

Change: the constant at any level in Cancer Registry.

By Gema Midence, MBA, CTR, Quality Control Coordinator

Adaptability is defined as the ability to change (or be changed) to fit changing circumstances. It is also a defining characteristic found within the most skilled cancer registrar. Within the past 30 years, the cancer registry field has grown from a process of basic medical data collection to a rigorously demanding and respected profession; seen as a major component to cancer patient care.

As cancer registrars we understand the demands of a changing environment. Today, the demand to acquire new knowledge and accompanying skills grows exponentially to the demand for quality and accuracy. In many ways, this parallels my transition as a registry manager of a single hospital registry to my current position at FCDS--whose database contains approximately 3.7 million abstracts and receives 180,000 new records each year resulting in 110,000 new cancer incidences.

FCDS is one of the largest population-based, cancer incidence registries in the nation and, from personal experience, has the learning curve that would accompany a registry of such size.

In the time that I have been here, my working knowledge of cancer registration has expanded to gain an understanding of the underbelly of our profession. As registrars, we are pulled in many directions and asked to follow through on the demands from multiple sources--- our facility's administration, physicians, the American College of Surgeons and yes, the State (FCDS). There isn't much reprieve for registrars these days whether their registry is big or small. I've been there before and now that I am here at FCDS, I can tell you that the pressure is just as intense at this level. It would have made a world of difference knowing then what I have learned now.

Changing, learning, adapting and multitasking are constants in the cancer registry field but the momentum of these skills swings at a greater speed at FCDS. There are many examples of how the environment of a central cancer registry is (more often than not) over-

whelmingly dynamic in contrast to a hospital registry. Essentially, we all know that once a record is reported to the State, that single facility record becomes a piece of a patients cancer incidence puzzle. However, the back-end operations of a central cancer registry are by far more complex that I would have ever imagined.

Within the first six months of joining the Quality Control and Education team at FCDS, I have been fortunate enough to participate on a few of the NAACCR working groups and listened in on the "think-tank" discussions behind the implementation of new data collection standards and the introduction of new edits before the release of the metafile. This has been for me the most intense and interesting aspect of a central cancer registry because I had often wondered, "Why am I picking up this field? ... Why do we need 25 site specific factors... etc."

Furthermore, my position on the QC team, has given me the far reaching opportunity to learn from others not only nationally but also within our own offices. It is truly amazing how much preparation goes on before any upcoming changes are rolled-out on a national level and how the State prepares to adapt its systems and its people (our staff and state registrars) to minimize any impact in the accuracy, timeliness and completeness of data collection--- no pressure. Likewise, by working alongside our statisticians, text fields and codes gain their rightful significance: the human impact of cancer.

I am excited to be a part of a challenging environment like FCDS and much more so to act as an advocate for the registrars in Florida while I am here. I hope to meet most of you at the state meeting this year in Tampa as well as to work together with all of you in exchanging ideas and tackling many of the new obstacles that are ahead as we transition into 2011. I look forward to the next 6 months at FCDS and completing my first year of this new learning experience. Stay tuned! ☺





JOB OPENINGS AT FCDS (UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI)

FCDS has employment opportunities for 10 positions that have been established to provide technical support for the CDC/NPCR Comparative Effectiveness Research Project (CER) with 3-year funding provided by CDC and AHRQ under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA).

Below is the information on the positions:

- 3 - CER Field Coordinator positions (Sr. Compliance Representative)
- 3 - CER QC Coordinator positions (Senior Regulatory Analyst)
- 2 - Statistical Analysts (CER and AHRQ)

UM position numbers for Field Coordinator and QC Coordinator openings are noted below:

- CER Position Number(s) – Sr. Compliance Representative (Field Coordinator): 041840, 041841, 041842.
- CER Position Number(s) - Senior Regulatory Analyst (QC Coordinator): 041790, 041789, 041788.

Position Postings and How to Apply:

In order to apply for these positions, please go to the Official job postings located at: <http://careers.med.miami.edu>. Using the “Department/Hospital” pull down menu, scroll to Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center and click “Begin Search”. Click on the position title “Sr. Compliance Representative” or “Senior Regulatory Analyst”. Click “Apply Online”.

Once you have applied, please e-mail your resume to Jill MacKinnon at jill_mackinnon@miami.edu

Register

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The FCRA/FCDS Task Force is actively working on many issues that all registrars are facing. If you have any questions, issues or suggestions that you would like the task force to review, please email them to taskforce@fcra.org.

The task force meets the first Thursday of every month. We will respond back to your inquiries as quickly as possible.

