

## Blue in a Pink World

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Women don't get "female breast cancer" and yet we say men get "male breast cancer". Bottom line is it is breast cancer. The fact that male breast cancer is a rare occurrence is where things get more interesting, and it becomes even more important that our registry counts are accurate. An article in NCRA's *Journal of Registry Management*, 2014 Volume 41, Number 3, titled "Misclassification of Sex in Central Cancer Registries", discusses identifying miscoded sex on gender-skewed sites like male breast cancer with the application of an intra-record edit on site-sex combinations. The New York State Cancer Registry developed an edit that looked at first name and sex, using data on the most popular names by gender maintained by the Social Security Administration. The Florida Statewide Cancer Registry applied the edit to their data and then reviewed their breast cancer cases and found a number of male breast cancers were miscoded as females. They identified these types of cases as "fake males". CRGC decided to take a gander at our gender to see how we fared when it came to our male breast cases. We were rather surprised to see that we also had our own fake males---***females that were miscoded to males with breast cancer!***

Year	Cases Identified as Male (# cases reviewed)	Gender Coding Errors (% or # changed from male to female)
2013	125 Tumors (151 Admissions)	11.2% 14 changed on Tumor level (13 changed on Admission level)
2014	90 Tumors (113 Admissions)	13.13% 12 changed on Tumor level (13 changed on Admission level)

In most of the cases that were miscoded as male, there was clear documentation that the patient was female in the physical exam text. In a few cases, where female was not documented, there was a reference to menarche or a past history of pregnancy. In two cases, there was no gender documentation but the names were very feminine names and another admission confirmed the patient was female. CRGC will continue to

review our data back to 2010 to correct any “fake males” that should be corrected to female.

The edit that was developed by the New York State Cancer Registry will be presented as a potential edit to the NAACCR Edit Work Group, so this could become a national standard edit that registries could implement. This edit will not only identify incorrectly coded gender for breast cases, but it will identify potential miscoded gender for any site.

**Abstracting Tips:** Make sure somewhere in your abstract that gender is documented. When abstracting a breast cancer case where the gender is male, document Male Breast Cancer in the Remarks text (this is one time we should say “male breast cancer”). Obviously, even the documentation for female in the physical exam text is helpful when research is done for gender verification.

**Visual Editing Tips:** Verify that a breast cancer case that has gender coded male also has documentation that the patient is male. Query back if all data is ambiguous.

**Reference Articles:**

<http://news.naaccr.org/misclassification-of-sex-in-central-cancer-registries/>

[http://www.ncra-usa.org/files/public/JRM\\_fall2014\\_V41.3.pdf](http://www.ncra-usa.org/files/public/JRM_fall2014_V41.3.pdf)