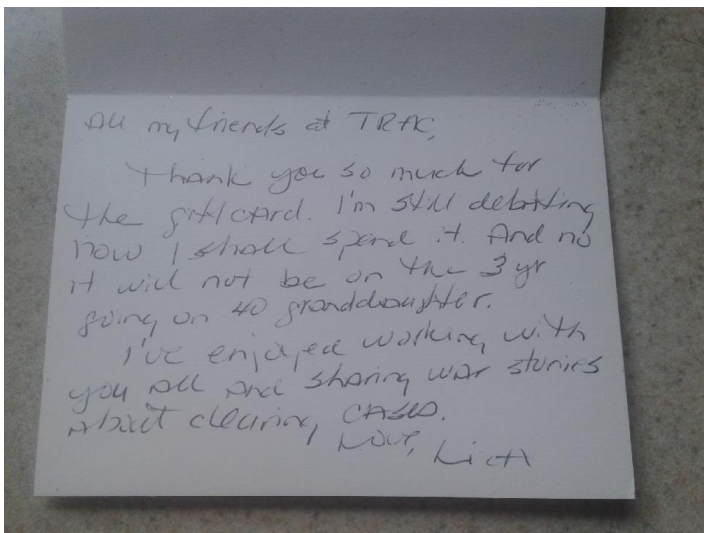
We updated our bylaws at the last Annual meeting. You can access the most up to date set of bylaws on our TRAC website. The President shall serve as the secondary signatory for all TRAC funds and securities. A vote can amend our bylaws at any business meeting with a required 30-day prior notice to the membership. In addition, there is a change in terms of re-instatement of

## Nominations Committee

Tammy Corso, CTR

Nominations committee asked 13 eligible TRAC members to consider serving on the Executive board for the 2020-2021 term. Of the six persons identified as potential candidate for president 1 remained on the ballot, three declined and two did not respond. For vice president four persons were asked, one remained on the ballot, one accepted, one declined and one did not respond. For treasurer 1 remained on the ballot. For secretary two were asked, one accepted and one declined.

The election took place from Sept 25- OCT 2 using Survey Monkey. **Thank you** to the 21 active members who voted.



## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### THANK YOU

TRAC sent a retirement gift to our former Ways and Means person, Eliza. Here is her note.



12/13/2015

At the annual meeting November 6, 2019 Cathy Philips installed the new officers who were charged with acting in the best interest of the Association and are responsible for the business and professional affairs of TRAC as described in the bylaws.



Photo 1 Installment of 2020-2012 Executive Board (L to R): Cathy Philips, Brooke Chang, Sara Mercado, Nicole Tomarchio, Michele Wojewodzki

## 2020 TRAC Vice President- Sara Mercado

### Describe your professional experience as a CTR.

I started my career in cancer registry at Hartford Hospital. I earned my CTR in March 2015. After graduating with a Bachelor's degree in Health Information Management in 2017, I transitioned into full time work with Registry Partners, Inc. Then, after five months full-time with that company, an opportunity to take over as full-time registrar and cancer program coordinator at Waterbury Hospital opened up and I jumped on it! I have been full-time at Waterbury Hospital since Oct 2018.

### What is a goal of yours for 2020?

Professionally, serving TRAC to the best of my abilities! To keep adding onto my knowledge base as a CTR, enhancing my understanding of the profession and all the minutiae it entails.

## 2020 TRAC Secretary- Nicole Tomarchio

### Describe your professional experience as a CTR.

I attended my first TRAC meeting in the Fall of 2015 when April Fritz presented at Yale. It was an amazing experience. I have been a member of TRAC since around that time. I earned my CTR in March 2016 and started at the Hospital of Central CT in 2016. In the Fall of 2017, I began working part-time for Registry Partners. In August 2018 I began working at YNH. I was previously on the Education Committee for TRAC. The best part of being a CTR is knowing the data that I help to collect makes a difference in helping to make strides in the fight against cancer.

### What is a goal of yours for 2020?

My goal is to get more involved in my community by volunteering.



## ACS Latest News

### Year in Review: Cancer Research Insights from 2019

Overall, the US cancer death rate is continuing to decrease, but there's more to that story.

Throughout 2019, the recurring themes of cancer research news included the link between obesity and cancer, increased rates of certain cancers in people younger than 50, and continued barriers to cancer care due to poverty, race, where people live, and other factors.

<https://www.cancer.org/latest-news.html>

### Cancer Awareness Calendar:

**January** has traditionally been devoted to Health and Weight. It is also the National Cervical Health Awareness Month.

**February** is the American Heart Month and National Cancer Prevention Month. World Cancer Day is FEB 4.



## FROM THE STATE

CATHY PHILLIPS, CTR

The 2019 Central Brain Tumor Registry of the United States (CBTRUS) Report is available online at [www.cbtrus.org](http://www.cbtrus.org) through a Free-to-View web link by clicking on Reports and Tables. The Report is a supplement to the Society for Neuro-Oncology's journal, *Neuro-Oncology*.

Looking ahead: The Connecticut Tumor Registry is currently working to fill three positions however the application period has closed. We reviewed 76 applications and several selected candidates will be scheduled for an interview in the near future.

## SEER



Sending on behalf of the SEER\*Educate team.

**NOTE: Please direct questions to SEER\*Educate.**

New in SEER\*Educate!!

2018 Histology Coding Drills – EVEN MORE coding exercises



## CDC

Cancer Prevention Works Newsletter

### Reducing Excessive Alcohol Use Reduces Your Cancer Risk



Good choices related to alcohol can help lower the risk of certain cancers. Drinking alcohol can increase your risk for cancers of the liver, female breast, colon, rectum, mouth, pharynx (throat), larynx (voice box), and esophagus. If you choose to drink, [dietary guidelines](#) recommend moderate alcohol use—up to one drink a day for women and up to two drinks a day for men. The more alcohol you drink, the higher your cancer risk. Excessive alcohol use includes binge drinking (four drinks or more for women and five drinks or more for men on a single occasion) and heavy drinking (eight drinks or more per week for women and 15 drinks or more per week for men). Any alcohol use by pregnant women or individuals under the minimum legal drinking age (21 years old) is also considered excessive alcohol use.

**Drinking less alcohol can help lower your risk of cancer. Learn more about the guidelines for alcohol use and strategies to help reduce excessive alcohol use.**

To learn more, visit the website [https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/alcohol/reducing-excessive-alcohol-use/?deliveryName=USCDC\\_9\\_13-DM13320](https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/alcohol/reducing-excessive-alcohol-use/?deliveryName=USCDC_9_13-DM13320)

WINTER NEWSLETTER

## COC Cancer Program News – Updates and Alerts

AcCoS Cancer Programs- The Brief

<http://multibriefs.com/briefs/ACSORG/index.php>

Online December 5, 2019

### ACS Cancer Programs offer career opportunities for CTRs



The American College of Surgeons Cancer Programs has two exciting career opportunities at its home office in Chicago, IL, for Certified Tumor Registrars (CTR) or CTR-eligible professionals with the American Joint Committee on Cancer (AJCC) and the National Cancer Database (NCDB).

For details, visit the American College of Surgeons [website](#):

[AJCC Technical Specialist](#)

[NCDB User Support Specialist](#)

Interested candidates are encouraged to apply online; however, if you have questions, please contact Cindy McWilliams, Talent Manager, at 312-202-5492 or [cmcwilliams@facs.org](mailto:cmcwilliams@facs.org).

### NCDB NEWS

#### NCDB website updated for 2020 Call for Data



The [National Cancer Database](#) (NCDB) website has been redesigned for the [2020 Call for Data](#). All documents are grouped for easy access and updated for the 2020 Call for Data specifications. The 2020 Call for Data window will run from January 1 through May 31, 2020. Communication has been sent to the registry programs. Slides from the annual [NCDB vendor webinar](#), which was held September 30, 2019, have been posted under the vendor title box on the NCDB Call for Data website.



Online December 12, 2019

## ACS CANCER PROGRAMS UPDATES

### Pre-Review Questionnaire to replace SAR



As programs begin compliance with the new Commission on Cancer (CoC) [2020 Standards](#) on January 1, the CoC wants to provide information to programs that will go through a site review on the new standards in 2021 and beyond.

To support 2021 site reviews, the CoC will release a newly designed Pre-Review Questionnaire (PRQ) to record 2020 cancer program activity. The PRQ will replace the Survey Application Record (SAR).

- The PRQ is expected to be released in Fall 2020 to programs scheduled for site reviews in 2021.
- 2021 site reviews will cover one year (2020) of program activity under the new CoC 2020 Standards.
- A blank PDF version of the PRQ will be made available to all cancer programs.
- The Program Activity Record (PAR) will be retired as of December 31, 2019.
- Retirement of the SAR will take place following each 2020 site review. Historical access to previous SARs will be available in CoC Datalinks in read-only format.
- Templates to upload into the PRQ are being created to facilitate documenting compliance with 2020 program activity. Templates can be used similarly to the PAR as a way to track activity during the full accreditation cycle.
- Templates will be made available in the first quarter of 2020 and will be located in CoC Datalinks.

Please continue to check [The Brief](#) and the [Commission on Cancer](#) website for additional updates.

WEBSITE SOURCE: <http://multibriefs.com/briefs/ACSORG/ACSORG121219.php>