Strategic Management Plan

2021–2024

NAACCR
North American Association of
Central Cancer Registries

Introduction

The North American Association of Central Cancer Registries, Inc. (NAACCR), is an association of more than 100 sponsoring, sustaining, and full members representing population-based central cancer registries and other cancer surveillance organizations in all U.S. states and Canadian provinces. Leading U.S. Federal agencies include the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the National Cancer Institute. Canadian partner organizations include the Canadian Council of Cancer Registries, Canadian Partnership Against Cancer, and Statistics Canada. The American Cancer Society, Commission on Cancer, and National Cancer Registrars Association (NCRA), as well as many other cancer surveillance entities, are also NAACCR members. These diverse, dedicated groups are united through NAACCR to ensure the development and promotion of uniform data standards; to provide education and training opportunities; and to publish and promote the use of cancer surveillance data and research to ensure high-quality, population-based data from cancer registries across North America.

Central cancer registries play an essential role in our understanding of cancer and its diagnosis, treatment, and prevention by ensuring that accurate and timely population-based data are available for use in cancer control, epidemiologic research, public health programs, and patient care to reduce the burden of cancer. NAACCR has a long history of accomplishment and continues to be a leader in cancer surveillance by ensuring standardization, enhancing the quality of data through analysis and certification, and expanding data use through innovative approaches.

This current plan is the third iteration of the NAACCR Strategic Management Plan (SMP). The first iteration, which was implemented 2011–2016, focused on establishing the Priority Areas that we still have today to advance NAACCR's mission and vision. In June 2016, the NAACCR Board approved the second iteration of the SMP (2016–2021),

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which articulated a new 5-year vision for the organization based on the previously implemented and now fully functioning Priority Areas. This third iteration of the plan aims to move us from a management focus to a more strategic focus for the period 2021–2024. Our goal is that this plan will support the ongoing work of the Priority Area steering committees, work groups, and task forces, while at the same time moving toward a more strategic vision of how NAACCR can contribute to moving the field of cancer surveillance forward. A detailed history of the SMP, and the 2021–2024 SMP itself, can be found on the NAACCR Strategic Management Plan website.

Monitoring and Review

Steering Committees monitor progress toward reaching goals on an ongoing basis as one of their key responsibilities. Progress on objectives and strategic steps are assessed at every Steering Committee meeting. In addition, Board Liaisons work with the Steering Committees to bridge any gaps or address emerging issues that might arise. The Board and Steering Committee Chairs meet annually to conduct an in-depth assessment of the SMP and address challenges and barriers that impact progress. In the past, the NAACCR Annual Conference has also served as a venue for communicating progress in each of the five priority areas, and meetings have been held to report on progress and discuss concerns. At the same time, additional member forums have been organized to capture more critical feedback. Throughout this effort, the Steering Committees and Board have made adjustments and updates to the SMP when necessary. In 2020, the Board and Steering Committees made plans to conduct a thorough review of the progress made during the past 5 years and update or revise the plan to ensure NAACCR continues to advance central cancer registries. A membership survey was conducted regarding the SMP. In February 2021, the NAACCR Board and Steering Committee Chairs came together to engage in a comprehensive assessment of progress during the past 5 years and an exploration of new directions or programs that might be needed to sustain the continued success of NAACCR.

In preparation for that meeting—

- A review of progress on the current SMP was undertaken by the Steering Committees;

- Board members reviewed NAACCR's contributions to its vision and mission;

- A key stakeholder survey was completed to obtain feedback on both the benefits and costs of the SMP and the committee restructuring; and

- An updated analysis of NAACCR's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats was outlined.

At the meeting—

- Progress in each priority area was assessed, and an intensive evaluation of goals and objectives was undertaken;

- An environmental scan was completed, and changes were considered; and

- A NAACCR town hall was held, along with a subsequent comment period to afford members another opportunity to provide input on the proposed revised SMP.

Based on all the information gathered, a decision was made to move forward with a 3-year Management Plan while concurrently developing a Strategic Plan. Although the membership survey results indicated that the vision and mission statements were still relevant, the NAACCR Board will be reviewing them as part of the strategic process. Crosscutting issues were considered, and strategies to address them were proposed. Steering Committees worked to update each priority area and proposed methods to assess and monitor progress where feasible. The creation of dashboards was also discussed as another method to monitor and review progress toward reaching goals.

NAACCR Advancing to the Next Level

NAACCR remains a robust and effective organization, but we recognize that we must always be cognizant of understanding how we can improve and grow to meet the changing needs of our membership. Some of the biggest challenges organizations face include establishing clear organizational direction and effective communication (internal and external) and managing change and member engagement. You will see that several goals and objectives in this SMP address these areas:

- NAACCR recognizes that the SMP should more clearly communicate strategic direction for the organization. In conjunction with the revamped Strategic Planning and Alliances Steering Committee, the NAACCR Board will be deliberate about highlighting strategic directions and will include that information in updated versions of the SMP.

- Collaboration among Steering Committees is critical to the success of many goals and objectives in this SMP. As Steering Committees developed new goals and objectives, they were purposeful in identifying crosscutting work and specifying which other Committees would be involved.

- The Communications Steering Committee will focus efforts on effective communication through multiple mechanisms: the *NAACCR Narrative*, social media, and peer-to-peer sharing opportunities.

- Change is inevitable in our profession, and our colleagues in the Standardization and Registry Development Steering Committee have many objectives intended to help us successfully navigate change. Topics include interoperability and interfaces with electronic health data, informatics, artificial intelligence and other technologies, emerging data sources, interstate deduplication, and other innovative uses of cancer registries. Underpinning all this work is the Steering Committee's charge of developing and maintaining our data collection standards.

- The Professional Development Steering Committee will be working toward improving member engagement through the Member Ambassador Program, which is intended to help newer staff in member registries get connected and involved in NAACCR activities.

- The Research and Data Use Steering Committee—in collaboration with Professional Development—will work to improve the research and data use capacity of NAACCR member registries and external researchers.

THE NAACCR *WOW* Initiatives

As part of its first SMP from 2011–2016, the *WOW* initiative was originally proposed to challenge the cancer surveillance community to take on a big-picture problem that would have a transformative impact on the field. *WOW* projects address complex problems within the cancer surveillance community that require innovative and collaborative solutions that cross all priority areas and bring together outside partners. As an example, in 2012, NAACCR identified the Virtual Pooled Registry-Cancer Linkage System (VPR-CLS) as its first *WOW* project.

Virtual Pooled Registry-Cancer Linkage System: The creation of a resource to support multistate or nationwide research with one application and one file submission will continue. This resource will also have the capacity to support inter-registry deduplication, cohort-based research studies, clinical trials, and U.S. Food and Drug Administration–required post-marketing surveillance. Not only will the VPR-CLS facilitate linkages, but its simultaneous goal is to develop a central institutional review board (IRB), which could function as a universal IRB for VPR-CLS–eligible studies. In addition, a template IRB application is being developed to streamline the IRB process.

As of the release date of the 2021–2024 SMP, the NAACCR Board has not adopted any additional *WOW* initiatives. However, the Board will be focusing on strategic direction over the next 3 years. Through that process, we fully expect to identify at least one new *WOW* initiative to include in the SMP.

Steering Committee Goals and Objectives

Communications Steering Committee

Goal 1: **Strengthen NAACCR's ability to capture and share member views, opinions, and perspectives on important registry issues and promote member engagement and the sharing of expertise, knowledge, procedures, and best practices among NAACCR members.**

Objective 1: Identify opportunities to enhance the content and broaden the distribution of the *NAACCR Narrative* newsletter to expand readership.

Objective 2: Develop an effective and efficient process for the systematic and timely review and publication of material submitted for the *NAACCR Narrative*.

Objective 3: Enhance member opportunities for sharing best practices and obtaining member views and insights on specific cancer surveillance issues.

Objective 4: Improve the ability of NAACCR to promote member engagement opportunities.

Goal 2: **Strengthen NAACCR's ability to promote its products, services, and accomplishments to increase brand awareness and market visibility among external stakeholders, partner organizations, and other target audiences.**

Objective 1: Explore and develop strategies and resources to share promotional content through multiple media outlets.

Professional Development Steering Committee

Goal 1: Develop and implement strategies to recruit and retain personnel in central cancer registries by enhancing career opportunities for individuals with diverse skill sets.

Objective 1: Partner with other professional organizations (e.g., American Health Information Management Association, American Public Health Association, NCRA) to address recruitment and retention issues.

Objective 2: Establish collaborative approaches to make career opportunities more attractive to individuals with skill sets and expertise to build and implement the cancer registry of the future.

Objective 3: In collaboration with other steering committees, such as Standards and Registry Development and Research and Data Use, bring top central registry staff together to brainstorm best practices for leadership, management, registry operations, epidemiology/statistics, information technology (IT), research support, and data security.

Objective 4: Collaborate with NCRA and other groups to address data quality from non-cancer registry/non-U.S. outsourcing firms.

Objective 5: Engage new members through the Member Ambassador Program to encourage involvement in NAACCR activities.

Goal 2: Develop a comprehensive multidisciplinary training program to ensure that NAACCR members possess the requisite skill sets to excel in the rapidly changing cancer surveillance environment.

Objective 1: Produce a training program that includes core competencies in the areas of leadership, management, registry operations, epidemiology/statistics, IT, research support, and data security to prepare members for management positions and to provide a talented and reliable supply of future NAACCR leaders.

Objective 2: Coordinate an inter-registry mentorship program, with opportunities for registry staff to observe operations and best practices of highly successful registries.

Objective 3: Support and guide university-level curriculum for central cancer registries, along with other interested organizations.

Research and Data Use Steering Committee

Goal 1: Increase the use of central cancer registry data.

Objective 1: Assess the relevance and demonstrate the value of central cancer registries to the cancer control community, clinicians, researchers, and the public (in collaboration with Communications Priority Area).

Objective 2: Develop efficient processes to improve access to North American population-based cancer registry data.

Objective 3: Improve the research and data use capacity of NAACCR member registries and external researchers (in collaboration with Professional Development Priority Area).

Standardization and Registry Development Steering Committee

Goal 1: Prepare for the cancer surveillance system of the future—a system that is more timely, responsive, and adaptable to change.

Objective 1: Analyze how cancer surveillance systems will interface with electronic health data and continue to assess semantic interoperability issues.

Objective 2: Engage with and appraise national and international efforts regarding informatics initiatives, electronic health records, artificial intelligence, and other IT technologies as they relate to central cancer registries.

Objective 3: Identify, analyze, and assess emerging cancer surveillance data sources to assist registries with ensuing data storage, computing infrastructure, and operational needs.

Objective 4: Investigate and promote increased registry incorporation of informatics to optimize registry operations.

Goal 2: Establish consensus standards and best practices for the collection and processing of cancer and patient information.

Objective 1: Organize consensus-based standards volumes and implementation guidelines.

Objective 2: Develop methods to simplify the death clearance process to improve efficiency.

Objective 3: Enable the facilitation of automation of record consolidation by developing general principles and consolidation guidelines.

Objective 4: Evaluate recommendations of timeliness initiatives to identify commonalities and feasibility.

Objective 5: Collaborate with the Research and Data Use Steering Committee to develop best practices for interstate deduplication.

Objective 6: Collaborate with the Research and Data Use Steering Committee to develop minimum and targeted data sets.

Goal 3: Investigate and develop innovative uses of cancer registries by identifying emerging initiatives and new roles that bring value-added benefits to cancer surveillance, research, and control.

Objective 1: Investigate and recommend opportunities for cancer registries to improve cancer surveillance, research, and control (for example, Childhood Cancer Registry).

Objective 2: Investigate the process and feasibility of setting up and maintaining virtual population-based tumor banks.

Objective 3: Develop best practices for conducting linkages to enhance registries.
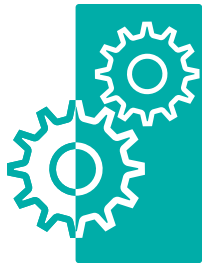
Strategic Planning and Alliances Steering Committee

Goal 1: Ensure that NAACCR's strategic plan serves to advance the mission of the organization.

Objective 1: Conceptualize and recommend a strategic direction for NAACCR.

Objective 2: Analyze potential strategies using a consistent, systematic approach.

Objective 3: On an annual basis, coordinate with other the Steering Committees to align Board strategy with Steering Committee strategy.

Objective 4: Oversee the Strategic Management Plan renewal process.

Goal 2: Ensure that NAACCR maintains a complement of partnerships and alliances that promote and enhance NAACCR's mission.

Objective 1: Systematically evaluate stakeholder and competitor organizations to understand their relationships with and influence on NAACCR.

Objective 2: Develop strategies for engaging and collaborating with potential new partners.

Objective 3: Assess existing partnerships to ensure relationships are mutually beneficial.

Conclusion

In a rapidly changing environment with significant challenges and opportunities, progress is essential. To succeed in such an environment, NAACCR must balance its retention of core values while embracing new strategies to ensure that it meets the challenges and leverages opportunities. NAACCR and its members have worked diligently over the past 5 years to lay the foundation to move forward while remaining true to its mission.

This new SMP maintains core principles yet builds new capacity and positions NAACCR to adapt as necessary. A transition from a Management Plan to a Strategic Plan will be the focus for the upcoming 3 years. A flexible structure is in place, and refinements are being made to address the need to handle overarching issues in a way that encourages multidisciplinary solutions. Finally, this SMP will continue to ensure that NAACCR is equipped to meet the demands of today's cancer surveillance needs while building a vision for the future.

Appendix

Organizational Structure

The responsibilities of a Steering Committee include the following:

- Leads and develops its Priority Area.

- Plans, interprets, and sets overall direction for the Priority Area, including drafting strategic management plan (SMP) goals and objectives.

- Develops annual and long-term work plans.

- Ensures that major goals, objectives, and tasks are organized and achieved.

- Assists with developing timelines and strategies for work groups and task forces.

- Works with and oversees working groups and/or task forces to achieve Priority Area goals.

- Ensures that tasks and activities toward the completion of SMP goals and objectives align with member interests.

- Controls the scope of activities within the Priority Area and manages approved resources that support those activities.

- Facilitates open communication across multidisciplinary members and groups.

- Engages in collaboration and relationship building across priority areas.

- Monitors progress toward SMP goals and objectives and tracks timelines appropriate to achieving those goals.

- Identifies emerging issues within assigned Priority Areas and advises the Board if they require integration in future SMP revisions.

- Reports regularly to the Board and NAACCR members.

- Serves as a sounding board for new ideas and opportunities for growth.

Definitions

Advisory Group: A group of subject-matter experts that plays a strong supportive role to the Steering Committee by identifying opportunities for growth and development and serving as a sounding board for specific initiatives vetted by the Steering Committee—for example, the Cancer Informatics Advisory Group (Standardization and Registry Development).

Committee: A group of volunteer NAACCR members supported by NAACCR staff, who accept responsibility for major goals and objectives. Committees tend to be ongoing, with no identified endpoints or anticipated termination.

Task Force: A group of team members with complementary skills brought together to accomplish a defined and specific task in a set time period. Task Forces are often need-based or event-driven and then disbanded upon completion of work. Examples of task forces include the Death Clearance Task Force (Standardization and Registry Development), NAACCR Geocoder Task Force (Research and Data Use), and the Recruitment and Retention Task Force (Professional Development).

Working Group: A group of experts brought together to accomplish a measurable objective, a major project, or a defined activity. Examples include the Edits Work Group (Standardization and Registry Development), Uniform Data Standards Work Group (Standardization and Registry Development), Cancer in North America (CiNA) Editorial Review Work Group (Research and Data Use), and the Research Application Review Work Group (Research and Data Use). Work groups usually have a defined scope and are technically focused, with specific recurring or ongoing deliverables.

NAACCR Committees and Workgroup Structure