The professional practice experience is the hands-on application of the program coursework. The clinical practice will provide the student with experience in the technical aspects of cancer registry operations and compliment the knowledge gained during the academic portion of their education.

To qualify for the Certified Tumor Registrars (CTR) certification exam under Eligibility Routes A, Path 1& 2, students are required to complete 160 hours of work experience at a cancer registry after successfully completing an NCRA-accredited Formal Education Degree Program or an NCRA-accredited Formal Education Certificate Program. During the clinical practice, students must be under the direct supervision of a Certified Tumor Registrar (CTR).

**When you should begin the Professional Practice/Clinical Practicum requirement:**

Students will not begin the Clinical Practicum until they have completed all the courses in the CRM/CIM program. The theoretical foundation provided in the NCRA Accredited Formal Education Program courses are essential to understanding the general concepts and principles of cancer registry functions and operations. Additionally, about half of the 160 hours of work experience will focus on abstracting, coding and staging, which is a large part of a registrar’s educational training. The clinical supervisor will expect the student to have basic knowledge and skills in all areas of the cancer registry.

According to the NCRA Formal Education Accreditation standards, NCRA accredited programs must have affiliation agreements with facilities where students can do the Clinical Practicum hours as required by the program. Any agreement for the clinical
practice should be viewed as an arrangement between the program (in the case of college/university-based programs), on behalf of the student, and the healthcare facility. In the case of a student from the NCRA American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) Cancer Registry Program (CRM), the student may secure a facility independently, or NCRA may serve as the program Administrator and negotiate an affiliation agreement with a facility on behalf of students. Facilities affiliated with NCRA are listed on the NCRA Job Bank under the position title, "Clinical Student."

Locate Clinical Host Sites in addition to those contracted by the CRM/CIM Program:

1. To increase your chances of being able to begin the clinical practicum as soon as your coursework is complete, begin contacting people in your network and potential sites before you complete your program. The clinical practicum does not have to be four, forty-hour work weeks. Clinical practicum activities are varied and assigned a certain number of hours. By being proactive and networking in your area, you may develop opportunities at multiple facilities and have a better chance of completing the activities. In addition, certain times of the year may be more feasible than others due to surveys and data submission requirements, and more options makes it easier for the student.

2. Use the NCRA Directory of Clinical Site Hosts to identify other possible host sites in your area. The list is located on the NCRA Job Bank.

3. Contact cancer registries in your area. If they are not available, ask for names of other facilities in the state or region. A list of CoC accredited programs in your area can be obtained from the Commission on Cancer website. They have a search function for CoC accredited cancer programs in the US.

4. Contact your state cancer registrar’s association and join as a student, if possible. The network of registrars in your area will prove to be a valuable asset for you in the future. A list of state association contacts can be found on the NCRA web site.

5. Contact the state’s central cancer registry to see if they are available to host you for some of the activities listed in the Clinical Practicum list of tasks. A list of NPCR central cancer registries can be found on the CDC NPCR website and SEER central cancer registries on the SEER web site.

6. If one facility is unable to accommodate the entire 160 hours, recommend solutions such as sharing time with another facility or the central cancer registry or splitting the session into increments.
7. You may complete a portion of your casefinding requirements on the CDC Cyber Cancer Registry as long as you are supervised by a CTR. You may earn up to seven hours on the CCR toward your requirement.

8. You may also complete a portion of your abstracting requirement using the exercises on the SEER*Educate website. The Formal Education Program Review Committee (FEPRC) has approved up to 15 abstracts being completed, under the supervision of an Independent Clinical Advisor (ICA)/Mentor CTR, that may count toward the fulfillment of the 30 abstracts required. Speak with your Independent Clinical Advisor about this option.

**Basic Guidelines for Students:**

1. Review this packet and the Professional Practice/Clinical Practicum requirements.

2. Use the Clinical Site Fact Sheet to help gather general information about the clinical site.

3. Complete the Introductory Letter for Professional Practice (optional) and share with clinical supervisor as soon as they have agreed to host the clinical.

4. **Important:**
   Contact the clinical supervisor at least two weeks prior to the start date. If possible, arrange for a personal visit. When making a personal visit, call the clinical supervisor for an appointment. Confirm that you are prepared to provide the facility with the following:

   * Up-to-Date record of immunizations – the facility should give you a list of the immunizations that are required.
   * Recent background check.
   * Recent drug test.
   * Professional liability insurance - check with the facility regarding the amounts required. Information about professional liability insurance is available on the NCRA web site, Member Benefits section.
   * Documentation that you have completed the coursework for the Cancer Registry Management (CRM)/Cancer Information Management (CIM) Certificate Program.

The facility should give you the following information prior to your start date:

* Start date and time, and where to report
* Dress code
* Identification
* Parking
* Any materials that student is required to bring
5. You will be required to sign a confidentiality statement and may receive HIPAA training prior to your start. This HIPAA training will fulfill the requirement of your practicum. Maintain strict confidentiality of any and all information encountered. This includes cancer patient information, health record information and cancer center/facility operation information.

Confidentiality and HIPAA regulations are a very serious matter. It is very important that you maintain strict confidentiality of all information encountered. This includes cancer patient information, health record information and cancer center/facility operations. Under no documentation or information should be discussed or removed from the facility. Failure to abide by the confidentiality policies of the facility could result in termination of the clinical practice.

6. Discuss a schedule with you supervisor. If it is possible to attend cancer conferences, ensure that your schedule accommodates this.

7. Review and adhere to the NCRA Code of Ethics.

8. Report promptly every day. If you must be absent from work, it is IMPERATIVE to notify the clinical supervisor, as soon as possible. Absences should be avoided unless there is an illness or emergency. The Weekly Time Record is a tool to help keep track of your practicum hours (optional). When the time comes to apply for the CTR exam, your supervisor will be required to attest to the hours, by signing the experience section on the CTR exam application.

9. If possible, schedule a closing interview on the last day of your clinical with the CTR supervisor. Ask your supervisor for feedback on your performance. This will help you further prepare CTR exam. Discuss with the CTR supervisor the CTR exam application and the necessity of having them sign off on your clinical hours in the facility. A copy of the CTR Exam Application is available in the Candidate’s Handbook.

10. Promptly send separate thank you notes to your clinical supervisor and all associated staff members.
PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE/CLINICAL PRACTICUM
Clinical Site Fact Sheet

Student Name:
__________________________________________________________________________________

Facility Name:
__________________________________________________________________________________

Address:
__________________________________________________________________________________

Supervisor: ______________
Credential: ______________

☐ I certify that I am an active CTR

Email: __________________________ Phone: __________________________

COC Approval Category: ______________ Last COC Survey: __________

Annual Analytic Caseload: __________________________

Registry’s Reference Date: __________________________

Cancer Committee Frequency: __________________________

Cancer Conference Frequency: __________________________

Medical Records (Electronic/Paper): __________________________

Cancer Registry Software System: __________________________

How many full time employees (FTEs) are in the Cancer Registry?

___________________________

How many Cancer Registrars have the following specific credentials?

[Sample letter of introduction for student to present to facility-Optional]

Dear __________;

This letter is to introduce ___, a student who has completed the coursework in the NCRA-accredited Formal Education Program in Cancer Registry Management at [………………………………………………] college. This student is interested in utilizing your facility to obtain professional practice experience in all areas of cancer registry operations and management.

The professional practice experience is the hands-on application of the program coursework. The clinical practice will provide the student with experience in the technical aspects of cancer registry operations and compliment the knowledge gained during the academic portion of their education. The student must complete 160 hours in the clinical experience. During the clinical practice, students must be under the direct supervision of an active Certified Tumor Registrar (CTR).

This student has completed courses in anatomy and physiology, pathophysiology and pharmacology, medical terminology, computers in healthcare, cancer registry operations, cancer registry structure and management, cancer disease coding and staging, abstracting methods, oncology treatment and coding, and follow-up, data quality and utilization. This student is well prepared to obtain an entry-level position as a cancer registrar and may be a source for a qualified employee in this position following program completion.

By agreeing to accept this student for professional practice experience you are agreeing to:

A. Provide an opportunity for the student to complete all or part of the Clinical Practicum Activity requirements.
B. Provide an opportunity for the student to complete all or part of the abstracting requirement.
D. Complete, discuss and provide a copy of an evaluation to the student at the conclusion of the clinical practice.
F. Review and sign the Supervisor Verification section on the student’s CTR exam application.

In addition, a list of recommended assignments (and definitions) has been provided to the student. This list provides a guideline that would allow the student to become more knowledgeable of the cancer registry and various cancer registry activities. However, the final decision as to the required assignments and what the student is allowed to copy and take with them is at the discretion of the clinical supervisor. Ideally, the clinical experience should start with a general orientation to the facility and cancer center.
This student has been informed that the facility may require that the student provide proof of immunizations, liability insurance, background checks, drug tests, etc. The student has been advised of privacy and confidentiality strictures regarding health information. The student understands that they may have to complete HIPAA training and may be required to sign a confidentiality statement prior to the start of the clinical practice.

Accepting a student from an NCRA-accredited Formal Education Program should be viewed as an arrangement between your organization and the student. NCRA assumes no responsibility for the student’s actions; however, NCRA does appreciate your willingness to advance the professional skills of this student and contribute to the profession through mentoring.

Thank you for your consideration.
Confidentiality Statement and Affiliation Agreement for Professional Practice

I, ______________________________________________________, understand that gaining access to patient records in order to collect data, analyze, and abstract information and assign clinical codes for my own professional practice purposes is a serious matter. As a student cancer registry professional allowed to view records from the facility ________________________________, I agree to fully respect the rules of confidentiality for both the patient and the healthcare provider. No information will be shared with anyone outside your organization from this experience, including any acknowledgment of the presence of a patient or his/her record in your facility.

Student Signature ____________________________________________

Facility Representative Signature ________________________________

Both parties should sign this form and each should retain a copy.
PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE/CLINICAL PRACTICUM

Weekly Time Record

Name of Student: ____________________________________________

Name of Facility: ____________________________________________

You will need to have this form printed and signed by the clinical supervisor (one per week).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Hours Worked</th>
<th>Total Hours</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>From</td>
<td>To</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

HOURS WORKED:

This is a correct record of the time worked this week.

____________________________________________  _______________________
Student Signature                        Date

Required Abstracting Assignments:

1. A minimum of 30 abstracts must be completed, this includes: ICD-O-3 Coding, Staging (AJCC TNM, SEER Summary), and Treatment 84 of the 160 hours must be spent on data collection and coding. A minimum of 30 abstracts must be completed even if more than 160 hours are needed in order to complete them.
2. Review the facility’s list of required data items to be collected.

3. Complete at least two abstracts for each of the following primary sites. Other sites may also be abstracted in order to meet the 30 abstract minimum.
   - Head and Neck
   - Colon
   - Other Digestive Tract
   - Lung
   - Melanoma
   - Other Musculoskeletal System
   - Breast
   - Gynecological
   - Genitourinary
   - Lymphoma
   - Leukemia
   - Brain
   - Unknown/Ill-defined Sites

4. Entering the case into the cancer registry software is preferred, but if not possible, a worksheet may be used.

5. Abstracts should have at least a 90% accuracy rate (or higher as specified by the supervisor) and should be above 95% by the end of the clinical.
**CLINICAL PRACTICUM**

**Recommended Assignments for the Hospital Registry Clinical:**

The following is a list of recommended assignments that could be completed during the clinical experience. Other assignments may be assigned by the clinical supervisor. All copies and summaries must be typed and clearly labeled. All summaries and copies should be shared and discussed with the clinical supervisor.

1. If possible, obtain copies of the following organizational charts: All positions (including job titles) in the Cancer Registry; All departments in the Cancer Center, including the Cancer Registry; The reporting structure of the Cancer Registry: to whom does the Registry report?

2. Research information on the salary range for cancer registry positions in different parts of the country (Indeed.com, etc).

3. Attend the following meetings held during the clinical. If possible, assist in preparing for the meetings. Obtain a copy of the agenda, meeting schedule and attendee requirements (by title).
   - Cancer Committee (should attend at least one)
   - Cancer Conference (should attend at least one)

4. Review each section of the facility Cancer Registry Policy and Procedure Manual. Discuss, with your CTR supervisor, any areas that were unclear and any areas that needed updating. Obtain copies of the following:
   - Manual's table of contents
   - Reportable and non-reportable lists
   - Eligibility requirements including central cancer registry and reportable-by-agreement.

5. Review the documentation related to the last CoC survey. Discuss the survey experience including successes, obstacles, and areas needing improvement with your CTR supervisor.

6. If possible, obtain copies of letters used by the registry, including follow-up and further treatment letters.

7. Review a copy of the most recent annual report for the cancer program.

8. Review the *Release of Information* policy. If possible, assist in the running of reports in the cancer registry software. Discuss reports, along with a summary of your findings with your CTR supervisor.
NCRA Formal Education
Programs in Cancer Registry Management
Clinical Hours Report

Student: ______________________________________________________

School:________________________________________ Date: ______________

To be completed by clinical supervisor

Facility: ______________________________________________________

Address: ______________________________________________________

City, State, Zip

Supervisor:____________________________________________________

☐ I certify that I am a Certified Tumor Registrar (CTR) in good standing.

CTR Number: __________________________________________________
(can be obtained from NCRA 703/299-6640)

Type of Facility: _________________________________________________

Have you previously supervised a student before?____________________
Student Name: ________________________________
Please verify that the student spent the appropriate number of hours in each activity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTIVITY</th>
<th>HOURS REQ’</th>
<th>HOURS COMPLETE</th>
<th>SUPERVISOR INITIAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Abstracting</td>
<td>84</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Collection (Abstracting), includes:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>ICD-O-3 Coding</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Staging (AJCC TNM, SEER Summary)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Treatment</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Follow-up</td>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Cancer Committee Activities</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Data Utilization and Reporting</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Quality Improvement</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Required Files (Suspense, MPI, P&amp;P, etc.)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Quality Management Studies</td>
<td>8</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Casefinding</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Cancer Conference</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Central Registry Operations</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Legal/HIPAA</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Electronic Medical Reporting (EMR) Training</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Students must complete a minimum of 30 abstracts. This is required regardless of whether the student uses all the hours in the practicum or not. If extra time is needed to complete 30 abstracts, the time is not to be deducted from the hours accumulated. Sites to be emphasized in abstracts are lung, breast, colon, prostate, bladder, and the site(s) most common to the facility in which the student is practicing. Students may complete up to 15 abstracts at the SEER*Educate website, under the supervision of an Independent Clinical Advisor (ICA)/CTR Mentor.

Students may complete up to seven (7) hours of casefinding activity on the CDC Cyber Cancer Registry (CCR) website under the supervision of an Independent Clinical Advisor (ICA).

Students who do not complete the full 160 hour clinical rotation will not receive their degree or certificate of completion and will not be eligible to sit for the Certified Tumor Registrars Examination. Students must provide a time sheet to document clinical activities that is signed by the clinical supervisor and the clinical supervisor will sign off on the CTR exam application in the ‘Experience Verification’ section.

Did the student complete a minimum of 30 abstracts? Yes_____No_____

_________________________  __________________________
Clinical Supervisor Signature  Date

CTR #: ______________________   □ I certify that I am an active CTR.
NCRA PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE/CLINICAL PRACTICUM
ACTIVITY DEFINITIONS

1. Abstracting: Data Collection, ICD-O Coding, Staging (CS, AJCC, SEER Summary)*
- Thorough review of facility specific cancer registry database.
- Review and understand Central Registry and Commission on Cancer (CoC) reportable data fields:
  - Demographics
  - Cancer Identification
  - Stage of Disease at Diagnosis
  - First Course of Treatment
  - Outcomes [Follow-up]
  - TEXT – emphasize importance
  - GenEdits – after completion or editing every abstract -Assist with abstracting reportable cases.
- Paper or into facility HER.

* Cancer Registry Management (CRM) textbook, ch. 12
  Commission on Cancer (CoC) Standards 5.1 and 5.2
  Central Cancer Registries: Design, Management and Use (CCR), pg. 96

2. Follow-up*
- Differentiate between active and passive follow-up (F/U).
- Understand differences between CoC Standards 5.3 and 5.4.
- Run and review Lost to Follow-Up Report.
- Demonstrate understanding of the date of first recurrence, type of first recurrence and cancer status.
- Run and review various database reports to review unknowns. Assist with F/U activities:
  - Review obituaries
  - Facility specific F/U activities:
    - Run reports to determine who needs current F/U
    - Print & send F/U letters
    - Enter returned F/U letters into database
    - Central Registry F/U
    - Death Clearance letters

* Cancer Registry Management (CRM) textbook, ch. 16
  Commission on Cancer (CoC) Standards 5.3 and 5.4
  Central Cancer Registries: Design, Management and Use (CCR), ch. 19
3. Cancer Committee Activities*
- Review the Cancer Committee section in the Cancer Registry Management: Principles & Practices for Hospitals & Central Registries, 3rd edition (CRM) and discuss questions with CTR supervisor.
- Review CoC Cancer Program Standards and discuss questions with CTR supervisor.
- Assist with the preparation of a Cancer Committee meeting (coordination of agenda preparation, attendee meeting packet, preparation of minutes).
- Attend a Cancer committee Meeting.

*Cancer Registry Management (CRM) textbook, ch 21
Commission on Cancer (CoC) Standard 2.6

4. Data Utilization and Reporting*

Utilization
- Assist with developing data presentations using tables and graphs.
- Create a report utilizing the registry data.
- Review state specific central registry website for statistics.
- Create a report utilizing central registry and facility statistics.

Reporting
Central Registry:
- Assist with monthly submission to central registry.
- Select cases for reports to send to state registry.
- Clean edits.
- Compare facility submission report to central registry submission report.

National Cancer Database (NCDB):
- Review CoC Datalinks.
- Submit/resubmit data.
- Data submission history and edits.
- Assist with annual submission to the NCDB.
- Select cases for a report.
- Clean edits.

Facility Specific reports:
- Cancer Committee.
- Management.

*Cancer Registry Management (CRM) textbook, ch 22, 23, 24, 25, 27
Commission on Cancer (CoC) Standards 5.5, 5.6, 5.7
Guidebook to Informatics, ch 11
5. Quality Improvement*
- Review the Quality Management section in CRM and discuss questions with CTR supervisor.
- Review *CoC Cancer Program Standards* that pertain to quality management studies and discuss questions with CTR supervisor.
- Identify quality improvement study areas and outcomes in Cancer Committee minutes and assist in a quality improvement study, if possible (pull and organize data, assist with presentation).
- Review NCDB facility data [Hospital Comparison Benchmark reports, CP3R, etc].
- Review committee involvement in recommendations, actions and follow-up (per standards).
- Review NCDB Completeness Reports.

*Cancer Registry Management (CRM) textbook, ch 18, pg 200
Commission on Cancer (CoC) Standards 4.5, 4.7, 4.8

6. Required files:
Suspense*
- Assist with adding cases to suspense.
  Assist with running & reviewing a suspense list.

Disease Index**
- Review Central Registry & CoC reportable ICD-10 code list.
- Review established facility list & process for implementation.
- Review disease index to locate reportable cases.

P&P*** [CoC Eligibility Requirement E5]
- Review Cancer Registry Policy & Procedures.
  - Be knowledgeable of creating or updating a Policy & Procedures document.

* Cancer Registry Management (CRM) textbook, ch. 12, pg. 139
** Cancer Registry Management (CRM) textbook, ch. 11, pg. 124-126
*** Commission on Cancer (CoC) Standards Eligibility Requirement 5

7. Quality Control* - Define quality.
- Define five characteristics of data quality.
- Review facility specific *Cancer Registry Quality Control Plan* - Assist with casefinding audit.
- Assist with abstract audit.
- Run timeliness report.
- Review *CoC Datalinks* [benchmarking, survival reports, CP3R].
- Review non-concordant cases on measures report.

*NCRA Clinical Practicum Guide
Updated July 2017*
8. Casefinding*
- Knowledge of casefinding process: legislative rules/types of reporting entities, sources of cases, availability of electronic sources.
- Reportable case vs. non-reportable case [reportable by agreement/facility specific].
- Hospital reporting requirements vs. central registry reporting requirements.
- Hospital vs. non-hospital casefinding sources.
- Casefinding audits, time frame requirements, death clearance.

*Cancer Registry Management (CRM) textbook, ch. 18
Commission on Cancer (CoC) Standards 1.6, 4.4, 4.5, 5.2

9. Cancer Conference*
- Assist Cancer Conference Coordinator.
- Organize the abstracts of cases to be discussed (pull from data base if necessary).
- Update suspense.

*Cancer Registry Management (CRM) textbook, ch. 11

10. Central Cancer Registry Operations* - Central registry administration (staffing, budgeting).
- Types — population-based vs. non-population based.
- Legal and ethical issues.
- Operation/data sets and flow of data.
- Privacy and security.
- Quality control.

*Cancer Registry Management (CRM) textbook, ch. 21
Commission on Cancer (CoC) Standard 2.6

11. Legal*
- Law regarding health issues: civil vs. criminal law, protection of confidentiality, cancer data [Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)].
- Role(s) of regulatory agencies such as (NCI, CDC, SEER, NPCR)/state laws/institutional requirements.
- Cancer data protection/release of cancer registry data (e.g. data security and data transmission).

*Cancer Registry Management (CRM) textbook, ch. 36
-Demonstrate knowledge and applicability of the NCRA Professional Practice Code of Ethics in relation to the facility specific policies.

*Cancer Registry Management (CRM) textbook, ch. 4 and ch. 6

12. Electronic Health Record (EHR) Facility Specific*
-Demonstrate ability to navigate the facility’s Electronic Medical Record (EMR) - software.
-Demonstrate ability to complete an abstract with all information available in the EHR.

*Cancer Registry Management (CRM) textbook, ch. 9*
PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE/CLINICAL PRACTICUM

Evaluation of the Student
(Optional, to be shared with student)

The following student evaluation and assessment information document may be used as the basis for feedback to the student by a sponsoring facility. The student may elect to use this document as a job reference document for future employment.

1. Did the student seem to understand and correctly apply ICD-O coding conventions and principles for diagnoses?

   If not, what were the concerns or suggestions for correcting deficiencies?

2. Did the student seem to understand and correctly apply case finding conventions and principles for procedure reporting?

3. Was the student’s knowledge of data collection methods what you expected for an entry level professional?
If not, what were the concerns or suggestions for correcting deficiencies?

4. Did the student appear to be committed to the profession, conducting him or herself in a professional manner while in your facility? If not, what were the concerns or suggestions for correcting deficiencies?

5. What suggestions would you give this student for enhancing success as a cancer registry management professional?

Date            Clinical Supervisor Signature

Facility

Date            Student Signature