2003 CTR EXAMINATIONS REPORT

Gayle G. Clutter, Administrator
NCRA's Council on Certification
ctrexam@ncra-usa.org

In 2003, 571candidates took the Certification Examination compared to 440 in 2002. Eighty-nine percent of these were first time candidates compared to 72% in 2002. Overall, 62% of the candidates passed the exam. This is exactly the same as for 2002. However, of the first-time candidates 68% passed (2002 = 71%), but only 47% (2002 = 41%) of the repeat candidates passed.

Demographics: The most common eligibility route was Route 1: two years experience in the Cancer Registry field, with 62% of the candidates (2002: 64%). Route 4: one year of experience in Cancer Registry field and a recognized credential or license was the second most common route with 17% (2002: 20%). The predominant primary employer continues to be the hospital registry at 70% down from 2002 at 78%. The Central Cancer Registry was second at 13% up from 2002 at 11%. Forty percent of the candidates had between 1 and 2 years experience (2002: 41%), followed by 30% that had 3 to 5 years experience (2002: 34%). The most commonly reported educational background in Cancer Registry remained on-the-job training at 71% (2002: 73%) followed by short-term training for 21% (2002: 22%). Thirty-one percent of the candidates had either attended an approved college or a listed training program (2002: 29%). Candidates between the ages of 40 and 49 years of age remained the largest category at 34% (2002: 29%) with those between 30 and 59 representing 70% of the total candidates (2002: 69%).

All but 11% of the candidates in 2003 had some college education (2002: 10%), with the categories of some college, associate's or bachelor's degree each representing 33%, 27% and 19% respectively. This is very similar to the pattern as seen in 2002. In addition to these statistics, the Council on Certification analyzed the highest academic level of candidates taking the CTR examination since 1983. Persons having only a High School education represented between 30% to 45% of the candidates taking the exam before 1998. However, in March of 1998 that percentage fell to just under 15% and has remained under that percentage for all of the subsequent tests.

The average percent correct by subject category was tabulated by experience, eligibility route and academic level. The lowest scores seen overall remains in the statistics and epidemiology subject area at 63% correct (2002: 65%). The second lowest overall score was in shared by Anatomy, Staging and ICD-O coding at 72% correct. The subject with the highest general score remains computer principles at 79% correct (2002: 80%). Repeat candidates had lower scores in all categories with an overall 70% correct (2002: 69%). All patterns are very similar to those seen in 2002.

Experience: Persons with less that one year experience had the lowest overall scores at 70% correct. These candidates received their lowest score in ICD-O coding and Staging (65%), followed by Statistics at 66% correct. The highest overall score was seen for persons with 1 to 2 and 6 to 10 years of experience at 74% correct.
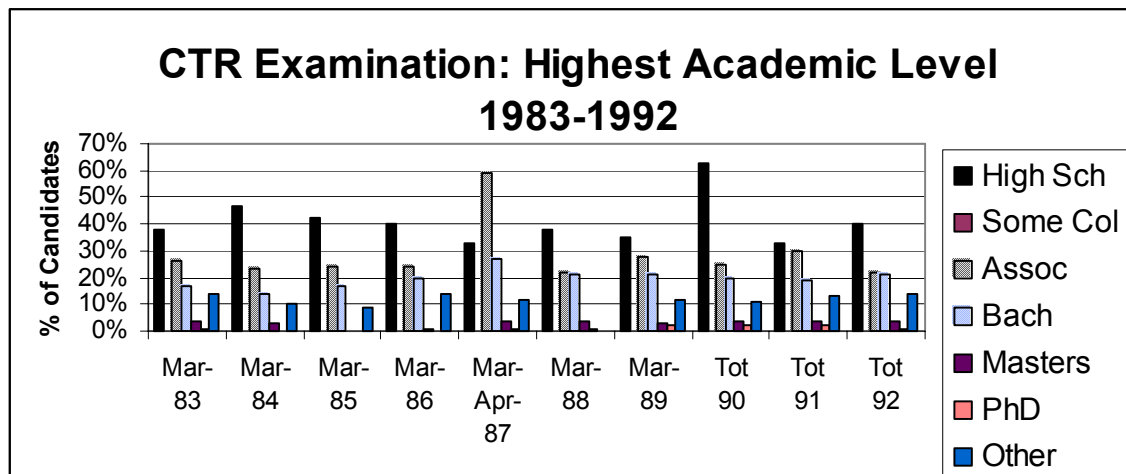
Eligibility Route: Candidates applying under eligibility route 2: attendance at an approved college, had the lowest overall score again this year with 69% correct (2002: 69%). They received the lowest score in statistics and staging at 65% correct followed closely by abstracting and coding and ICD-O coding at 66% correct. Candidates applying through Routes 3 and 4, one year experience and completion of an approved college curriculum, received the highest overall scores at 76% correct each. Candidates applying through Route 1, the largest number of candidates on the exams, had an overall score of 72% correct with the lowest scores in statistics at 60% correct.

Academic level: Candidates with a Master's degree had the highest overall score at 81% correct. Their lowest scores were in Statistics and Staging at 77% correct. Candidates with only a High School diploma scored the lowest with 69% correct. These candidates received the lowest score in Statistics at 56% correct.
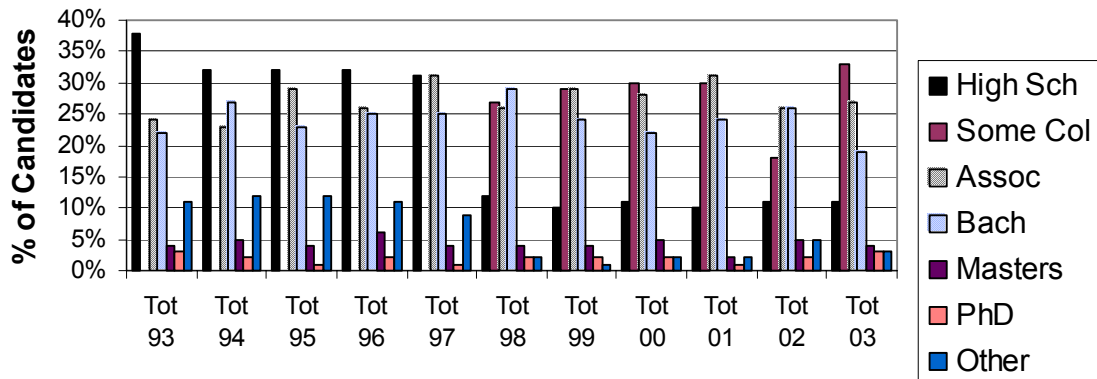
Academic level: Candidates with a Master's degree had the highest overall score at 81% correct. Their lowest scores were in Statistics and Staging at 77% correct. Candidates with only a High School diploma scored the lowest with 69% correct. These candidates received the lowest score in statistics at 56% correct.

Not 1. Percentages are not reported for non-responders, but reported percentages are based on the total number of candidates.
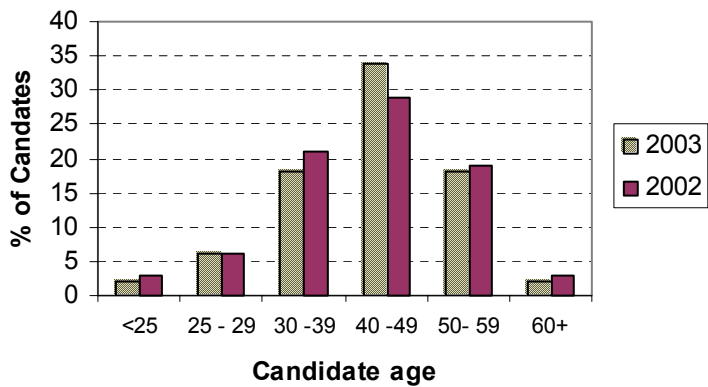*Note 2. All comparisons are based on observed percentages and no tests of significance were performed on differences.*
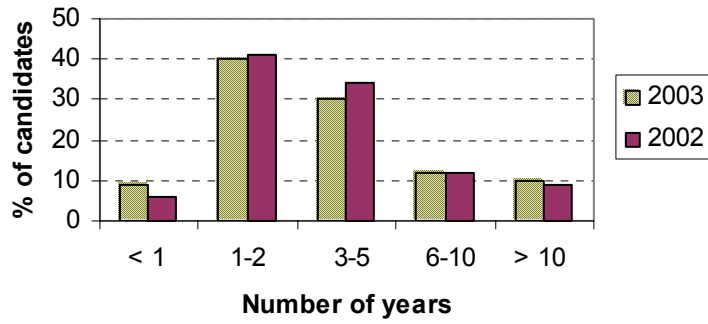

CTR Examination: Highest Academic Level
1983-1992

CTR Examination: Highest Academic Level 1993-2003

Legend: High Sch, Some Col, Assoc, Bach, Masters, PhD, Other

CTR Examination Age Distribution

Legend: 2003, 2002

X-axis: Candidate age (<25, 25 - 29, 30 -39, 40 -49, 50- 59, 60+)

CTR Exam Candidate Experience

CTR Exam Primary Employer