



## Interoperability Standards and Their Impact on the Future of Cancer Diagnostics

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Alex Goel, MD  
Sandy Jones

OCTOBER 18 | 3–4 PM PT



COLLEGE of AMERICAN  
PATHOLOGISTS  
Laboratory Quality Solutions

CAP24 | LAS VEGAS  
#PATHDATA

# **Interoperability Standards and Their Impact on the Future of Cancer Diagnostics**

**Sandy Jones**

**Public Health Advisor (Informatics)**

**Cancer Surveillance Branch**

**Division of Cancer Prevention and Control**

October 18<sup>th</sup>, 2024

Future of Cancer Data Summit: Harnessing the Power of  
Pathology Data

# Disclosures

**Nothing to disclose**

# The Question That Forever Changed Cancer Registration



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**Why are so many Vermont  
women dying of  
breast cancer?**

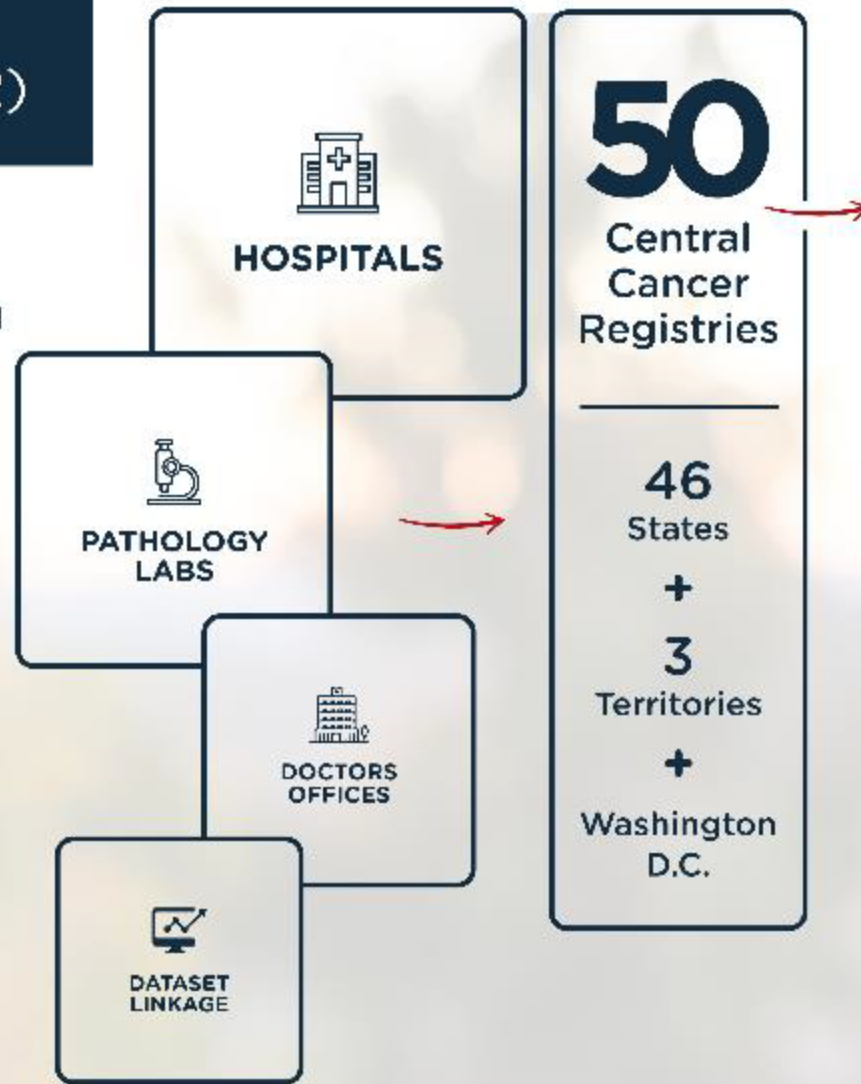
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# National Program of Cancer Registries (NPCR)

- Coordinates collection, verification and reporting of important information on all reportable cancer cases.
- Helps identify better ways to prevent, treat and control cancer.



- Data Visualization Tool
- State Cancer Plans
- Public Use Dataset
- Reports & Research

Over 1.7 million new cases & nearly 600,000 deaths annually.



U.S. Department of  
Health and Human Services  
Centers for Disease  
Control and Prevention

*Measuring Progress. Targeting Action.*

# Changing Data Needs

- Rapid case reporting
- Expansion of data collection to enable research and analysis of treatment modalities and other factors beyond incidence
  - Outcomes
  - Continuity of care
  - Genomic variations
  - Social determinants of health
- More responsive coordination with public health officials to define useful data analysis and reporting capabilities.



# Use of Complete, High-Quality, and Timely EHRs to Enhance Patient Care and Public Health



Patient is diagnosed with a reportable condition, such as COVID-19



Healthcare provider enters patient's information into the electronic health record (EHR)



Data in the EHR automatically triggers a case report that is validated and sent to the appropriate public health agencies if it meets reportability criteria



The public health agency receives the case report in real time and a response about reportability is sent back to the provider



State or local health department reaches out to patient for contact tracing, services, or other public health action

# Needs and Challenges



## Hospitals

- Collection of data items not usually found in patient charts
- Treatment administered outside hospital difficult to capture
- Burden of manual reporting



## Providers

- Competing priorities
- Staff time required to identify cases and treatments
- Lack of supporting information technologies



## Laboratories

- Redundant coding and data recoding
- Burden of manual reporting
- Maintaining multiple transmission protocols



## Central Registries

- State and local consent law differences
- Missing information
- Changing classifications and staging guidelines
- Staff time spent case finding and abstracting

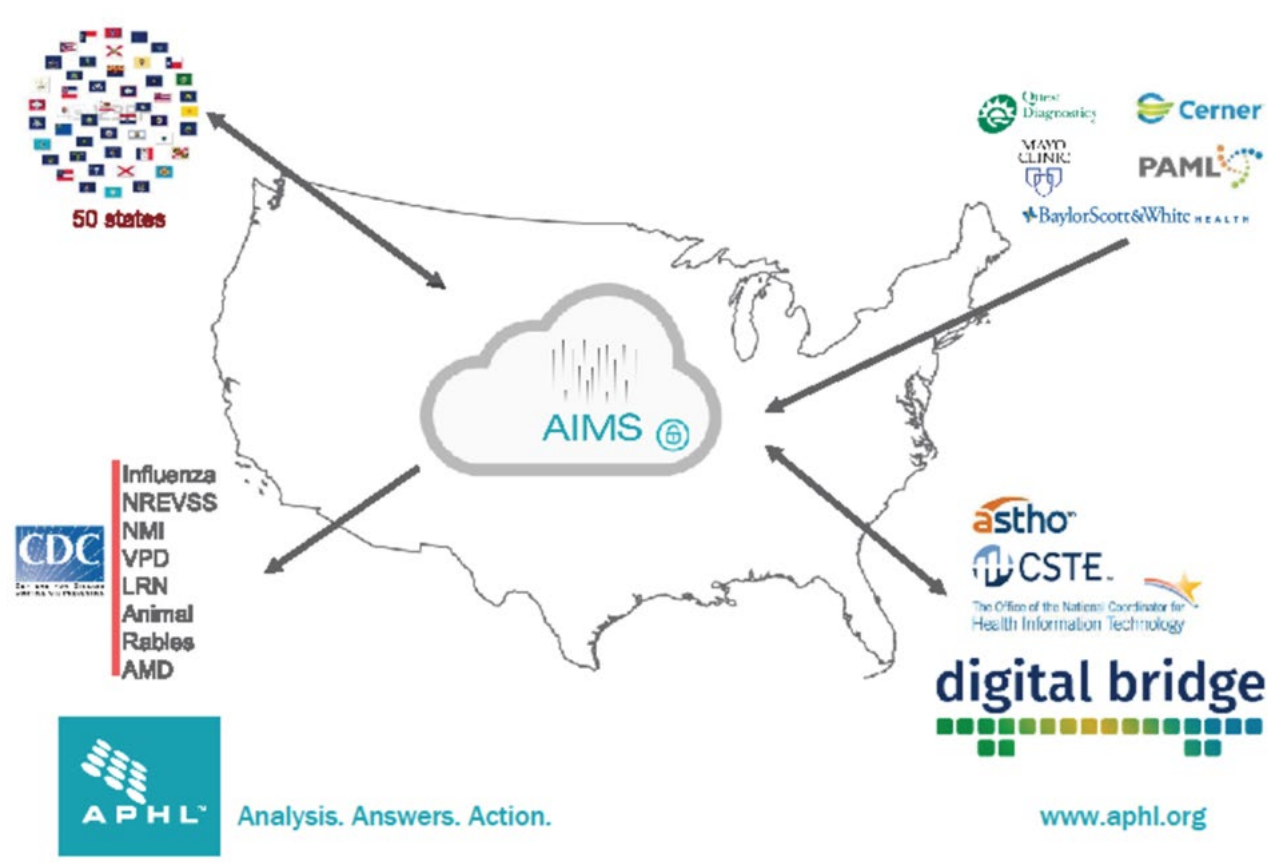


# Leveraging Electronic Health Record (EHR) Interoperability Initiatives for Improved Healthcare

- Use EHR data for multiple health domains and varied use cases
- Implementation guides and secure cloud architecture for cancer case reporting (HL7 FHIR and APHL AIMS)
- Certification of EHRs compliance with CMS Promoting Interoperability Program, United States Core Data for Interoperability (USCDI) and USCDI+ Cancer Early Incidence
- Minimum Common Oncology Data Elements (mCODE), Common Oncology Data Elements eXtensions (CodeX) HL7 FHIR Accelerator

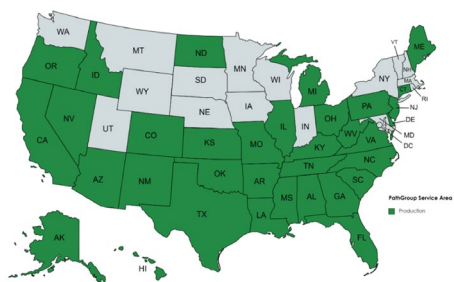


# A National Resource for Interoperability: Association of Public Health Laboratories (APHL) Informatics Messaging Services (AIMS)

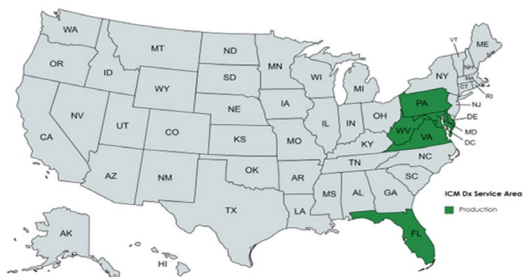


# Cancer Pathology Reporting in Production using APhL AIMS

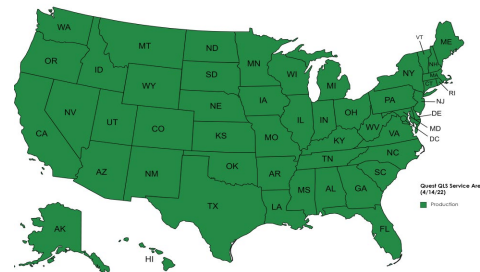
## PathGroup Laboratories



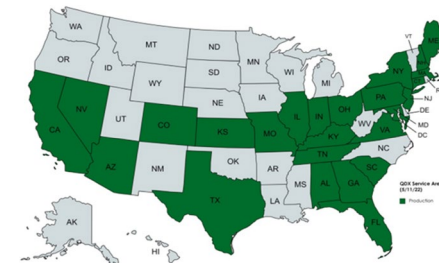
## ICM Diagnostics



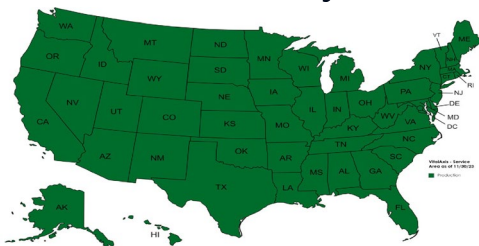
## Quest Diagnostics



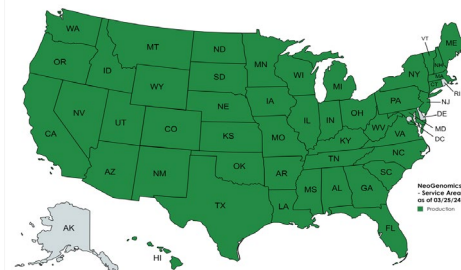
**QDx Laboratories**



## Vital Axis Laboratory Information System



# NeoGenomics

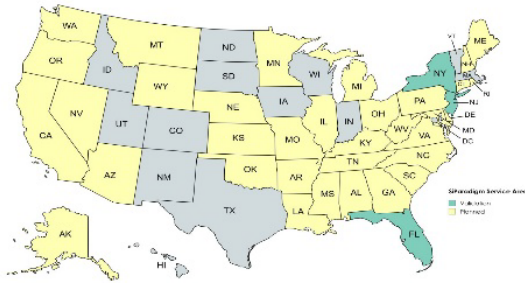


## Inform Diagnostics

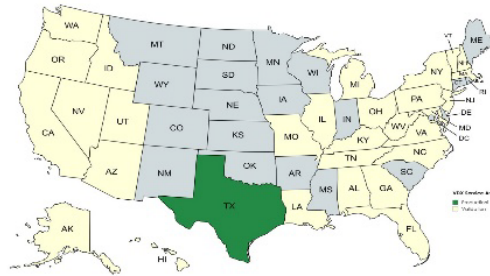


# Laboratories Onboarding to Report Cancer Pathology using APHL AIMS

SiParadigm Labs



Vizia Diagnostics



AP Derm Services



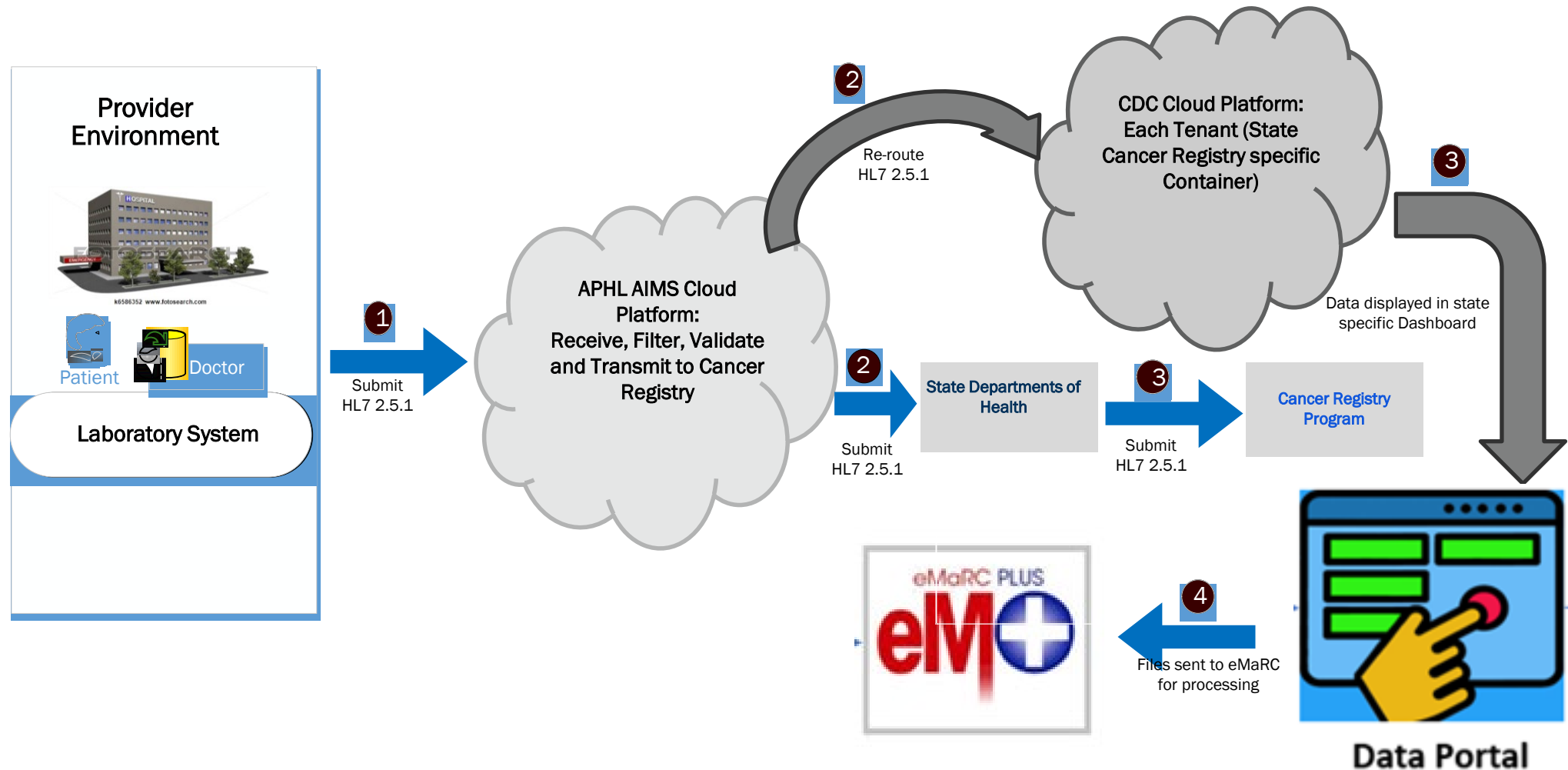
Laboratory Name	HL7 Message Developed
Mayo Medical Laboratories	In Progress
BioReference	In Progress
Sonic Healthcare (CBL Path, CPL Path, Aurora Dx, ProPath)	In Progress
Avero Dx	
Summit Health	



# Vision for Cancer Surveillance Reporting in Five Years

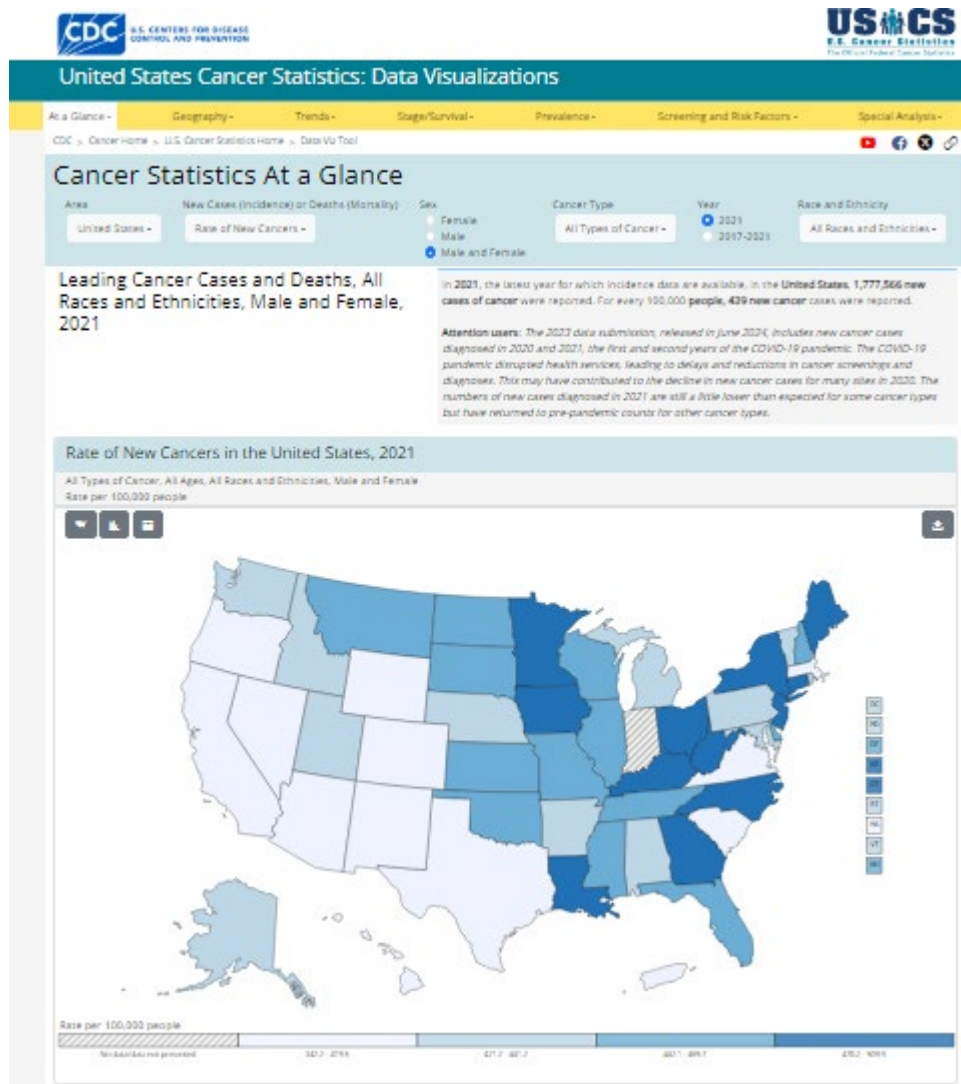
- All labs reporting electronically in real time using a common cloud platform
- Cloud platform will validate reports for conformance (structure and content)
- Conformance issues reported back to labs in real-time for continuous data improvement
- All labs are using the CAP protocols, and EHR/LIS can store and transmit SNOMED CT encoded data without any loss in content or meaning
- All CAP Cancer Protocols are using SNOMED codes
- Reports are used in real-time for cancer surveillance and research

# Cancer Registry Data Flow From APHL AIMS Cloud to CDC Cloud Platform



# Data Visualizations Tool

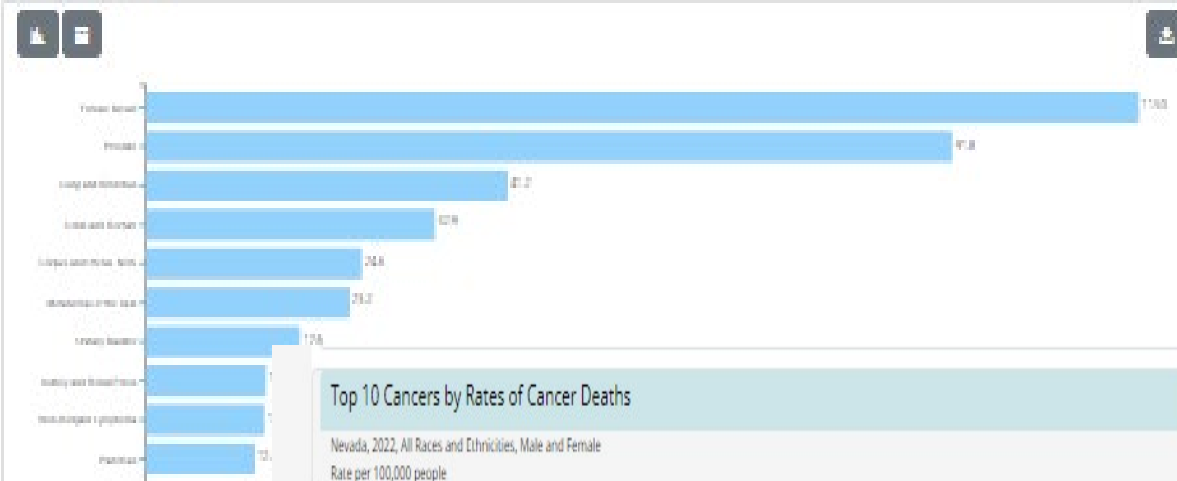
## U.S. Cancer Statistics



### Top 10 Cancers by Rates of New Cancer Cases

Nevada, 2021, All Races and Ethnicities, Male and Female

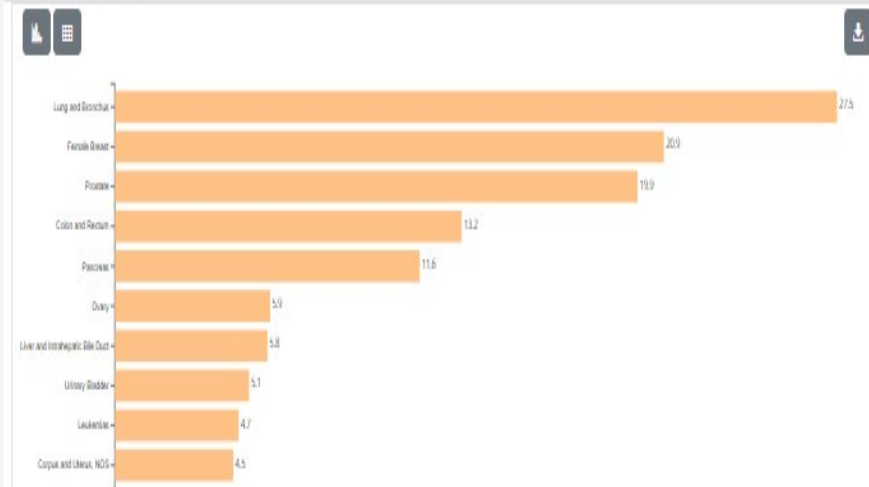
Rate per 100,000 people



### Top 10 Cancers by Rates of Cancer Deaths

Nevada, 2022, All Races and Ethnicities, Male and Female

Rate per 100,000 people



# Benefits and Return on Investment for Patients, Providers, and Public Health

- **Enable faster reporting of all cancer cases**
  - ❖ Including childhood and young adult cancers
- **Identify which interventions work**
- **Inform resource allocation**
- **Identify research priorities more quickly**
- **Timely identification for clinical trials**





# Resources

- CDC National Program of Cancer Registries: <https://www.cdc.gov/national-program-cancer-registries/>
- HL7 FHIR Cancer Pathology Data Sharing Implementation guide: <https://build.fhir.org/ig/HL7/cancer-reporting/>
- HL7 FHIR Central Cancer Registry Reporting Implementation Guide: <https://build.fhir.org/ig/HL7/fhir-central-cancer-registry-reporting-ig/index.html>
- North American Association of Central Cancer Registries (NAACCR) Electronic Pathology Reporting Guideline: <https://www.naaccr.org/pathology-laboratory-electronic-reporting/>
- Association of Public Health Laboratories Informatics Messaging Services: [https://www.aphl.org/programs/informatics/Pages/aims\\_platform.aspx](https://www.aphl.org/programs/informatics/Pages/aims_platform.aspx)
- EHR Certification: <https://www.healthit.gov/topic/certification-ehrs/certification-health-it>
- United States Core Data for Interoperability (USCDI): <https://www.healthit.gov/isp/united-states-core-data-interoperability-uscdi>
- US Core Implementation Guide: <https://build.fhir.org/ig/HL7/US-Core/>
- USCDI+ Cancer: <https://uscdiplus.healthit.gov/uscdi>
- Minimum Common Oncology Data Elements (mCODE): <https://confluence.hl7.org/display/COD/mCODE>
- Common Oncology Data Elements eXtensions (CodeX) HL7 FHIR Accelerator: <https://confluence.hl7.org/display/COD/Cancer+Registry+Reporting>

# Thank You!

For more information, contact CDC

1-800-CDC-INFO (232-4636)

TTY: 1-888-232-6348 [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov)

Follow us on X (Twitter) [@CDCgov](https://twitter.com/CDCgov) & [@CDC\\_cancer](https://twitter.com/CDC_cancer)

The findings and conclusions in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position of the U. S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.



[www.cdc.gov/uscs](https://www.cdc.gov/uscs)



COLLEGE of AMERICAN  
PATHOLOGISTS

# How Data Flows

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## Cancer Data Summit

# Alex Goel

## COI Declaration

- Co-Owner of Topology Health
- Consultant for The College of American Pathologists (CAP) working on projects related to Award Agreement Number 1 NU58DP007573-01-00 from the CDC



# **We're Collecting Vast Amounts of Data in Healthcare**

**This data is useful in many contexts**

# Cancer Pathology Data Sharing

## Specimen

**Procedure:** Lobectomy

**Specimen Laterality:** Right

## Tumor

**Tumor Site:** Lower lobe of lung

**Histologic Type:** Predominantly squamous cell carcinoma, moderately to poorly-differentiated; focal sarcomatoid carcinoma component.

**Histologic Grade:** G3: Poorly differentiated

**Total Tumor Size (size of entire tumor):** 2.2 x 1.6 x 1.2 Centimeters (cm)

**Tumor Focality:** Single focus

**Visceral Pleura Invasion:** Not identified

**Direct Invasion of Adjacent Structures:** Adjacent structures present but not involved

**Treatment Effect:** No known presurgical therapy

**Lymphovascular Invasion:** Cannot be determined

## Margins

**Margins:** All margins are uninvolved by tumor

**Margins Examined:** Bronchial; Vascular; Parenchymal

**Distance of Invasive Carcinoma from Closest Margin (Centimeters):** 8.5 cm

**Closest Margin:** Bronchial; Vascular

## Lymph Nodes

**Number of Lymph Nodes Involved:** 0

**Number of Lymph Nodes Examined:** 13

**Nodal Stations Examined:** Cannot be determined

## Pathologic Stage Classification (pTNM, AJCC 8th Edition)

**Primary Tumor (pT):** pT1c


**Regional Lymph Nodes (pN):** pN0

## Additional Findings

**Additional Findings:** Inflammation (type) - patchy acute; Emphysema; There is a usual interstitial pneumonia pattern in the background pulmonary parenchyma. This is characterized mostly by patchy areas of old interstitial fibrosis, with occasional fibroblastic foci and interstitial chronic inflammation, alternating with adjacent areas of normal alveolar septa - i.e. temporal heterogeneity. Subpleural involvement is more advanced, with some honeycombing. No asbestos bodies are found. While idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis is a consideration, clinical correlation is required.

## Comments

Although the squamous carcinoma is invasive, there is a significant component that is apparently in situ, growing along small bronchioles or bronchiolized airways and alveolar spaces.

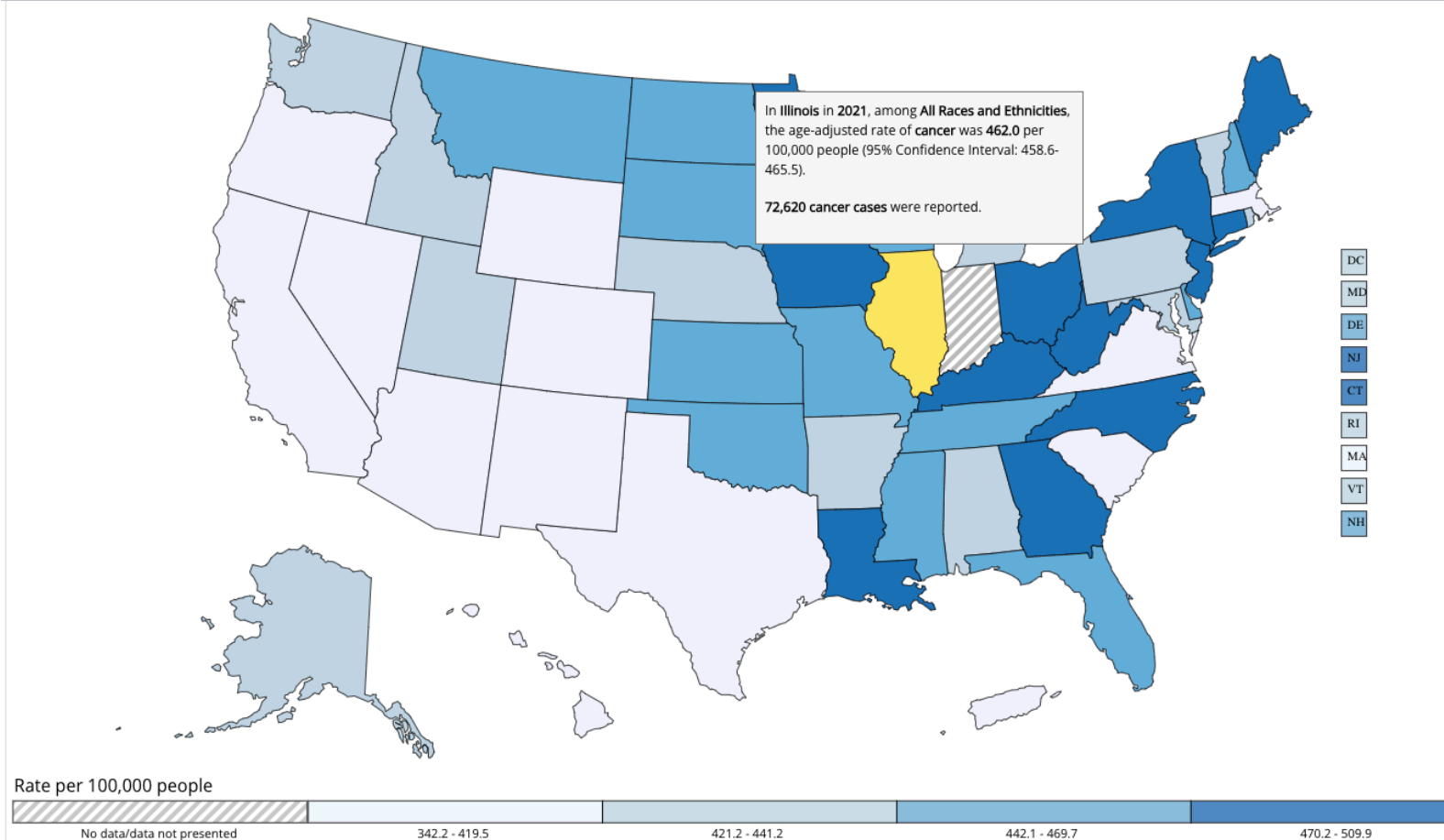


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4   "meta" : {
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8   ],
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10  },
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29    ]
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45      },
46      {
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49        "display" : "Infiltrating duct carcinoma of breast"
50      }
51    ]
52  },
53  },
54  "specimen" : {
55    "reference" : "Specimen/specimen875758333"
56  }
57 }
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# Where does all this data go?

## Rate of New Cancers in the United States, 2021

All Types of Cancer, All Ages, All Races and Ethnicities, Male and Female  
Rate per 100,000 people



<https://gis.cdc.gov/Cancer/USCS/#/AtAGlance/>

# Registry Software – eMaRC Plus

eMaRC Plus - [Workbench 3/16/2013 7:50:34 AM, File: prostate\_samples.hl7, Batch No: 3 - 1 of 9]

File Administration Tools Help

Import HL7 Import Pipe-delimited Open batch Export Abstracts PHINMS Queue Search Show/Hide List Raw Data Reports

Back Next Non-reportable Hold Test Report Heme Report Follow-back Save Delete Abstract Add Abstract Note eRE Map

Message ID: 18 Path Report No: 2530 Sex: M Spec Date: 01/18/2011 Processing status: Errors

Abstract Ref ID: 18

**MSH SEGMENT**  
CLIA number: 9999

**OBR SEGMENT**  
Path Report Number: 2530 Spec Collect Date: 201101181653

**eCC Report**

**> PROSTATE GLAND: Radical Prostatectomy**

**Tumor Site**  
Prostatic structure

**Procedure (Note G)**  
Radical prostatectomy

**Weight (g)**  
27.9

**Size (cm)**  
4

**Size (cm)**  
3.5

**Size (cm)**  
2.8

**Lymph Node Sampling (Note G)**  
No lymph nodes present

**Histologic Type (Note A)**  
Adenocarcinoma (acinar, not otherwise specified)

**Gleason Pattern**  
Gleason Pattern  
Grade 3  
Grade 4  
Not applicable  
Total Gleason Score: 7

**Proportion (percentage) of Prostate Involved by Tu**  
16

**Margins (Note I)**  
Margin(s) involved by invasive carcinoma  
Multifocal  
Postero-lateral (neurovascular bundle)

**Extraprostatic Extension (Note H)**  
Present  
Nonfocal (established, extensive)

**Seminal Vesicle Invasion (invasion of muscular wal**  
Present

**Treatment Effect on Carcinoma**

**DATA TO BE CODED**

Primary Site C619 - PROSTATE GLAND

Behavior Code ICD-O-3 3 Malignant, primary site

Histologic Type ICD-O-3 8140 - ADENOCARCINOMA, METASTATIC, NOS

Laterality 0 Not a paired site

Grade 3 Grade III: poorly differentiated

**PATHOLOGY REPORT HEADER**

Message Received 2011/01/27

Path Report Type 1 11 Flow cytometry, immunophenotype

Report Date 2011/01/27

Path Reporting Fac ID 1

Path Report Number 1 2530

Medical Record Number

Path Date Spec Collect 1 2011/01/18

Path Reporting Fac ID 2

Path Report Number 2

Physician-Primary Surg 70113

Pathologist Id 81993

Pathologist F Name

Pathologist L Name

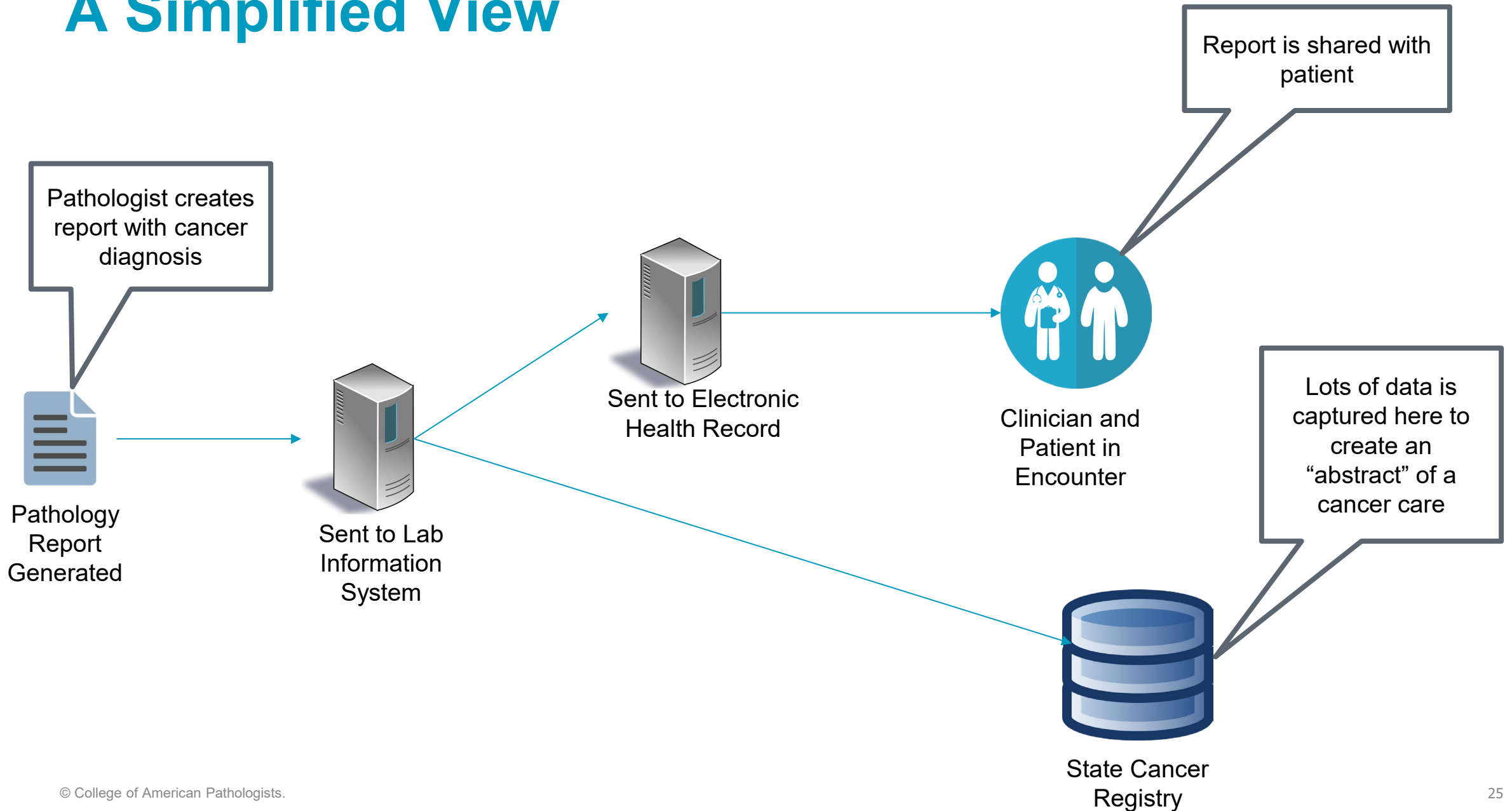
Pathologist M Name

**DEMOGRAPHICS**

Name-Last CALEBRITY



# A Simplified View



# The e-Paper Problem



**Specimen**  
**Procedure:** Lobectomy  
**Specimen Laterality:** Right

**Tumor**  
**Tumor Site:** Lower lobe of lung  
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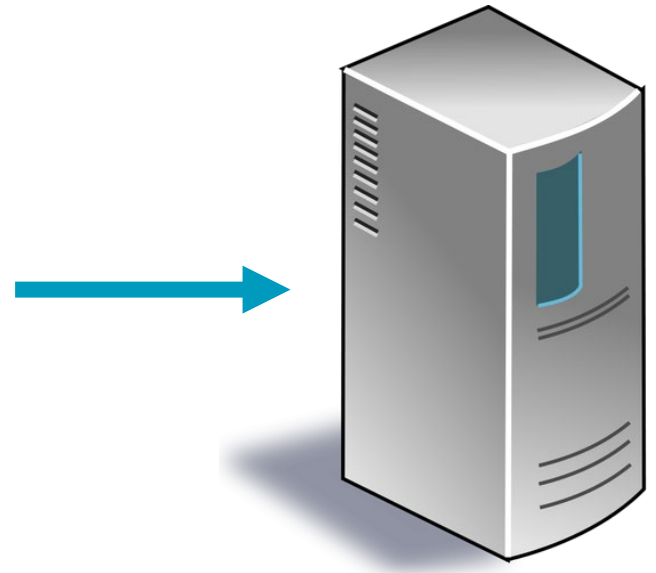
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**Pathologic Stage Classification (pTNM, AJCC 8th Edition)**  
**Primary Tumor (pT):** pT1c  
**Regional Lymph Nodes (pN):** pN0

**Additional Findings**  
**Additional Findings:** Inflammation (type) - patchy acute; Emphysema; There is a usual interstitial pneumonia pattern in the background pulmonary parenchyma. This is characterized mostly by patchy areas of old interstitial fibrosis, with occasional fibroblastic foci and interstitial chronic inflammation, alternating with adjacent areas of normal alveolar septa - i.e. temporal heterogeneity. Subpleural involvement is more advanced, with some honeycombing. No asbestos bodies are found. While idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis is a consideration, clinical correlation is required.

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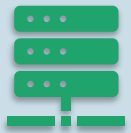
# Digital Health Standards Enable Data To Flow

**They're the specifications for the “plumbing” that makes data flow**

# Why Does Cancer Data Need Standards?



Standards help everyone speak the same language



Enable users of electronic Cancer Protocols (eCPs) to share the structured data created



Ensuring that pathologists and users of pathology data, including Cancer Registries, have high quality data



# **Synoptic Reporting in Cancer Pathology**

**electronic Cancer Protocols and their role in supporting  
Cancer Registries**

# What are the CAP Cancer Protocols?

- **Compilation of standards**
  - American Joint Committee on Cancer (AJCC) Staging System (2020)
  - World Health Organization (WHO) Blue Books
  - International Classifications of Disease for Oncology (ICD-O-3)
  - Evidence based practice guidelines
- **Provide cancer reporting core data elements**
- **[www.cap.org/cancerprotocols](http://www.cap.org/cancerprotocols)**

CAP Approved

Gastrointestinal • Colon and Rectum 4.0.1.0  
Resection

## Surgical Pathology Cancer Case Summary

Protocol posting date: June 2017

### **COLON AND RECTUM: Resection, Including Transanal Disk Excision of Rectal Neoplasms**

**Note:** This case summary is recommended for reporting transanal disc excision specimens, but is not required for accreditation purposes.

Select a single response unless otherwise indicated.

#### **Procedure**

- ☐ Right hemicolectomy
- ☐ Transverse colectomy
- ☐ Left hemicolectomy
- ☐ Sigmoidectomy
- ☐ Low anterior resection
- ☐ Total abdominal colectomy
- ☐ Abdominoperineal resection
- ☐ Transanal disk excision (local excision)
- ☐ Endoscopic mucosal resection
- ☐ Other (specify): \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Not specified

#### **Tumor Site (select all that apply) (Note A)**

- ☐ Cecum
- ☐ Ileocecal valve
- ☐ Right (ascending) colon
- ☐ Hepatic flexure
- ☐ Transverse colon
- ☐ Splenic flexure
- ☐ Left (descending) colon
- ☐ Sigmoid colon
- ☐ Rectosigmoid
- ☐ Rectum
- ☐ Colon, not otherwise specified
- ☐ Cannot be determined (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

#### **+ Tumor Location (applicable only to rectal primaries) (Note A)**

- + ☐ Entirely above the anterior peritoneal reflection
- + ☐ Entirely below the anterior peritoneal reflection
- + ☐ Straddles the anterior peritoneal reflection
- + ☐ Not specified

#### **Tumor Size**

- Greatest dimension (centimeters): \_\_\_\_ cm
- + Additional dimensions (centimeters): \_\_\_\_ x \_\_\_\_ cm
- ☐ Cannot be determined (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Macroscopic Tumor Perforation (Note H)**

- ☐ Not identified
- ☐ Present
- ☐ Cannot be determined

+ Data elements preceded by this symbol are not required for accreditation purposes. These optional elements may be clinically important but are not yet validated or regularly used in patient management.

6

# What Are the electronic Cancer Protocols (eCPs)?



**Specimen**  
**Procedure:** Lobectomy  
**Specimen Laterality:** Right

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**Comments**  
Although the squamous carcinoma is invasive, there is a significant component that is apparently in situ, growing along small bronchioles or bronchiolized airways and alveolar spaces.

Computerized versions of the cancer protocols

eCPs can automate information sharing and make it possible to do more with the data

# NAACCR Vol V Message Reference

John message

```
1 MSH|^~\&||xxx^1234^CLIA||1235||ORU^R01^ORU_R01|12|P|2.5.1|
2 OBX|1|ST|60573-3^Report template source^LN||CAP eCC||||F|||202001021400
3 OBX|2|CWE|60572-5^Report template ID^LN||119.100004300^LUNG^CAPECC||||F|||202001021400
4 OBX|3|ST|60574-1^Report template version ID^LN||3.005.001||||F|||202001021400
5 OBX|4|CWE|43094.100004300^?Synchronous Tumors (required if morphologically distinct unrelated multiple primary tumors are present)^CAPECC||41654.100004300^?Not applicable^CAPECC||||F|||202001021400
6 OBX|5|CWE|55856.100004300^Procedure^CAPECC||15717.100004300^Bilobectomy^CAPECC||||F|||202001021400
7 OBX|6|CWE|1693.100004300^Specimen Laterality^CAPECC||1694.100004300^Right^CAPECC||||F|||202001021400
8 OBX|7|CWE|54193.100004300^Tumor Site^CAPECC||1699.100004300^Middle lobe of lung^CAPECC||||F|||202001021400
9 OBX|8|CWE|54193.100004300^Tumor Site^CAPECC||1700.100004300^Lower lobe of lung^CAPECC||||F|||202001021400
10 OBX|9|CWE|41746.100004300^Histologic Type (Note C)^CAPECC||33378.100004300^Colloid adenocarcinoma^CAPECC||||F|||202001021400
11 OBX|10|CWE|1731.100004300^Histologic Grade (Note D)^CAPECC||1732.100004300^Not applicable^CAPECC||||F|||202001021400
12 OBX|11|CWE|43111.100004300^Total Tumor Size (size of entire tumor)^CAPECC||43137.100004300^Cannot be determined^CAPECC||||F|||202001021400
13 OBX|12|ST|43111.100004300^Total Tumor Size (size of entire tumor)^CAPECC||43137|Cannot Reapproximate||||F|||202001021400
14 OBX|13|CWE|41688.100004300^?Size of Invasive Component## (required only if invasive nonmucinous adenocarcinomas with lepidic component is present)^CAPECC||41820.100004300^?Not applicable^CAPECC||||F|||202001021400
15 OBX|14|CWE|41711.100004300^Tumor Focality (Note B)^CAPECC||41731.100004300^Cannot be determined^CAPECC||||F|||202001021400
16 OBX|15|CWE|15671.100004300^Visceral Pleura Invasion (Note E)^CAPECC||15673.100004300^Not identified^CAPECC||||F|||202001021400
17 OBX|16|CWE|43724.100004300^Direct Invasion of Adjacent Structures (Note G)^CAPECC||1775.100004300^Adjacent structures present but not involved^CAPECC||||F|||202001021400
18 OBX|17|CWE|15684.100004300^Treatment Effect (Note I)^CAPECC||30013.100004300^No known presurgical therapy^CAPECC||||F|||202001021400
19 OBX|18|CWE|1795.100004300^Lymphovascular Invasion (Note F)^CAPECC||1796.100004300^Not identified^CAPECC||||F|||202001021400
20 OBX|19|CWE|46319.100004300^Margins^CAPECC||57726.100004300^One or more margins are involved by tumor, or any margin cannot be assessed^CAPECC||||F|||202001021400
21 OBX|20|CWE|51508.100004300^Bronchial Margin^CAPECC||54582.100004300^Uninvolved by invasive carcinoma^CAPECC||||F|||202001021400
22 OBX|21|CWE|40805.100004300^?Status of Carcinoma in Situ at Bronchial Margin^CAPECC||56514.100004300^?Not applicable^CAPECC||||F|||202001021400
23 OBX|22|CWE|40624.100004300^Vascular Margin^CAPECC||59983.100004300^Uninvolved by carcinoma^CAPECC||||F|||202001021400
24 OBX|23|CWE|46180.100004300^Parenchymal Margin^CAPECC||16055.100004300^Positive for invasive carcinoma^CAPECC||||F|||202001021400
25 OBX|24|CWE|7841.100004300^Number of Lymph Nodes Involved^CAPECC||14471.100004300^None identified^CAPECC||||F|||202001021400
26 OBX|25|CWE|33444.100004300^Number of Lymph Nodes Examined^CAPECC||7835.100004300^Specify number^CAPECC||||F|||202001021400
27 OBX|26|NM|33444.100004300^Number of Lymph Nodes Examined^CAPECC||7835|2||||F|||202001021400
28 OBX|27|CWE|33450.100004300^Nodal Stations Examined^CAPECC||55956.100004300^Cannot be determined^CAPECC||||F|||202001021400
29 OBX|28|CWE|15994.100004300^?TNM Descriptors^CAPECC||2027.100004300^?Not applicable^CAPECC||||F|||202001021400
```

A NAACCR Vol message containing Questions and Answers from the eCP filled out by a Pathologist which is sent

This message is sent to a cancer registry

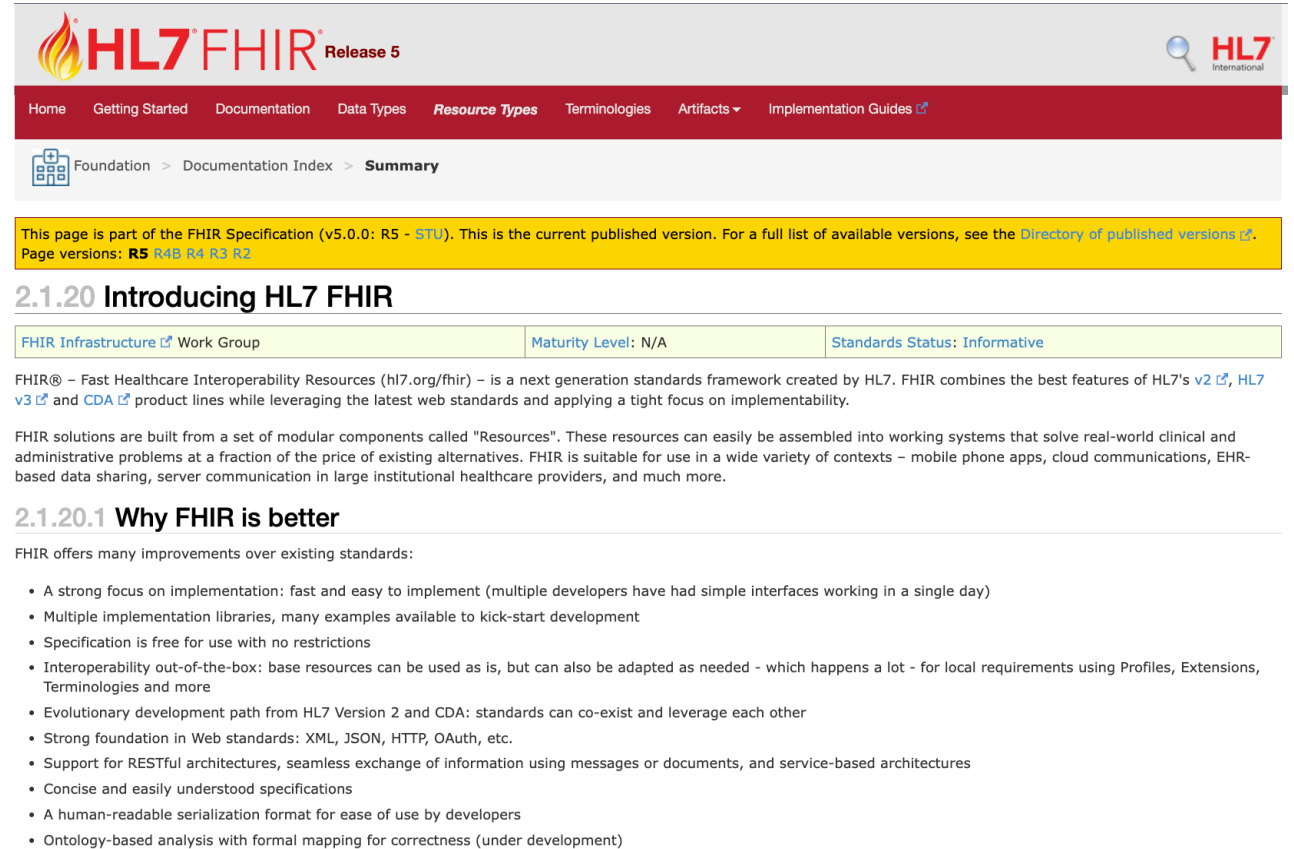
# Cancer Pathology Data Sharing

## An Implementation Guide on Using FHIR for Pathology Cancer Data Exchange



# What is FHIR

- “FHIR solutions are built from a set of modular components called "Resources".
- These resources can easily be assembled into working systems that solve real-world clinical and administrative problems.”



The screenshot shows the HL7 FHIR Release 5 website. The header includes the HL7 FHIR logo and navigation links: Home, Getting Started, Documentation, Data Types, Resource Types, Terminologies, Artifacts, and Implementation Guides. The breadcrumb trail indicates the current location: Foundation > Documentation Index > Summary. A yellow banner states: "This page is part of the FHIR Specification (v5.0.0: R5 - STU). This is the current published version. For a full list of available versions, see the Directory of published versions." The main heading is "2.1.20 Introducing HL7 FHIR". Below it, a table provides metadata: FHIR Infrastructure Work Group, Maturity Level: N/A, and Standards Status: Informative. The text describes FHIR as a next-generation standards framework created by HL7, combining the best features of HL7's v2 and CDA product lines. It highlights that FHIR solutions are built from modular components called "Resources" that can be assembled into working systems. The section "2.1.20.1 Why FHIR is better" lists several advantages: strong focus on implementation, multiple implementation libraries, free specification, interoperability out-of-the-box, evolutionary development path, strong foundation in web standards, support for RESTful architectures, concise specifications, human-readable serialization, and ontology-based analysis.

HL7 FHIR Release 5

Home Getting Started Documentation Data Types Resource Types Terminologies Artifacts Implementation Guides

Foundation > Documentation Index > Summary

This page is part of the FHIR Specification (v5.0.0: R5 - STU). This is the current published version. For a full list of available versions, see the [Directory of published versions](#).

Page versions: R5 R4B R4 R3 R2

## 2.1.20 Introducing HL7 FHIR

FHIR Infrastructure Work Group	Maturity Level: N/A	Standards Status: Informative
--------------------------------	---------------------	-------------------------------

FHIR® – Fast Healthcare Interoperability Resources ([hl7.org/fhir](http://hl7.org/fhir)) – is a next generation standards framework created by HL7. FHIR combines the best features of HL7's v2 and CDA product lines while leveraging the latest web standards and applying a tight focus on implementability.

FHIR solutions are built from a set of modular components called "Resources". These resources can easily be assembled into working systems that solve real-world clinical and administrative problems at a fraction of the price of existing alternatives. FHIR is suitable for use in a wide variety of contexts – mobile phone apps, cloud communications, EHR-based data sharing, server communication in large institutional healthcare providers, and much more.

### 2.1.20.1 Why FHIR is better

FHIR offers many improvements over existing standards:

- A strong focus on implementation: fast and easy to implement (multiple developers have had simple interfaces working in a single day)
- Multiple implementation libraries, many examples available to kick-start development
- Specification is free for use with no restrictions
- Interoperability out-of-the-box: base resources can be used as is, but can also be adapted as needed - which happens a lot - for local requirements using Profiles, Extensions, Terminologies and more
- Evolutionary development path from HL7 Version 2 and CDA: standards can co-exist and leverage each other
- Strong foundation in Web standards: XML, JSON, HTTP, OAuth, etc.
- Support for RESTful architectures, seamless exchange of information using messages or documents, and service-based architectures
- Concise and easily understood specifications
- A human-readable serialization format for ease of use by developers
- Ontology-based analysis with formal mapping for correctness (under development)

[Introducing HL7 FHIR – FHIR Infrastructure Group, 2024](#)

# Relationship to USCDI and USCDI+



- **USCDI is designed to promote more consistent data**
- **Can be represented in FHIR using the US-Core Implementation Guide**
- **Cancer data has broader set belonging to USCDI+ Cancer**

## United States Core Data for Interoperability

Version 5 | July 2024

This communication was printed, published, or produced and disseminated at U.S. taxpayer expense.

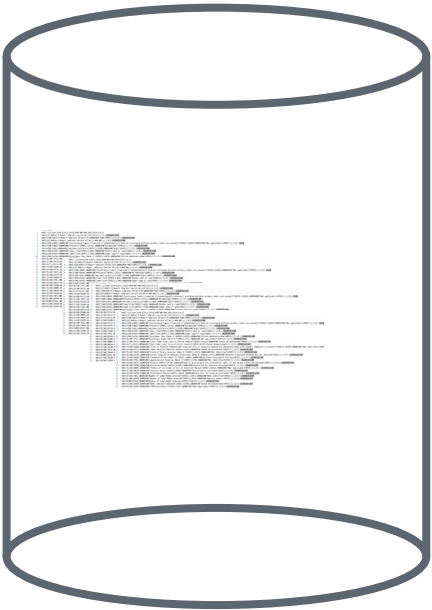
# eCPs on FHIR + SNOMED

The image shows a screenshot of a pathology report form. The top section is titled '15656 - SPECIMEN' and contains several checkboxes and text fields for specimen information. The bottom section is titled '15657 - TUMOR' and contains checkboxes and text fields for tumor information. The form is filled out with various values, including '43056 - 2 Synchronous Tumors (required if morphologically distinct unrelated multiple primary tumors are present)' and '43057 - Total Number of Primary Tumors'.

Filled eCP



Converted to FHIR



Saved as FHIR resources by the EMR

Endpoint could be *any receiver* (EMR, Registry, Health Information Exchange, etc.) who does not have the CKeys, but now they can understand the SNOMED

# Getting to Computable Pathology Cancer Data

W. Scott Campbell, PhD, MBA  
Peter Hinrichs Professor and Chair of Pathology Informatics  
University of Nebraska Medical Center

University of Nebraska  
Medical Center



Nebraska  
Medicine

# Disclosures

Nothing to disclose





# What do we know?

Anatomic pathology reports contain critical information for:

- Patient care
- Clinical trials
- Public Health
- Quality of Care
- Research

Stakeholders want and need this information

These data can be captured, shared (exchanged), used for multiple purposes repeatedly

HOW?



# Part 1 - Structured Reporting

## Australasia- RCPA

CAP Approved

US – College of American Pathologists

Breast • Invasive Carcinoma of the Breast  
InvasiveBreast 3.3.0.0

Note: The histologic type corresponds to the largest carcinoma. If there are smaller carcinomas of a different type, this information should be included under "Additional Pathologic Findings."  
Inflammatory carcinoma requires the presence of clinical findings of erythema and edema involving at least one-third or more of the skin of the breast (see explanation under "Pathologic Staging").  
Special type carcinomas should consist of at least 90% pure pattern.

### Histologic Grade (Nottingham Histologic Score) (Note F)

#### Glandular (Acinar)/Tubular Differentiation

- Score 1 (>75% of tumor area forming glandular/tubular structures)
- Score 2 (10% to 75% of tumor area forming glandular/tubular structures)
- Score 3 (<10% of tumor area forming glandular/tubular structures)
- Only microinvasion present (not graded)
- No residual invasive carcinoma after presurgical (neoadjuvant) therapy

#### Nuclear Pleomorphism

- Score 1 (low nuclear pleomorphism)
- Score 2 (intermediate nuclear pleomorphism)
- Score 3 (high nuclear pleomorphism)
- Score 4 (extreme nuclear pleomorphism)
- Score 5 (extreme nuclear pleomorphism with prominent nucleoli)
- Score 6 (extreme nuclear pleomorphism with prominent nucleoli and mitotic figures)
- Score 7 (extreme nuclear pleomorphism with prominent nucleoli, mitotic figures, and necrosis)
- Score 8 (extreme nuclear pleomorphism with prominent nucleoli, mitotic figures, necrosis, and lymphovascular invasion)
- Score 9 (extreme nuclear pleomorphism with prominent nucleoli, mitotic figures, necrosis, lymphovascular invasion, and stromal reaction)

Form for PALGA (Pathology Amsterdam) reporting, including fields for patient information, specimen details, and histological findings.

PALGA

### S1.02 Clinical details

Specimen type (select all that apply)

- diagnostic open biopsy ☐
- wide local excision (partial mastectomy, quadrantectomy or segmentectomy) ☐
- re-excision ☐
- mastectomy ☐

Sentinel nodes

Location:   
Number:  Colour:   
Radioactive count:

Invasive Carcinoma of the Breast

### SPECIMEN DETAILS

Depth of tissue excised  
Skin to deep ☐ Yes ☐ No

Specimen includes (select all that apply)

- Skin ☐
- Nipple ☐
- Skeletal muscle ☐

TUMOUR SITE (select all that apply) (Note 4)

- Not specified ☐
- Distance from nipple  mm
- AND
- Position, specify  o'clock

- OR
- Upper outer quadrant ☐
- Lower outer quadrant ☐
- Upper inner quadrant ☐
- Lower inner quadrant ☐
- Central ☐
- Nipple ☐
- Other, specify

TUMOUR FOCALITY (Note 5)

- Cannot be assessed ☐

### HISTOLOGICAL TUMOUR TYPE<sup>e</sup> (Note 7)

(Value list based on the World Health Organization Classification of Breast Tumours (2019))

- No residual invasive carcinoma ☐
- Invasive breast carcinoma of no special type (invasive ductal carcinoma, not otherwise specified)<sup>e</sup> ☐
- Invasive lobular carcinoma ☐
- Tubular carcinoma ☐
- Cribiform carcinoma ☐
- Mucinous carcinoma ☐
- Invasive micropapillary carcinoma ☐
- Carcinoma with apocrine differentiation ☐
- Metaplastic carcinoma ☐
- Mixed, specify subtypes present<sup>f</sup>

Other, specify

<sup>e</sup> Refer to Note for details of variants including medullary carcinoma.  
<sup>f</sup> Tumour exhibiting more than one tumour type should be designated mixed and the types present stated.

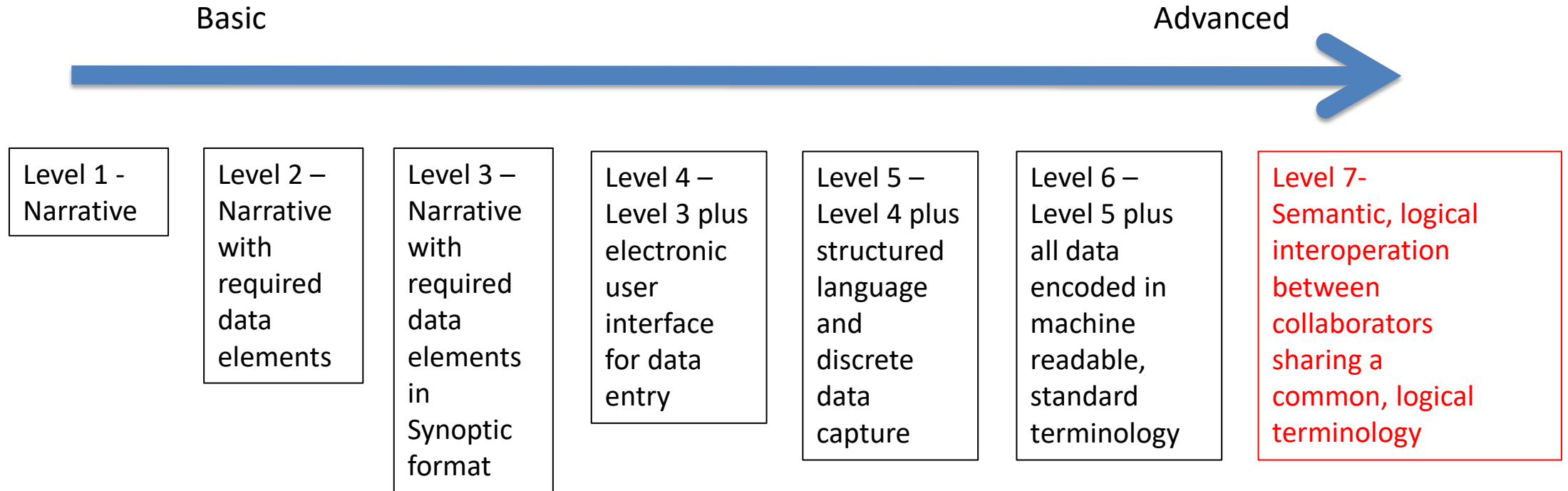
### HISTOLOGICAL TUMOUR GRADE (Note 8)

- No residual invasive carcinoma ☐
- Grade 1 (scores of 3, 4, or 5) ☐
- Grade 2 (scores of 6 or 7) ☐
- Grade 3 (scores of 8 or 9) ☐

Form for UK - RCPATH reporting, including fields for inflammation, DCIS size, LCIS, Paget's disease, microinvasive, and invasive carcinoma.

UK – RCPATH

# Part 2 – The Data



1. Srigley JR, McGowan T, Maclean A, Raby M, Ross J, Kramer S, et al. Standardized synoptic cancer pathology reporting: a population-based approach. J Surg Oncol. 2009 Jun 15;99(8):517-24.



## Part 2 - The Data Problem (prior to 2024)

- No standard representation of data elements to realize Level 6 or 7 reporting
- US CDC studies in 2005 and 2009 found that neither LOINC nor SNOMED CT had sufficient content with sufficient definition to unambiguously represent data elements in cancer registries for reliable query and study (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2009). Report on the Reporting Pathology Protocols Project for Breast and Prostate Cancers and Melanomas Executive Summary.)
- US College of American Pathologists introduced C-keys after CDC report. C-keys are data element identifiers. They carry no meaning/semantic, but they do provide a mechanism to associated data elements to their appropriate protocols.
- The Cancer Synoptic Reporting Working Group (CSRWG) was established to address this problem within SNOMED CT



# Part 2 – Data issue resolved

- 1284 new concepts created and/or fully modeled
- 100% of CAP required data elements for all solid tumors
  - 61 data sets
  - Includes both adult and pediatric data sets
  - CAP PERT committee reviewing and approving SNOMED CT terminology binding and association with C-keys.
  - CAP to include SNOMED CT terminology bindings in eCP and other release formats
- 24 ICCR data sets initially mapped to SNOMED CT
  - Terminology binding on-going for remaining data sets
  - Terminology binding to be reviewed and validated for use by ICCR





# The Process



Record it



# UNMC – Cerner Copath Example

Worksheet # 1 of 1  
 Diag/Part A: RECTAL SIGMOID COLON

Page 2 of 8

**COLON AND RECTUM: Resection**

<div style="background-color: #e0f0e0; padding: 2px; margin-bottom: 5px;">Tumor Size</div> <p><b>F1</b> Greatest dimension: <u>2.2</u> cm</p> <p>F2 *Additional dimensions: _____ cm</p> <p>F3 Cannot be determined</p> <p>F4 Other (specify): _____</p> <div style="background-color: #e0f0e0; padding: 2px; margin-top: 10px;">Macroscopic Tumor Perforation</div> <p>G1 Present</p> <p><b>G2</b> Not identified</p> <p>G3 Cannot be determined</p> <div style="background-color: #e0f0e0; padding: 2px; margin-top: 10px;">* Macroscopic Intactness of Mesorectum</div> <p><b>H1</b> * Not applicable</p> <p>H2 * Complete</p> <p>H3 * Near complete</p> <p>H4 * Incomplete</p> <p>H5 * Can not be determined</p> <p>H6 * Other (specify): _____</p> <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 20px;"> <p>**** NOTE ****</p> <p><b>All rectal carcinomas arising distal to peritoneal reflection, should have notation regarding mesorectum.</b></p> </div>	<div style="background-color: #e0f0e0; padding: 2px; margin-bottom: 5px;">Histologic Type</div> <p><b>J1</b> Adenocarcinoma</p> <p>J2 Mucinous adenocarcinoma (greater than 50% mucinous)</p> <p>J3 Signet-ring cell carcinoma (greater than 50% signet-ring cells)</p> <p>J4 High-grade neuroendocrine carcinoma</p> <p>J5 Large cell neuroendocrine carcinoma</p> <p>J6 Small cell neuroendocrine carcinoma</p> <p>J7 Squamous cell carcinoma</p> <p>J8 Adenosquamous carcinoma</p> <p>J9 Medullary carcinoma</p> <p>J10 Undifferentiated carcinoma</p> <p>J11 Other (specify): _____</p> <p>J12 Carcinoma, type cannot be determined</p> <div style="background-color: #e0f0e0; padding: 2px; margin-top: 10px;">Histologic Grade</div> <p>K1 Not applicable</p> <p>K2 Cannot be determined</p> <p><b>K3</b> Low-grade (well to moderately differentiated)</p> <p>K4 High-grade (poorly differentiated to undifferentiated)</p> <p>K5 Other (specify): _____</p>
--	---



# Sample FHIR Questionnaire

Colorectal Cancers	
Presurgical neoadjuvant therapy *	Administered
Type of neoadjuvant therapy	Chemo
Operative procedure *	Total colectomy
Tumour site *	Ascending colon
Tumour dimension *	12
Second dimension	2
Smallest dimension	1
Perforation *	Not identified
Histological tumour type *	Adenocarcinoma
Histological Tumour Grade *	High grade
Extent of Invasion *	Invasion onto the surface of the visceral peritoneum
Lymphatic and Venous Invasion *	Present
Small vessel invasion	Select one
Large vessel (intramural) invasion	1: Not identified
Large vessel (extramural) invasion	2: Present
Perineural Invasion *	Select one

# The Process



Record it

Send it



# FHIR SDC Format (partial)

```
{ "resourceType": "QuestionnaireResponse",  
  ....  
  "authored": "2023-10-17T00:24:38.695Z",  
  "item": [  
    { "linkId": "8937332503874",  
      "text": "Presurgical neoadjuvant therapy",  
      "answer": [ { "valueCoding": {  
                    "system": "http://snomed.info/sct/9000000000000207008",  
                    "code": "398166005",  
                    "display": "Administered"},  
                  { "linkId": "7905003324223",  
                    "text": "Type of neoadjuvant therapy",  
                    "answer": [ { "valueString": "Chemo" } ]  
                  } ]  
    } ]  
}
```





# HL7 v2 OBR and OBX segments

OBR|1|null^Colorectal Cancers|

OBX|1|CNE|1279827005^Presurgical neoadjuvant  
therapy^LN||398166005^Administered^http://snomed.info/sct/900000000000207008|

OBX|2|CNE|2620001000004108^Operative procedure ^http://snomed.info/sct/900000000000207008 ||26390003^Total  
colectomy^http://snomed.info/sct/900000000000207008|

OBX|3|CNE|399687005^Tumour site ^http://snomed.info/sct/900000000000207008 ||9040008^Ascending  
colon^http://snomed.info/sct/900000000000207008|

OBX|4|NM|200001000004104^Tumour dimension ^http://snomed.info/sct/900000000000207008 ||12|

OBX|5|CNE|788481000004105^Perforation^ ^http://snomed.info/sct/900000000000207008 ||47492008^Not  
identified^http://snomed.info/sct/900000000000207008|

OBX|6|CNE|1284862009^Histological tumour type ^http://snomed.info/sct/900000000000207008  
||1187332001^Adenocarcinoma^http://snomed.info/sct/900000000000207008|

OBX|7|CWE|1285736001^Histological Tumour Grade ^http://snomed.info/sct/900000000000207008 |1155707008^High  
grade^http://snomed.info/sct/900000000000207008|



# The Process

Record it

Send it

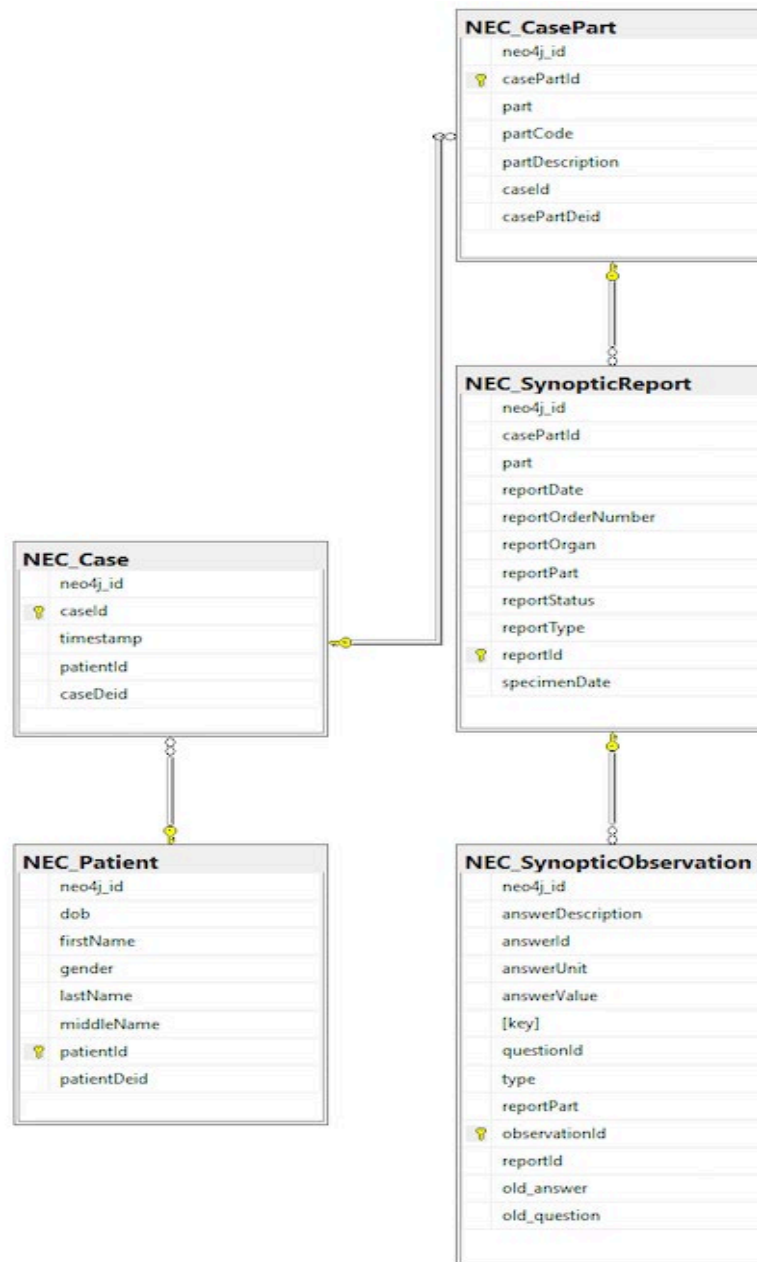
Store it



# UNMC Tumor Biorepository Model

Synoptic Observations stored in RDBMS MS SQL structure

RDBMS allows easy to understand patient, report-level data



Graph allows for ECL-like query capability in runtime environment

SNOMED CT contained in MS SQL graph model

SCTID bound to graph

# The Process



# Samples of tractable questions:

## •Difference of tumor profile based on response to therapy prior to resection

- Final all breast cancer cases with synoptic data
- Get two groups of cases:
  - Those with complete response to neoadjuvant therapy
  - Those with less than complete response to neoadjuvant therapy
- Provide the histologic type, ER/PR/Her2 profiles of the tumors between both groups. Is there a difference in distribution?

## •Treatment approaches

- Find all ER+ breast cancer cases with:
  - tumor size  $\leq 1\text{mm}$
  - Number of lymph nodes involved  $< 3$
- Determine how many patients have received the following therapies:
  - Tamoxifen alone
  - Aromatase inhibitor therapy alone
  - CDK 4/6 inhibitor therapy with tamoxifen or aromatase inhibitor therapy





# Step 1 – Find all breast cancer cases




1660001000004100 |Histologic type of primary malignant neoplasm of breast (observable entity)|

SNOMED CT	Histology	Quantity
82711006	Infiltrating duct carcinoma (morphologic abnormality)	1099
89740008	Lobular carcinoma (morphologic abnormality)	204
49755003	Morphologically abnormal structure (morphologic abnormality)	82
1187425009	Carcinoma (morphologic abnormality)	66
72495009	Mucinous adenocarcinoma (morphologic abnormality)	22
1187332001	Adenocarcinoma (morphologic abnormality)	17
443933007	Ductal carcinoma in situ with microinvasion (morphologic abnormality)	13
4631006	Tubular adenocarcinoma (morphologic abnormality)	13
444057000	Infiltrating carcinoma with ductal and lobular features (morphologic abnormality)	11
128705006	Metaplastic carcinoma (morphologic abnormality)	7
22694002	Adenocarcinoma with apocrine metaplasia (morphologic abnormality)	6
703578005	Invasive micropapillary carcinoma of breast (morphologic abnormality)	4
703594003	Solid papillary carcinoma with invasion (morphologic abnormality)	4
703545003	Encapsulated papillary carcinoma (morphologic abnormality)	3
703596001	Tubulolobular carcinoma (morphologic abnormality)	2
373395001	Invasive ductal carcinoma with an extensive intraductal component (morphologic abnormality)	1

## Step 2 – Stratify by response to neoadjuvant therapy

1255589007 | Presence of regression of primary malignant neoplasm of breast after neoadjuvant antineoplastic therapy (observable entity)|

SNOMED CT	Response	Quantity
1220561009	Not recorded (qualifier value)	2
2667000	Absent (qualifier value)	1
255545003	Definite (qualifier value)	1

 **Presence of regression of primary malignant neoplasm of breast after neoadjuvant antineoplastic therapy (observable entity)**  

SCTID: 1255589007

1255589007 | Presence of regression of primary malignant neoplasm of breast after neoadjuvant antineoplastic therapy (observable entity) |

en Presence of regression of primary malignant neoplasm of breast after neoadjuvant antineoplastic therapy (observable entity)

en Presence of regression of primary malignant neoplasm of breast after neoadjuvant antineoplastic therapy

Inheres in → Malignant neoplasm  
Property → Presence (property)  
Scale type → Ordinal value  
Inherent location → Breast structure  
Characterizes → Malignant proliferation of primary neoplasm  
Characterizes → Regression of neoplasm  
Precondition → Neoadjuvant antineoplastic therapy  
Time aspect → Single point in time



## Step 3 – Stratify by IHC Results

1234805007 |Presence of estrogen receptor in primary malignant neoplasm of breast by immunohistochemistry (observable entity)|

1234801003 |Presence of progesterone receptor in primary malignant neoplasm of breast by immunohistochemistry (observable entity)|

3550001000004108 |Presence of receptor tyrosine-protein kinase erbB-2 in primary malignant neoplasm of breast by immunohistochemistry (observable entity)|

SNOMED CT	Estrogen Receptor	Progesterone Receptor	HER/Neu
Not recorded (qualifier value)	Positive	Positive	Negative
Not recorded (qualifier value)	Negative	Negative	Negative
Absent	Positive	Positive	Equivocal
Definite	Negative	Negative	Equivocal



# Questions



**University of Nebraska  
Medical Center**



**Nebraska  
Medicine**

