

The Criterion

California Cancer Registry

September 2010

- 📌 **Ambiguous/Conclusive Diagnosis:** Some of you may wonder why we have the relatively new data items Ambiguous Terminology Diagnosis and Date of Conclusive Diagnosis. These required fields, added to our database in 2007, help a researcher understand whether a diagnosis is based on a firm, conclusive statement of cancer being present, or is based on the Ambiguous Term list in Volume I (V.1.7.1). The researcher may now exclude patients who otherwise meet the criteria for a research study, but have only an ambiguous term diagnosis; this exclusion is especially important for those studies that include direct patient contact. Accurate coding is essential to assure that patients are appropriately categorized. Please note that these fields are not visually edited at this time because of resource limitations, so we urge all registrars to review the coding guidelines and apply them carefully. Please let this also be a reminder that this is a lifelong field, and if the diagnosis is initially based on an ambiguous term, but later has a conclusive diagnosis established, this field may (and should) be updated and a correction record sent to the region.

- 📌 **Ambiguous Terms:** If the record states "likely malignant" only, is that reportable?
No – "likely malignant" is NOT reportable. Beginning with cases diagnosed January 1, 2010, the CoC, NPCR and SEER have agreed to a strict interpretation of the ambiguous terms list. Terms that do not appear on the list are not diagnostic of cancer. CCR-IS #2429 (revised), See also SING 20051079.