Field Testing

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What is Field Testing

- Quality assurance method used to assess
  - 1. Accessibility: Determine if a potential data item is available in source documents
  - 2. Feasibility: Assess a proposed data item prior to implementation
- Mandated by the Mid-Level Tactical Group (MLTG)
- Representatives on MLTG include: AJCC, Canada, CoC, NAACCR, NCRA, NPCR, SEER

2

Implementation of Field Testing

Under discussion for greater than 10 years

- Problem was determining how to implement Field Testing

Field Testing process first implemented in 2019

SEER's Reliability Study website being used

Field Testing Team:

Jennifer Ruhl (NCI SEER)

NAACCR SSDI Workgroup

Carmela Groves (Westat)

Nicki Schussler (IMS)

Bran Handley (IMS)

What Information Does a Field Testing Study Provide?

- Determine if the information for a potential data item is available in the general registry community
- Allow registrars early access to the proposed new data items
- Give registrars the opportunity to evaluate the codes and coding instructions prior to implementation
- Assist the standard setters in determining if the proposed data item should be implemented
- Provide information on educational needs

Field Testing Initiation Process

Standard setters determine if there are data items they would like to collect

These data items may be:

1. Stage-related
2. Biomarkers with clinical significance
3. Treatment related information

Note: Suggestions for new data items may also come from a hospital or central registrars, but they need to request a sponsor to formally propose the new data item (AJCC/CoC, NAACCR, NCRA, NPCR, SEER)

5

Field Testing Initiation Process

- Once a sponsor decides to recommend a data item for testing, they must fill out the "NAACCR Change Request Form," which includes
  - Organization supporting the change
  - Contact person for proposal
  - New or modified data item
  - Schemas to which new data item will apply
  - Description of proposed new data item or change
  - Rationale for change proposal (potential benefits of change)

- Information needed about the data item
  - Proposed data item name/length
  - Allowable values and format
  - New data item coding instructions
  - Location where data item can be found
  - Existing standards
  - Evidence whether data item will be present in records accessible to hospital registrars
  - Obtainability of data item without additional burden on abstracting staff
  - Description of the level of effort required to obtain these data items

Field Testing Initiation Process

Field Testing Initiation Process

- Once all the information is collected (per the previous two slides), the standard setter proposing the new data item presents it to the MLTG
- MLTG will
  - Review and discuss the data item, request additional information as needed
  - Vote on approving/rejecting the data item
  - If data item approved, send to NAACCR Senior Level Tactical Group (SLTG)
    - SLTG will make the final decision for approval
  - Contact standard setter/initial requestor with feedback from the MLTG and/or the SLTG on additional changes that can be made

Field Testing Initiation Process

- Once a data item has been approved to be tested for implementation, MLTG notifies the Field-Testing Team
- Field Testing Team and requestor of data item may reach out to other registries or NAACCR groups to further develop codes and the coding instructions
  - SSDI plays a major role in this process since they are experienced in developing data items

Getting Ready for Field Testing

To test a proposed data item, we must have samples of real cases

A call for cases is developed to request records with information about the sites, histologies, specific biomarkers, or other specific results needed for each data item under review

The call for cases is sent out to all registrars through CoC, NAACCR, NCRA, NPCR, SEER

A due date is assigned

Getting Ready for Field Testing

Once the cases are received, the Field-Testing Team reviews each individual record received to determine if they are appropriate for the study

The Field-Testing Team will look for cases that have differences between them to provide a variety in how item is captured

Once the cases are decided upon, the "preferred answer" are developed for each data item along with the rationale

Getting Ready for Field Testing

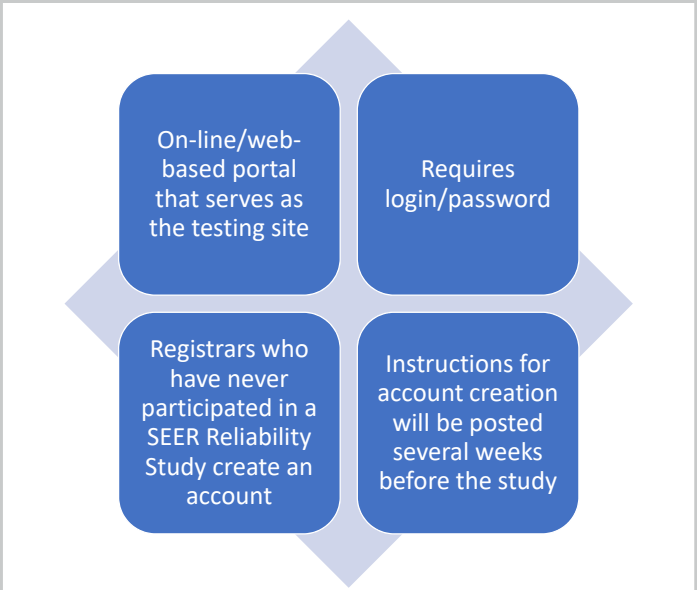
After the initial preferred answers and rationales are determined, the cases are sent to an additional group of registrars, who volunteer to be reviewers through NCRA. The codes, descriptions, coding instructions, preferred answers, and rationales are provided

The registrars are given 2-3 weeks to review the cases and provide feedback on the preferred answers and rationales

Once reviews are received back, the Field-Testing Team will review the comments and adjust the preferred answers and/or rationales as needed

Once the final preferred answers and rationales are determined, all the information regarding the case is sent to IMS for uploading into the SEER Reliability Study website

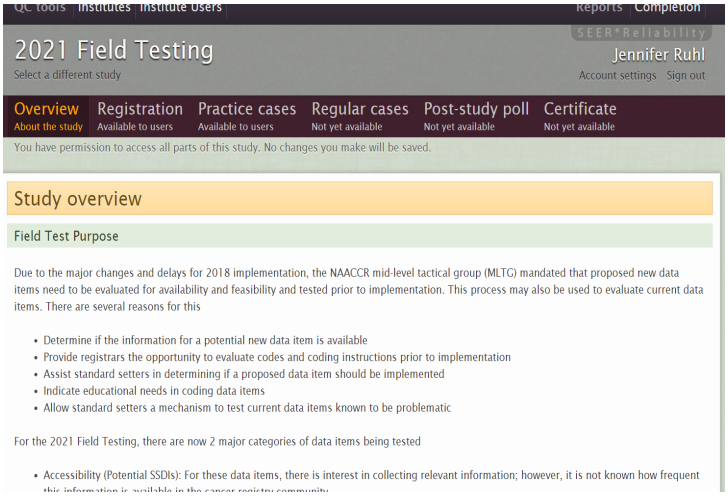
SEER Reliability Study website



SEER Reliability Study Website: Overview Page

SEER Reliability (cancer.gov)

- Specific data items being field tested
- Instructions related to these data items
- CEU information
  - 2-3 CEUs depending on study
  - Additional CEUs available if registrar completes more than one group of cases
- Estimated time to complete study
  - Usually, 2-3 hours
  - Additional time required if registrar completes more than one group of cases



SEER Reliability Study Website

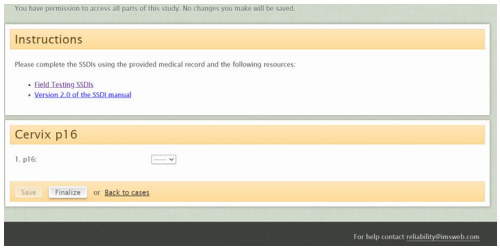
- SEER Reliability Study website has many advantages
  - Additional data other than the proposed data items can be collected (e.g., demographic items)
  - The codes, descriptions, and coding instructions are made available to the registrars
  - The registrar records their answer and after submitting it, they receive the preferred answer and rationale
  - Before going to the next question, they can provide comments, stating if they agree or disagree with the preferred answer and/or rationale and why
    - Registrars can comment on anything at this point; they can mention issues that not only affect the current data item, but other data items as well
  - The feedback received from these comments are very critical for the development of these data items

Advantage of Using the SEER Reliability Study website for Field Testing

- SEER Reliability Study website has advantages, cont.
  - With everyone coding the same cases, we can determine where there might be issues
  - Since workplace (hospital registry, central registry, other) and Certified Tumor Registrar (CTR) status are also collected, we can review findings comparing different groups of registrars. For example, it was determined through previous reliability studies that
    - CTRs with greater than 10 years of experience tend to code with greater accuracy
    - Non CTRs with little experience tend to not code as accurately

SEER Reliability Study Website

Example of cases from 2020 Field Testing
Data Items listed



Data Item Cervix p16
Documentation for the Field Testing included in the data item
For coding the data item, a drop box is available, which includes only the allowable values

Do we really review all the comments received from Reliability Studies and Field Testing

Reviewing Responses from the Field Testing

Individuals' names are not tracked

Confidentiality is strictly maintained (your results are not shared with anyone)

We don't know you participated unless you tell us

Responses are reviewed in aggregate (other than the comments) for where the preferred answer was not chosen

Situations where the preferred answer was not chosen are examined

These incorrect responses sometimes help us determine where there might be problems

19

Reviewing the Responses from the Field Testing

- Each comment is reviewed to determine if
  - The preferred answer needs to be modified
  - The preferred rationale needs to modified or clarified/expanded
  - Code changes are needed
  - Coding instructions need additions, changes, or clarifications

Finalizing the Results from the Field Testing

The Field-Testing Team will:

- Modify codes and coding instructions
- Reach out to experts (physicians, pathologists, etc..) to address comments, questions received
- Develop 'final' answers and rationales after adjudication
- Make the final and formal recommendation for a data item to be implemented

MLTG and SLTG will make final decision on implementation

21

Advantages of Field Testing for Registrars

Very helpful to have registrars, especially hospital registrars that are working on the front lines, assess the data items before release

Registrars can find where the "holes" in proposed data items exist and can contribute to their development

Registrars may also be able to provide information about how their specific hospital/facility documents a certain test, which may result in additional changes

By making these data items available for review prior to release, standard setters may be able to address some of the major concerns that may come up before release

22

Field Testing Participation

- Testing is done November 1 – December 15
- Please participate
- Here's your chance to
  - Step up by participating
  - Speak up by providing feedback

Thank you for all you do and helping us with this very important task