The Cancer Surveillance Community has been trying to deal with massive changes in data collection and processing of 2018 data. Results of the NAACCR 2018 Central Registry Readiness survey completed in early March, showed over 50% of central registries in the US and Canada are still unable to receive and process 2018 data and only 5% of the anticipated number of 2018 cases have been reported to central registries.

On April 4, 2019 cancer surveillance leadership from the ACoS Cancer Programs, the Canadian Council of Cancer Registries, NAACCR, NCRA, NPCR and SEER met to discuss potential changes in cancer surveillance data collection for the calendar year 2020. This High Level Strategic Group (HLSG) considered modifications to the Site Specific Data Items, Radiation Therapy codes, the addition of neo-adjuvant staging data items, and implementation of the NAACCR XML format.

Considering the significant delays in the capacity of registries to process 2018 data, the burden that these changes has placed on central and hospital cancer registries, and other factors, the HLSG voted not to implement any changes to data collection requirements or the data exchange layout in 2020. This means that NAACCR Data Standards and Data Dictionary, Volume II, Version 18 will remain in effect through December 31, 2020.

It is our hope that the decision to postpone any further changes until 2021 or later will allow the registry community to focus on the ongoing implementation challenges and the urgent backlog in collection and processing of 2018 cases.