

The Thoracic Society of Australia and New Zealand response to the ICCR Draft Tumours of the Lung- Small Diagnostic and Cytopathological Specimens dataset

The Society operates in compliance with the Medicines Code of Australia. Please see the TSANZ Sponsorship Policy for more information.

Introduction

The Thoracic Society of Australia and New Zealand (TSANZ) is a health promotion charity whose mission is to lead, support and enable all health workers and researchers who aim to prevent, cure, and relieve disability caused by lung disease. TSANZ is the only Peak Body in Australia that represents all health professionals working in all fields of respiratory health.

The TSANZ has a membership base of over 1800 individual members from a wide range of health and research disciplines. The TSANZ is a leading provider of evidence-based guidelines for the treatment of respiratory disease in Australia and New Zealand and undertakes a large amount of professional education and training. The TSANZ is also responsible for significant research administration and coordinates an accredited respiratory laboratory program.

As the leaders in lung health, we promote the:

- highest quality and standards of patient care
- development and application of knowledge about respiratory health and disease
- highest quality air standards including a tobacco smoke free society and effective regulation of novel nicotine delivery systems
- collaboration between all national organisations whose objects are to improve the wellbeing of individuals with lung disease and to promote better lung health for the community
- professional and collegiate needs of the Membership

The TSANZ thank the International Collaboration on Cancer Reporting (ICCR) for the opportunity to respond to provide feedback on the Draft Tumours of the Lung - Small Diagnostic and Cytopathological Specimens dataset. Lung cancer remains the leading cause of cancer mortality, and the fifth most commonly diagnosed cancer in Australia. The dataset made by the ICCR will have an impact on the field of respiratory health, Thoracic Society members, and subsequently the many patients who we support and treat whose lives are impacted by lung cancer. We will continue to advocate through evidence-based practice and policy to improve respiratory health for all.

Consultation Topic

The International Collaboration on Cancer Reporting is seeking stakeholder feedback on the Draft Tumours of the Lung - Small Diagnostic and Cytopathological Specimens dataset.

TSANZ Feedback

The Thoracic Society is supportive of the Draft Tumours of the Lung - Small Diagnostic and Cytopathological Specimens dataset. Combatting lung cancer in Australia is an urgent priority the Thoracic Society highly endorses. The dataset appears to be exhaustive, which may allow for assessment of quality and/or benchmarking but could be onerous for clinicians should the document be intended for routine clinical use. We recommend a period of pilot testing to assess the feasibility of the document. The Thoracic Society has addressed further aspects of the dataset in further detail below.

Further comments:

- A statement on the aims/purpose of such a comprehensive dataset would be useful. It is currently unclear whether the purpose is to ensure complete data collection for clinical purposes, or for Quality Assessment/Improvement Science, or a different reason.
- The length of the document raises concerns about how likely the document is to be used by busy clinicians.
- The extent of options presented under tumour type appears to be unfeasibly large, and might even be a barrier to routine completion.
- It is unclear who would populate the report - proceduralist or pathologist. The datapoints will be available at different timepoints (e.g. proceduralist for biopsy sites, cytology scientist for ROSE results, lab technicians for sampled material, reporting pathologist for tumour type, and molecular pathologist for ancillary testing), so as constructed this may require input from multiple people (with risks to accurate completion). Further, it is unclear if it is intended that this would be filled in real-time or retrospectively (audit-style).
- “Core needle biopsy” is not a term used in Australia. We would label these specimens as TBNA.
- It is currently unclear how multiple specimen types would be entered. For example, in a procedure where TBNA, brushings, washings, and a biopsy of RUL lesion, would all specimens be entered on one sheet or separate forms for each specimen type?
- The TSANZ recommend this document be adaptable in the event of changes in the field, e.g. identification of new driver mutations.
- There are likely significant resource requirements to successfully maintain such a database. This is currently not expected to be available at many centres in Australia.

Concluding Remarks

The Draft Tumours of the Lung - Small Diagnostic and Cytopathological Specimens dataset is a valuable resource which has the potential to improve the respiratory health of all Australians by helping to combat lung cancer. The Thoracic Society supports this dataset and thank the International Collaboration on Cancer Reporting for the opportunity to provide stakeholder feedback. We hope to continue working together as the dataset is refined, to tackle respiratory health issues and to improve respiratory health for all Australians.