

Incorporating Genomics Into An Existing State Level Cancer Surveillance System

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Background and objectives: The Genomics Unit and the Michigan Cancer Surveillance Program (MCSP) at the Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCH) created an audit tool to obtain family history of cancer information from cancer patients' charts. Objectives included: to assess the presence and availability of genomic elements in the MCSP, and to evaluate the feasibility and utility of including family history of cancer as a required data element.

Methods: A total of 853 charts of cancer cases reported to the MCSP were reviewed from December 2003 to October 2004. Charts were reviewed for documentation of the presence or absence of family history of cancer, including specific information about the affected relative.

Results: About 82.5% of the audited charts documented either the presence or absence of a family history of cancer. Among the charts reporting a family history of cancer (30.4%), approximately 89% were gender-specific in identifying the affected relative, and about 82% had specific information regarding the relative's primary cancer site. However, 94.3% of these charts were missing information about the relative's age of diagnosis, and 99.5% were missing the relative's date of diagnosis.

Discussion/Conclusion: The presence or absence of family history of cancer was largely documented and available in the majority of audited MCSP patient charts. Information regarding the affected relative was frequently gender- and site-specific, but missing age and date of diagnosis. This project led to family history of cancer being added as a required data element in the MCSP in 2007, allowing family cancer risk to be examined more thoroughly.