

STRIVING FOR A NEW AND IMPROVED NATIONAL THYROID CANCER DATABASE

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Background/Purpose: There is a significant need to collect and analyze data to help improve management of thyroid cancer. National and multi-institutional cancer databases are powerful tools for cancer surveillance and for analysis of treatment outcomes, benchmarking results, and creating quality-improvement initiatives. However, there are a number of unique aspects of thyroid cancer that limit the utility of current databases to study disease outcomes and influence clinical practice guidelines. The purpose of this review is to present advantages of a novel web-based disease management program called the Thyroid Cancer Care Collaborative (TCCC) as a new comprehensive National database specific to thyroid cancer.

Methods: Review article in which parameters relevant to thyroid cancer from four major cancer databases (Surveillance Epidemiology and End Results, National Cancer Database, National Thyroid Cancer Treatment Cooperative, and Thyroid Tumor & Cancer Collaborative Registry) are analyzed. Advantages of the TCCC as a new National database for thyroid cancer are elucidated.

Results: The advantages of the TCCC are: 1)Seamless integration of data entry into physician work-flow; 2)Improved accuracy of data-input; 3)Data-fields to include unique aspects of comprehensive thyroid cancer care; 4)Dynamic field changes as new information becomes available (e.g. molecular markers and genetic alterations); 5)Life-time follow-up on disease status and treatment-related complications even if patients move locations or change providers; 6)Representation across the entire spectrum of disease presentation and sites of care; 7)Private analysis of outcomes in physician's patients against larger-scale regional or National benchmarks.

Discussion & Conclusion: The TCCC can become a new and improved National database specific to thyroid cancer with a number of advantages over current registries.