What is an Effective Query Interview?

An effective query interview is a collaborative effort in which the cancer registrar seeks to understand the requestor's needs and timeline. The goal is to establish the requestor's true needs, even if he/she cannot explain them clearly.

Skill 1: Communication

Rely on proven interview strategies to convey information and check for understanding to help establish a rapport.

- Project a presence that is poised to convey interest and availability.
- Listen carefully to help prioritize elements of the query.
- Maintain "word contact" with the user by sending written or other messages to indicate process and interest.
- Provide explanations in a clear manner without judgment and unnecessary jargon.
- Consider rephrasing the question or request and use open-ended questions to gather more information.
- Know when to refer the query to another department or ask for collaboration.
- Assist in applying critical thinking skills in locating, using, and evaluating information by working together.

Skill 2: Improvement Strategies

Apply improvement strategies to enhance service quality.

- Use clarifying questions:
  - What have you already found?
  - What type of information do you need?
  - Do you need current or historical information?
- Maintain healthy skepticism about the data; does it seem possible?
- Gather verbal and visual cues from requestor.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the communication methods being used (e.g., e-mail, text, phone, etc.) and switch methods, if necessary.
- Suggest best methods, resources, and data visualization. Follow-up.

Skill 3: Policies & Procedures

Develop a scope-of-service to guide the types of questions that can be answered and what level of service will be provided to maintain efficiency.

- Refer to collaborating institutions when handling questions outside the scope of your service.
- Confidentiality/Privacy: One of the most important aspects of this skill is adhering to HIPAA, the facility's confidentiality and privacy policies, and communicating privacy guidelines to requestors.
- Understand and outline managerial and administrative roles in overseeing and enforcing policies and procedures.
- Go beyond the data-log required by the Commission on Cancer (CoC) and create a database of queries for future reference.