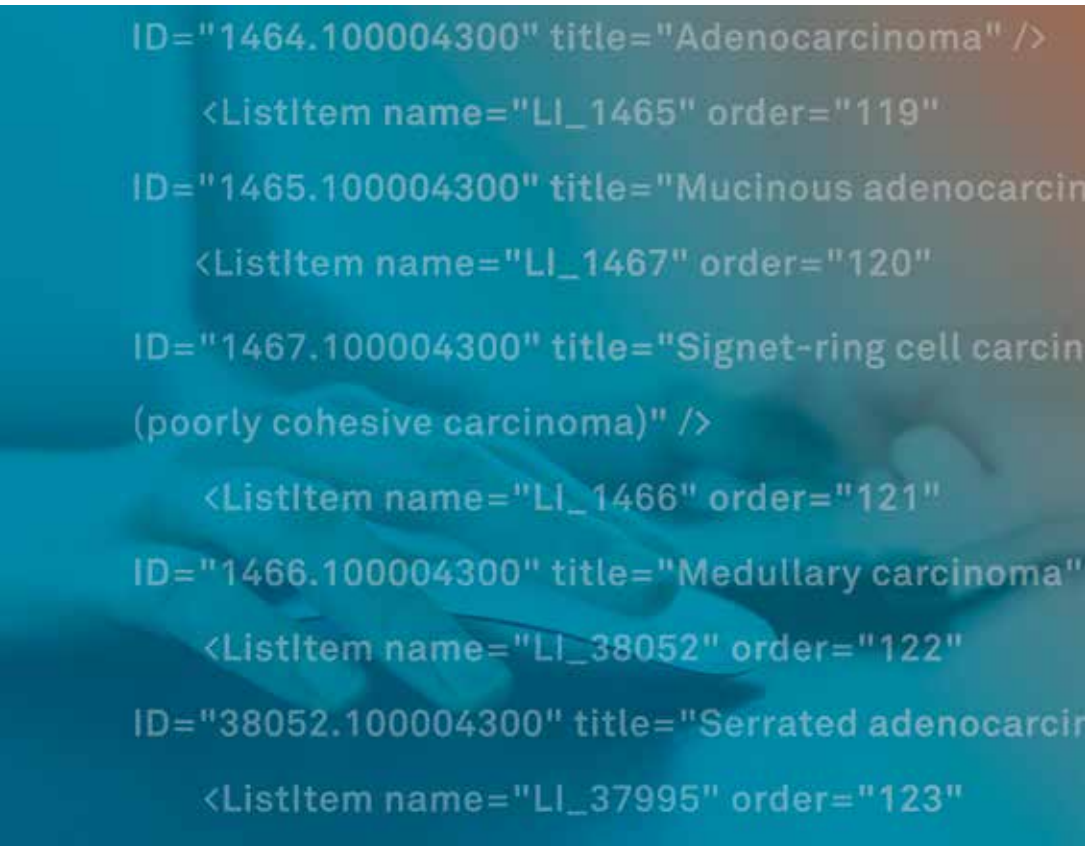
Leveraging the Power of Pathology Data

With the CAP electronic Cancer Protocols



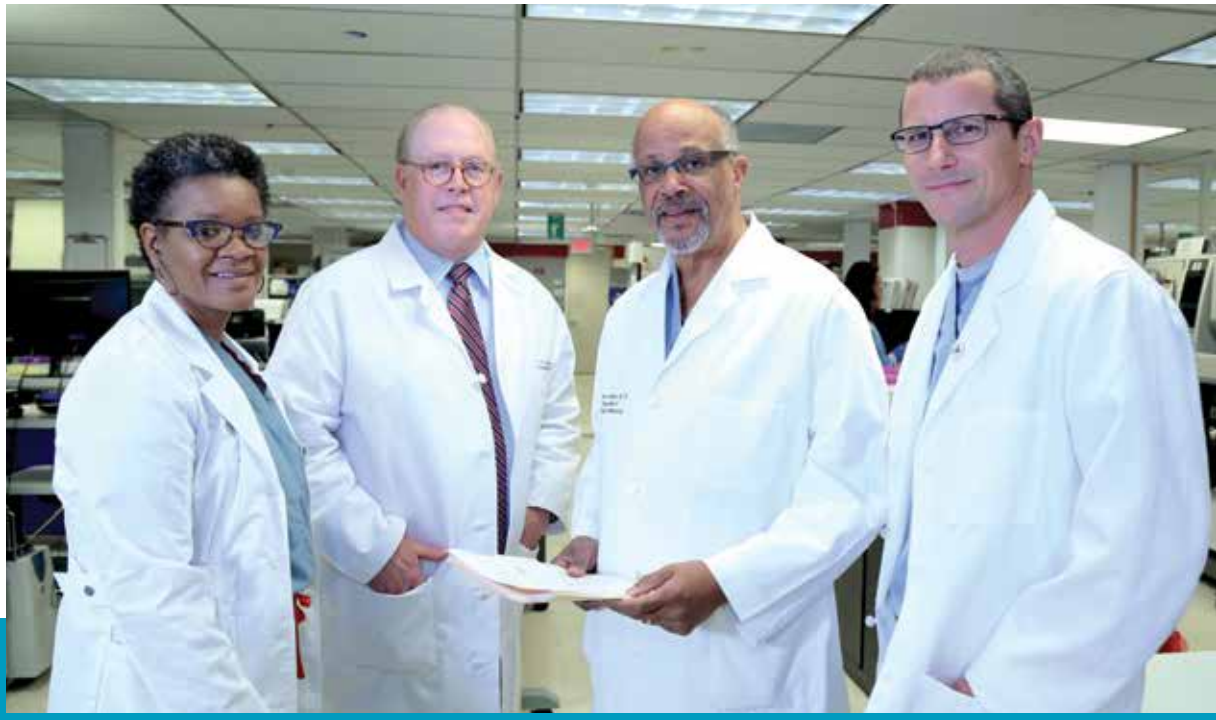
COLLEGE of AMERICAN PATHOLOGISTS
Laboratory Quality Solutions

Bringing Benefits Beyond the Laboratory Walls

Pathology plays a critical role in the diagnosis and treatment of cancer. **Every pathology report produced by your laboratory supports potentially life-changing patient care.**

But that same report also holds the potential to do so much more when it becomes part of a larger data set.

Initially developed in 1986, the Cancer Protocols from the College of American Pathologists (CAP) provide a structure for consistent and meaningful information, enabling health care professionals to report out clinical data for improved patient care. Twenty years ago, the CAP worked with industry partners to develop the electronic Cancer Protocols to both provide standardized data sets and enable the synoptic gathering of data within the pathologist's workflow.



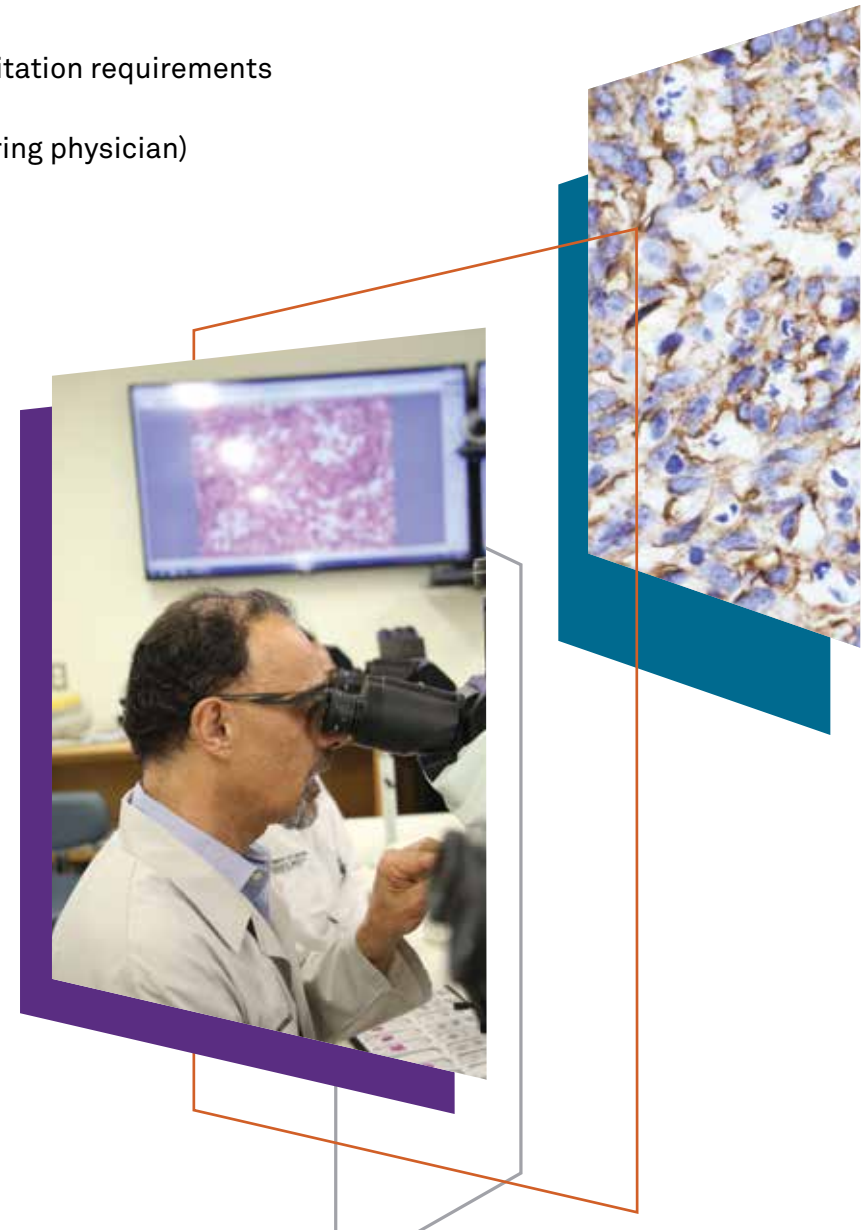
This ebook provides a guide for critical conversations about how the CAP electronic Cancer Protocols can streamline data collection and standardize cancer reporting, thus supporting better patient care, improving laboratory service levels, and informing research that drives advances in health care.

Starting the Conversation

Numerous stakeholders across health care organizations can benefit from the use of the electronic Cancer Protocols. These discussions usually start in the laboratory, where pathologists lead the collection and dissemination of data based on specimen review. This work is foundational for collecting and utilizing cancer reporting data.

Beyond streamlining data collection, the electronic Cancer Protocols support both the pathologists and laboratory leadership with the following efforts:

- Delivering reports that are easy for patients to understand
- Staying current with evolving best practices
- Standardizing processes
- Ensuring quality of the pathology work
- Meeting and maintaining compliance/accreditation requirements
- Supporting pathologist efficiency
- Promoting stakeholder satisfaction (eg, ordering physician)



Continuing the Conversation

The electronic Cancer Protocols bring value throughout not only the health system but the entire patient care process. It's important for both pathologists and laboratory leadership to consider the benefits that can be realized in other areas when pathology reports are standardized with the electronic Cancer Protocols.

Quality Leadership

- Maximizing accuracy of pathology reports
- Standardizing within and across laboratories, networks, and systems
- Optimizing data quality and workflow efficiency
- Ensuring accuracy of data analysis

Clinical Partners

- Delivering quality patient care/research results
- Interpreting pathology reports given the quality and consistency of standardized reporting
- Accessing and using key data to support population science
- Receiving reports quickly

C-suite/Executives

- Enabling scalability and growth through standardization
- Demonstrating measurable quality improvement processes
- Achieving and maintaining accreditation
- Strengthening organizational reputation

In the pages that follow, you'll discover key benefits that the electronic Cancer Protocols can provide across—and beyond—the pathology department.

Enabling Improved Patient Care

Delivering quality care is the goal for everyone in health care. When referring physicians review a cancer pathology report, they look for key pieces of information to guide their treatment decisions for the best possible patient outcomes. Having data in a standardized, synoptic format ensures all pertinent information is included, enabling physicians to quickly and easily find what they are looking for—and therefore enabling more rapid and effective treatment decisions.

Proven Benefits of Structured Data

According to a study in the *Journal of Clinical Oncology*, the use of structured reporting "improved patient care in those with CRC [colorectal cancer] by providing more complete reports of higher quality, which had significant effects on the delivery of adjuvant therapy and patient outcomes." The authors also concluded that implementation of structured reporting for CRC "resulted in increased completeness of pathology reports, higher-quality pathology evaluation, and better outcomes for patients."[1]

In another article from the *Journal of Clinical Oncology,*

> ***"The use of standardized structured data sets for pathology cancer reporting has been shown to improve patient care and clinical outcomes." The article goes on to demonstrate benefits associated with "interoperability and data exchange through health information technology standards utilization and advancement."***[2]

Making Data More Accessible

The standardized format produced by the electronic Cancer Protocols facilitates collaboration among clinicians during tumor board discussions. The electronic Cancer Protocols can integrate directly with the AP-LIS and be shared with the Electronic Health Record (EHR), making pathology reports and diagnostic data available quickly and seamlessly.

Staying Current and Maintaining Compliance

Laboratories across the country and around the world rely on the CAP to help them stay current with the latest evidence-based practices and to maintain quality and proficiency across their entire pathology team.

The electronic Cancer Protocols incorporate the latest standards to help pathologists and laboratories stay abreast of the advances and updates in cancer reporting, including those from the World Health Organization Classification of Tumours (Blue Books) and the American Joint Committee on Cancer Staging Manual.

Synoptic reporting also helps laboratories and hospitals comply with requirements for organizations such as the American College of Surgeons Commission on Cancer, the CAP's Laboratory Accreditation Program, and more.

Ensuring Consistency in Reporting

In the fast-paced world of pathology and laboratory medicine, it can be difficult to maintain consistency in cancer reporting—especially across multiple pathologists who are managing a variety of case types. The electronic Cancer Protocols can help laboratories improve consistency in three key areas.

Standardizing Processes for New Pathologists

New-in-practice pathologists face a variety of challenges while settling into their new roles. The electronic Cancer Protocols can provide a valuable foundational element in the overall training curriculum for trainees and new pathologists. By ensuring all specific data elements are included for clinicians, researchers, and other data users, laboratories can give new pathologists a solid start toward a standardized, quality-focused approach to their work.

Managing Varied or Less-Familiar Cases

In laboratories that handle cases with a wide range of cancer types, variability can be challenging. The electronic Cancer Protocols can provide a standardized approach when reporting on less-familiar types of cancer. Pathologists can feel confident they are providing the correct information and supporting the best patient care treatment decisions.

Reducing Time Spent on Incomplete Reports

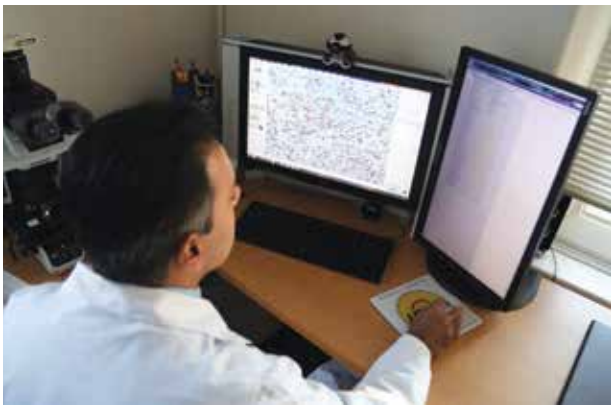
Time spent fixing incomplete reports is a drain on productivity and can delay important patient care decisions. Standardizing laboratory reporting with the electronic Cancer Protocols can help ensure these critical diagnoses contain all the necessary data elements in a consistent, predictable format.

Delivering Standardized Data for Quality Management

As the saying goes, you can't improve what you can't measure. Showing measurable improvements in quality is a priority for both laboratory leaders and quality departments. Standardizing cancer reporting can also provide valuable data and insights for C-suite executives.

With a structured, standardized approach to data capture for cancer cases, the electronic Cancer Protocols provide a template for consistent and accurate quality measurement. Everyone involved in the diagnostic process is collecting, using, and sharing data in the same way—particularly important as pathologists or clinical partners may move between institutions.

Standardizing cancer pathology reports in a synoptic format allows like-for-like comparisons within an individual laboratory, throughout a facility or network, or even across multiple regions. That same standardization helps ensure consistency and quality during times of growth or acquisition for health care organizations.



Supporting Cancer Research for Improved Treatments

Cancer registries play a critical role in cancer surveillance and serve as a foundation for cancer research. As with any data-driven effort, the more information that can be made available for analysis, the more effective the results will be.

Standardizing the format of cancer pathology reports supports a more reliable data exchange across a wide array of organizations and agencies like the National Cancer Institute (NCI), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONC), EHR/LIS vendors, insurance companies, clinical support applications, pharmaceutical developers, and more.

Using the cancer registry standard (HL7 NAACCR Vol V) for transmitting structured data files can also ease the burden of communicating cancer data to public health authorities as well as within and between various vendor systems.

No matter what your practice setting might be—whether an academic institution, a private practice, or a reference laboratory—we are all working to advance health care for better outcomes, and your pathology data powers research and population science from which breakthroughs emerge.

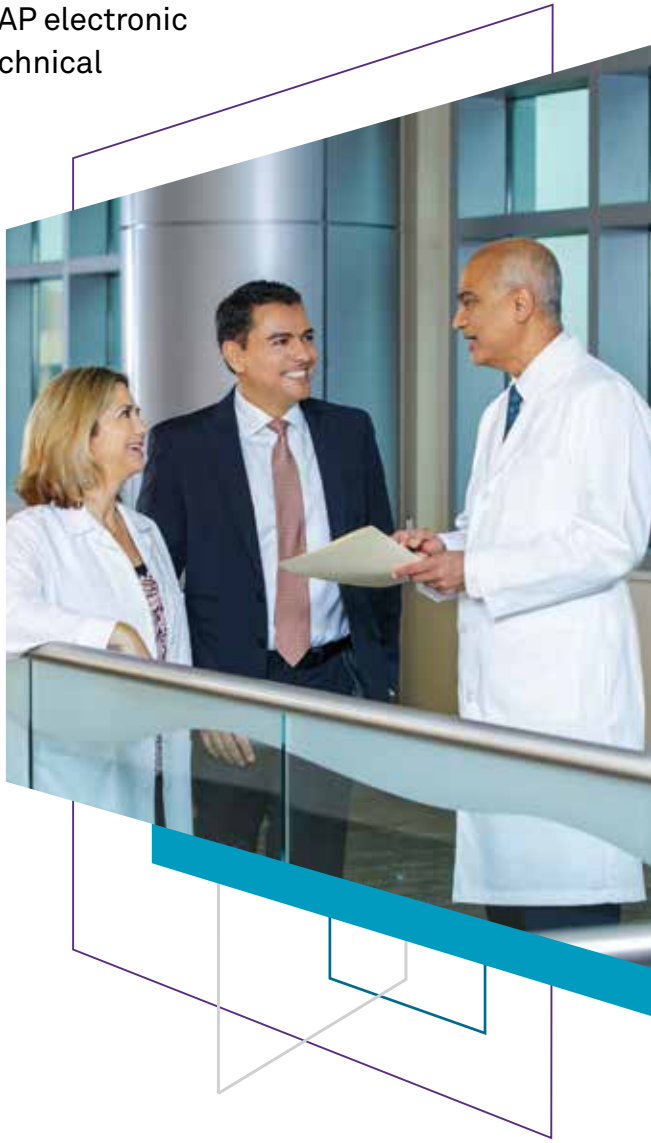
A Proven Solution From a Trusted Partner in Pathology

From helping new-in-practice pathologists ensure their cancer reports are complete and current with the latest evidence-based standards, to supporting the latest advancements in treatment options, standardizing your cancer reporting with the electronic Cancer Protocols leverages your pathology data for greater health care value systemwide.

As a trusted partner for quality and accreditation, the CAP is uniquely positioned to help laboratories and health systems realize the potential of standardized synoptic reporting of cancer data.

Start a conversation in your organization about what the CAP electronic Cancer Protocols can do. We have experts in all areas of technical and clinical implementation who can provide additional information and support as the discussion continues.

To learn more about our electronic Cancer Protocols, contact your CAP representative, visit cap.org, or email cancerprotocols@cap.org.

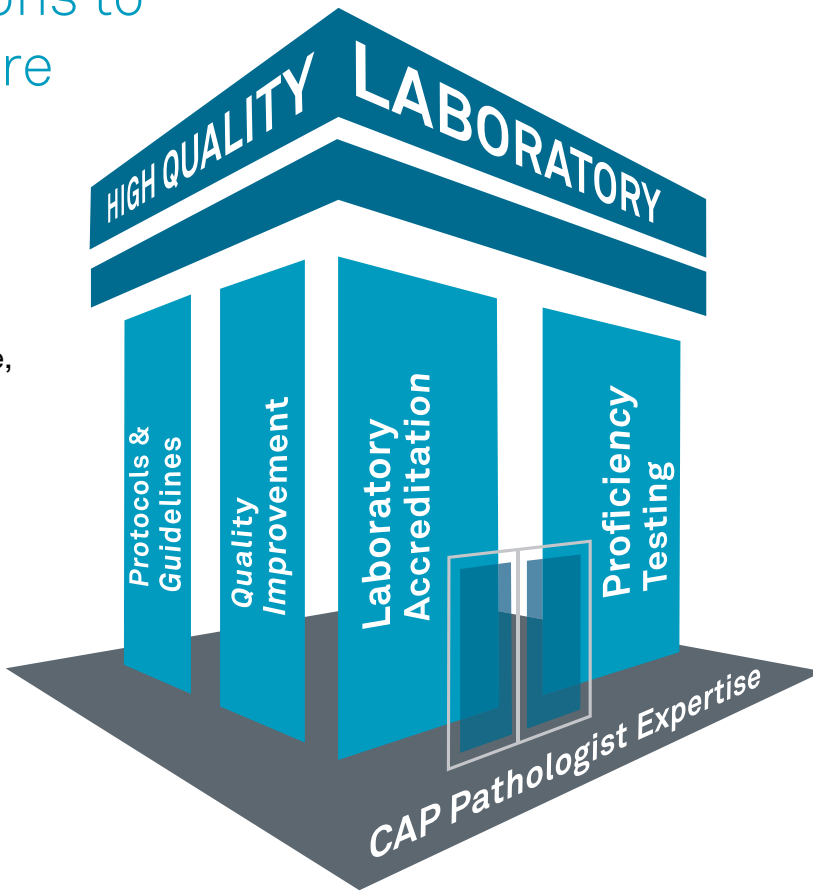


Sources:

1 Sluijter CE, van Workum F, Wiggers T, van de Water C, Visser O, van Slooten HJ, Overbeek LIH, Nagtegaal ID. Improvement of Care in Patients with Colorectal Cancer: Influence of the Introduction of Standardized Structured Reporting for Pathology. *JCO Clinical Cancer Informatics.* 2019 May;3:1-12. doi: 10.1200/CCI.18.00104. PMID: 31070983.

2 College of American Pathologists Cancer Protocols: From Optimizing Cancer Patient Care to Facilitating Interoperable Reporting and Downstream Data Use. Vanda F. Torous, Ross W. Simpson, Jyoti P. Balani, Alexander S. Baras, Michael A. Berman, George G. Birdsong, Giovanna A. Giannico, Gladell P. Paner, Jason R. Pettus, Zack Sessions, S. Joseph Sirintrapun, John R. Srigley, and Samantha Spencer. *JCO Clinical Cancer Informatics 2021;*:5, 47-55

Laboratory Quality Solutions to Ensure Quality Patient Care



Built on a foundation of pathologist expertise, the **College of American Pathologists** (CAP) partners with laboratories worldwide to elevate the quality of laboratory medicine with best-in-class solutions designed to drive operational excellence, achieve diagnostic confidence, and ensure the best patient care.

The CAP is a single provider of laboratory quality solutions, offering convenience with a full suite of programs in laboratory accreditation, proficiency testing, cancer protocols, evidence-based guidelines, and quality management tools.

Laboratory Excellence Begins With the CAP

Empowered by more than 17,000 member pathologists and 23,000 laboratory participants throughout 110 countries, our collective expertise and knowledge of laboratory medicine guides advancement through changing environments—all with a focus on serving patients, pathologists, and the public.

COLLEGE of AMERICAN PATHOLOGISTS

325 Waukegan Road
Northfield, IL 60093-2750
800-323-4040

cap.org