



CTR EXAM: KEEPING IT VALID

Suzanna S. Hoyler, CTR
Joan Phillips, CTR
Job Task Analysis Committee co-Chairs

Did you know that the certification exam for Tumor Registrars has changed little since it was first offered in 1983? Of course, questions have been updated to reflect new or revised data collection procedures and coding schemes, but the basic content outline has remained constant.

One of the main goals of the Council on Certification is to ensure that the examination is valid and applicable to the Registry field. To do this, the Council conducted a Job Task Analysis (JTA)—a survey designed to identify the tasks and knowledge a new CTR should possess to function effectively in any type of workplace. The information will be used to validate the CTR exam. In other words, we will be trying to determine if we're testing at the right level on the right topics.

Based on the results, the CTR content outline and subject weighting will be revised if appropriate. The survey was not intended to identify all jobs in the Cancer Registry field.

To give you a little background, the Council included the JTA as part of the request for proposal for administering the CTR exam. The Professional Testing Corporation (PTC) won the contract for the CTR exam and JTA in 2002. In early 2003, Pam Fulton, CTR (NY), chaired a task force that identified the types of registry work done in a variety of settings, including but not limited to hospitals, the private sector, and central registries. The initial work statements were reviewed and categorized by the JTA subcommittee and PTC as to type of activity, such as abstracting, management, or data analysis.

Individuals in various office settings were asked to beta test the survey. Based on their comments and the survey results, revisions were made, especially in the area of central registries tasks. Central registry staffs, as well as other Registrars in the field, were again solicited to review the statements prior to a second beta testing. In addition, we asked the Council on Certification's International Exam Committee, which includes representation from Canada, Puerto Rico, and more than 50 other international Cancer Registry contacts, to review the statements and suggest appropriate changes. All of these efforts helped produce the final JTA survey, which was released in May 2004.

The survey consisted of 16 demographic statements and 99 job task and 32 knowledge questions. The beta testing showed that it took anywhere from 20 to 45 minutes to complete the survey. There was space at the end of the survey to record comments or tasks not listed in the survey.

PTC is analyzing the results for U.S. and international participants separately. The Council will review PTC's report later this summer and make recommendations for the CTR exam content. The results and Council recommendations will be made available on the Council's website www.ctrexam.org, announced in an NCRA broadcast email, and in an article in *The Connection*.

As of June 8th, nearly 800 participants completed the JTA survey! The Council thanks everyone who participated in the survey, and also the following individuals for their help. We apologize if we have omitted anyone from the list.

- Stella Brockett, CTR (DC);
- Chris Stroymyer, CTR (MD);
- Chris Wray, CTR (MD);
- Keri-Ann Faley, RHIA, CTR (PA);
- Karen Langer, LPTA, CTR (MD);
- Alberta Mooney, CTR (PA);
- Steven Winter, CTR (PA);
- Shauna Orloff, CTR (PA);
- Nidaya Aponte, RHIT, CTR (TX);
- Donna Morrell, CTR (CA);
- Robin Otto, RHIA, CTR (PA);
- April Fritz, RHIT, CTR (MD);
- Marilyn Hansen, CTR (NJ);
- Mary O'Leary, CTR (FL);
- Pam Fulton, CTR (NY);
- Gay Good, CTR (PA);
- Mary Lewis, CTR (GA);
- Rita Dillon, CTR (PA);
- Rona Brodsky, RHIA CTR (MD);
- Martha E. Oliva, BS CTR (FL);
- Eileen Peterson Morgan, MPA CTR (NC);
- Theresa M. Hayden, BHA CTR (WA);
- Alfreda Smith, CTR (AR);
- Jane E. Braun, MS CTR (MN);
- Susan Van Loon, RN BA CTR (NJ);
- Betsy A. Kohler, MPH CTR (NJ);
- Melissa O. Pearson, CTR (NC);
- Kathryn Golub, CTR (WA);
- Ryan Intlekofer, RN CTR (GA);
- Donna C. Getreuer, RN MSN CTR (CT);
- Daniel J. Curran, MS CTR (CA);
- Annette A. Hurlbut, RHIT CTR (NY).



Council on Certification