

NCI Community Cancer Centers Program (NCCCP) National Quality Initiatives Applied Research Program

Overview of the NCCCP

The NCI Community Cancer Centers Program (NCCCP) is designed to create a community-based cancer center network to support basic, clinical and population-based research initiatives, addressing the full cancer care continuum—from prevention, screening, diagnosis, treatment, and survivorship through end-of-life care. A strategic partnership of the NCI and participating hospitals, the NCCCP is also designed to enhance access to and increase quality of care at community hospitals.

Overarching programmatic questions are:

- Can the NCCCP model improve quality of care?
- How can a knowledge exchange network support the advancement of goals for NCI and the NCCCP?
- How does sharing improvement strategies and tools or leveraging external partnerships (e.g., work with NCI Comprehensive Cancer Centers) facilitate and sustain program performance?

Goals of the NCCCP

The NCCCP has six major focus areas:

1. Reduce cancer health care disparities.
2. Increase patient participation in clinical trials.
3. Improve quality of care at community hospitals.
4. Enhance cancer survivorship and palliative care services at community hospitals.
5. Expand use of electronic health records and connect to cancer research data networks.
6. Promote high-quality biospecimen collection to support genomically-informed research.

One or more of the NCCCP's major focus areas (goals) is shared by several NCI programs—including the NCI Cancer Centers Program, Community Clinical Oncology Program, and Community Network Program. The NCCCP will incorporate evidence-based practices from other NCI community cancer programs in delivering services to these communities.

The Applied Research Program (ARP) Outcomes Research Branch (ORB) plays a key role in two national NCCCP partnership initiatives to improve the quality and timeliness of care: the American College of Surgeons Commission on Cancer (ACS CoC) Rapid Quality Reporting System (RQRS) and the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) Quality Oncology Practice Initiative (QOPI®). These initiatives are described below.

National Collaborations

ACS CoC Rapid Quality Reporting System (RQRS)

RQRS is a real-time cancer registry reporting and surveillance tool to prospectively monitor adherence to evidence-based guidelines. To enhance quality, the pilot program is focused on building the infrastructure to study data-driven, coordinated, evidence-based care. This includes studying ways to improve the quality of care through enhanced use of multidisciplinary conferences and tracking adherence to evidence-based guidelines. These activities provide researchers the opportunity to utilize the network, which has standardized data collection, to study performance in the community setting.

The RQRS beta test was initiated in July 2009 and completed in August 2011. Now in production mode nationwide, RQRS aims to demonstrate increased adherence to evidence-based practices at the hospital level, an important milestone in reaching the long-term NCCCP goal of improving the quality of care at that level. RQRS allows participants to compare their performance relative to hospitals in their state where possible, other similar programs, and all other beta test participants on six breast and colorectal performance measures.

Participant feedback regarding the RQRS has been overwhelmingly positive. Approximately 88% of respondents to a December 2009 survey reported that they would recommend RQRS to their colleagues at other cancer programs.

ASCO Quality Oncology Practice Initiative (QOPI®)

QOPI is a quality improvement collaborative of oncologists, most of whom are in private practice, that focuses on quality indicators consistent with NCCCP program aims. The first such initiative to be implemented nationwide, its goal is for participants to work as a network to share data and assess and target improvement opportunities. QOPI has shown increased adherence to evidence-based practices at the physician level, a key interim accomplishment in reaching the long-term NCCCP goal of improving the quality of care at that level.

The process employed for improving cancer care in QOPI encompasses measurement, feedback and improvement tools for hematology-oncology practices. Specifically, QOPI includes a set of quality measures, a specified chart selection strategy, a secure system for data entry, automated data analysis and reporting, and a network of resources for improvement. The QOPI quality measures were developed by practicing oncologists and quality experts.

References

Siegel RD, Clauser SB, Lynn JM. National collaborative to improve oncology practice: the National Cancer Institute Community Cancer Centers Program quality oncology practice initiative experience. *J Oncol Pract* 2009; 5:276–281.

For More Information

Websites

For more information about QOPI®, visit:

- <http://ncccp.cancer.gov/Resources/QualityCare.htm>
- <http://qopi.asco.org/index>

For more information about RQRS, visit:

- <http://www.facs.org/cancer/ncdb/qualitytools.html#rqr>

For general information about the NCCCP, including participating sites, progress reports, and tools, visit <http://ncccp.cancer.gov>.

For information about additional quality of care initiatives with which the NCI Outcomes Research Branch (ORB) is involved, visit <http://outcomes.cancer.gov/areas/qoc>.

ORB Staff

Steven Clauser, PhD
Applied Research Program, DCCPS, NCI
6130 Executive Blvd, EPN 4086, MSC 7344
Bethesda, MD 20892-7344
Telephone: 301-496-8500
E-mail: clausers@mail.nih.gov

Kathleen Castro, RN, MS, AOCN
Applied Research Program, DCCPS, NCI
6130 Executive Blvd, EPN 4091, MSC 7344
Bethesda, MD 20892-7344
Telephone: 301-594-6642
E-mail: castrok@mail.nih.gov



NIH Publication No. 11-7822

<http://outcomes.cancer.gov/areas/qoc/>