

Cancer Cluster Response Flowchart

New Jersey Department of Health

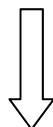
Environmental and Occupational Health Surveillance Program

Step I—Initial Contact and Response to Inquiries

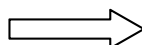
Purpose: Listen, record, and provide information to person or group reporting possible cancer cluster. Information collected may include case characterization and verification with the New Jersey State Cancer Registry (NJSCR), review of NJSCR data, and / or contact with local and state officials.

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



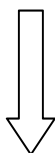
End investigation. Send customized letter & information (fact sheets, feedback form, etc.). Log inquiry in Cancer Surveillance Database (CSDB) with notation of annual follow-up if indicated. Most inquiries end here.

Step II. Formal Standardized Incidence Ratio (SIR) Analysis

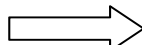
Purpose: To determine if the number of observed cancer cases in a particular geographic area is statistically significantly higher or lower than expected, given the population and age distribution for that community.

Does SIR analysis show there is an excess of uncommon cancers occurring, for one or two consecutive observation periods? OR is there an increasing trend of rates for an uncommon cancer over several time periods? OR is there a plausible hypothesis regarding a particular factor or exposure and an SIR that is statistically significantly higher than expected 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. Evaluation to determine the need and feasibility of performing an In-Depth Study

Purpose: NJ Department of Health officials will evaluate the need and feasibility of an in-depth epidemiological study with experts from our federal counterparts, where appropriate.