

## Cancer Cluster Investigation Flowchart

### New Jersey Department of Health

### Environmental and Occupational Health Surveillance Program

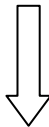
#### Step I—Initial Contact and Response to Inquiries

Purpose: Listen, record, and provide information to person or group reporting possible cancer cluster.\*

\*Information collected may include case characterization and verification with the NJSCR, review of NJSCR data, AND/OR contact with local and state officials.

**Does there appear to be an unusual pattern regarding number and types of cancer, gender, ages at diagnosis, or time trends? Specifically, are there at least 5 cases of one type or related types of an uncommon adult cancer, OR at least 3 cases of one type or related types of childhood cancers? OR is there a plausible reason to suspect more than normal fluctuation of cases? OR are the latency issues potentially consistent with a common factor? OR is community concern high?**

YES



NO →

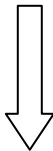
End investigation. Send customized letter & information (fact sheets, feedback form, etc.). Log inquiry in CSDB with notation of annual follow-up if indicated. Most inquiries end here.

#### Step II. Formal Standardized Incidence Ratio (SIR) Analysis

Purpose: To determine whether or not an excess of cancer has occurred.

**Does SIR analysis show there is an excess of uncommon cancers occurring, i.e. p-value <0.001 for one observation period? OR p-value <0.005 for two consecutive observation periods? OR is there an increasing trend of rates over several time frames of an uncommon cancer? OR is there a plausible hypothesis regarding a particular factor or exposure and an SIR with p <0.05 for any period?**

YES



NO →

End investigation. Send customized letter & information (fact sheets, feedback form, a SIR report, etc.). Public education and outreach may be recommended, in coordination with the Local Health Officer. Log inquiry in CSDB with notation of annual follow-up if indicated.

#### Step III. In-Depth Study

Purpose: Determine need and feasibility of performing an epidemiologic study linking the cancers to an exposure.