

POSTER ABSTRACTS

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The CRN Cancer Counter – A Web based Tool to Count Cancers Across Multiple CRN Sites

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Background: CRN researchers need accurate, rapid counts of cancers based on specific criteria to produce proposals for deadlines. Previously, researchers developing proposals would send a request to site investigators at some or all CRN sites for cancer count statistics. This prior process works, but it can be slow because it requires several persons per request to complete.

This "Cancer Counter" was developed to allow researchers to analyze counts of cancers rapidly. It enables them to explore the data quickly, interactively and iteratively. The "Cancer Counter" can be used to:

- Quickly provide information for proposal generation.
- Enable the CRN to rapidly respond to NCI and CRN queries.
- Improve access to data for quality assurance purposes.

Methods: Each participating CRN site sends a de-identified cancer case summary file from their virtual tumor registry to KPNW where the data are loaded into the application. Access is restricted to CRN members. Users can select counts using the following variables: Cancer Site, Morphology, Stage, Gender, Age at Diagnosis, Vital Status, Year of Diagnosis, and CRN Health Plan.

Security considerations:

The information produced by this application is de-identified and anonymized, as defined under HIPAA guidelines.

- Requires UserID and password to gain access.
- Participating HMO's are numbered and not named.
- Reports showing less than 5 will be shown as "less than 5".
- Records the reason for use, date, and all pages viewed by every user
- Integrated into the Cancer Research Network's national secure Website.
- Results are SSL encrypted.

Results: The CRN "Cancer Counter" has been used to develop proposals and answer queries. Users especially like the ability to query the data quickly and iteratively.

Conclusions: The CRN "Cancer Counter" is a simple yet powerful tool that empowers researchers to quickly ascertain numbers of cancer cases in participating health plans using selection criteria. This tool has demonstrated value in developing proposals, running queries, and improving the quality of data.