

“WHERE ARE YOU FROM?”

AN EFFORT TO DECREASE THE PERCENTAGE OF COUNTY UNKNOWN IN PUERTO RICO

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BACKGROUND

- As an entity supported by CDC's National Program of Cancer Registries (NPCR), the Puerto Rico Central Cancer Registry (PRCCR) must meet certain standards for the Call for Data report. At the Call for Data, NAACCR and NPCR evaluates the quality of various data items submitted including the percentage of county unknown.
- Historically, the PRCCR has long been aware of the high proportion of cases with county unknown but until recently, the PRCCR did not had many efficient resources to reduce this percentage. Although Puerto Rico is a small island, it has 78 counties. For 2008, 2009, and 2010 the percentage of county unknown was 4.7, 9.0, and 10.2 respectively.
- One important goal in order to meet the NAACCR Silver Certification is to find a source that allows us to decrease the percentage of county unknown in the near future.

PURPOSE

- To recover cancer patients' county information from different sources such as claims from public and private insurance companies, and treating physicians' records in order to decrease the percentage of county unknown for the 2010 Call for Data.
- To recover sociodemographical information such as birthdates, last names, marital status, age, addresses, and social security numbers missing in PRCCR database, among others.

METHODS

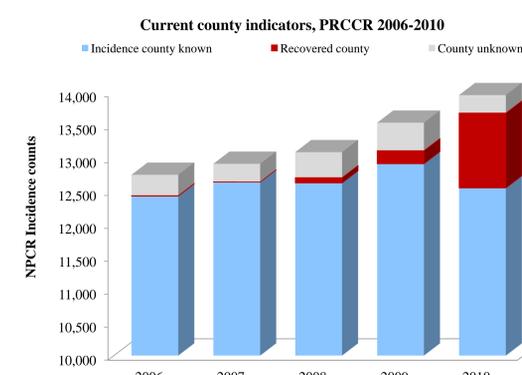
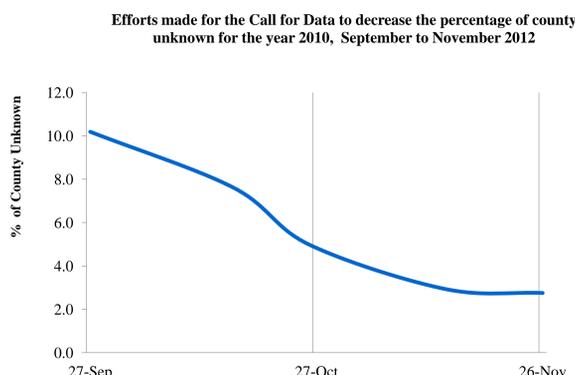
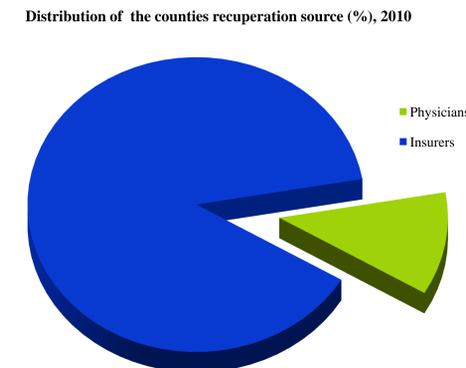
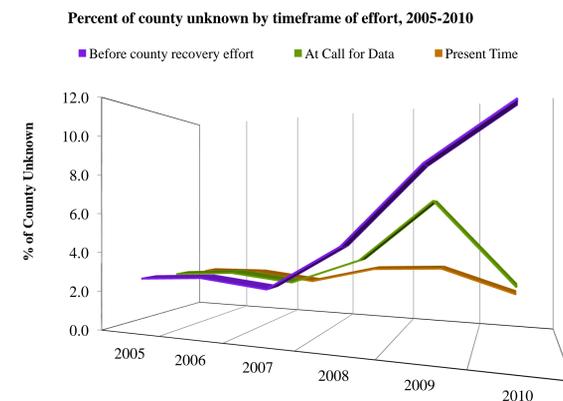
Physicians' Data - Direct communication was established with some physicians, after follow up, to explain them the PRCCR's Law and the importance of reporting timely and complete data. They received exclusive lists which contained the patients whose county information was missing. The lists were distributed via encrypted email. The information was received at the PRCCR through their source of preference or through an authorized contact person.

METHODS

Insurers' Data - The Law of the PRCCR also includes insurance companies as potential sources of information. For this reason public and private insurance companies were approached to share their databases with PRCCR's. The data was only about those insurers' clients who have had an ICD 9-CM code related to cancer in their claims. Some insurance companies accepted to collaborate with the PRCCR, via formal agreement, establishing an unprecedented event. After signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), a layout was distributed to the insurance companies for reporting purposes and then the cancer data was linked with the different insurers' administrative databases using the probabilistic match procedure of the CDC's Link Plus software.

RESULTS

- The percentage of county unknown for 2010 was decreased from 10.2 to 2.8 in only two months.
- Approximately 11.3% of the counties recovered came from physician's lists, and 88.7% from insurance companies claims.



RESULTS

- After various attempts to contact the physicians, most of them gave us the requested data. 31% of them replied to the communication in one week or less, 42%, in more than one week, and 27% did not collaborate with us. Physicians that didn't participate failed to respond.
- On the contrary, most of the contacted insurance companies replied to the communication and accepted to collaborate with us. This effort achieved coverage of more than 70% of the public and the principal private insurance companies in Puerto Rico.
- With the insurance companies claims data the PRCCR recovered unknown counties from 2008 until present and also recovered sociodemographical information such as birthdates, and social security numbers, among others. At this time, the percents of county unknown for 2008, 2009, and 2010 are 3.0, 3.1, and 2.0 respectively.

DISCUSSION

With the collected data from physicians and insurance companies, the PRCCR achieved an acceptable level of county unknown. Since this approach proved to be efficient, current efforts are addressed into improving all the other years with high % of county unknown, include other private insurance companies, as well as to comply with all parameters and achieve the Silver Certification for the Call for Data of 2011. Future collaborations will be kept with Puerto Rico's public and some private insurance companies as well as with the hospitals and physicians in order to achieve acceptable level of this important parameter and optimize the overall PRCCR's data flow for the years to come.

DISCLAIMER

The collection of cancer-incidence data was supported, in part, by the National Program of Cancer Registries of the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention by the Puerto Rico Central Cancer Registry as part of the statewide cancer reporting program mandated by the Puerto Rico State Law No. 28 of March 20, 1951, and Law No. 113 of July 30, 2010 (Law of the Puerto Rico Central Cancer Registry).