

# **ACC Coordinating Center Q1 Quarterly Progress Report January – March 2009**

## **Full Report**

### **Pilot projects**

The BMI Pilot Project has made significant progress during Q1. Eighteen cohorts have submitted data to the Coordinating Center (CC) as of the close of Q1, representing over one million subjects and more than 100,000 deaths to be included in Phase I of the analysis. Preliminary analysis of all datasets received during the quarter for Phase I was conducted by Dale McLerran and Ziding Feng of the CC. The BMI WG expects to review this analysis and determine additional analyses for Phase II of the project at the Spring meeting.

The BMI WG plans to produce an initial publication based on Phase I results in 2009. In preparation, a Writing Committee of fourteen WG members was established and charged with drafting sections of the first publication. The Writing Committee will develop publications resulting from the project using collaborative writing features on the secure members' portal. A draft of the publication's key sections is expected to be completed in Q2.

The commitment of cohorts involved and the swift pace of the BMI project raised the possibility of other collaborative projects among the WG. Paolo Boffetta of the International Agency for Cancer Research re-circulated an updated proposal to study rare cancers, specifically those of the small intestine, salivary glands, adrenal gland and male breast cancer. The CC developed and distributed a survey to collect information on these rare cancers from BMI WG cohorts. By the close of the quarter, nine cohorts expressed interest in the project, the majority of which have submitted a completed survey. Completed surveys have been integrated in project-tracking tools developed on the portal by the CC for both the BMI and rare-cancers projects. The WG will review survey information during the Spring meeting and determine the feasibility of the rare-cancers project.

In addition to these projects, ACC members will also have an opportunity to hear more about the nutrient-database proposal and biospecimens-related proposals at the Spring meeting. During Q1, Alan Kristal, of the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center, developed a proposal for a nutrient database. The proposal was circulated among the Executive Committee and will be distributed to attendees of the general meeting in Denver. A proposal on dietary patterns, body-size and mortality sponsored by Rashmi Sinha of the National Cancer Institute, will also be reviewed at the meeting.

Meeting attendees will also consider biospecimens-related proposals. A project involving biospecimens has been supported by the Executive Committee, Biospecimens WG and members of the new cohorts as a valuable activity for the ACC to pursue both scientifically and strategically. The general membership will review several projects submitted by ACC members at the general meeting, after which the Biospecimens WG will convene separately during the Spring meeting to develop a plan for advancing a biospecimens project in 2009.

### **Data-sharing & Analysis**

Data-sharing among the CC and cohorts participating in the BMI pilot project occurred throughout Q1 with the transfer of fifteen datasets through the Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS). Dale McLerran completed preliminary analysis on these datasets as well as those submitted in Q4 2008. Cohorts are currently reviewing these results. CC statisticians will conduct the next round of analyses during Q2, as determined by the BMI WG at the Spring meeting.

## **Communication**

The secure members' portal (<https://portal.asiacohort.org>) has grown from forty-three to fifty-two users during the past quarter. BMI WG users primarily accessed the portal to view individual cohort workspaces, which provide a space for communication between cohort representatives and CC statisticians. CC statisticians have used this space to ask specific questions raised during analysis and adjust the analysis based on responses received from the cohorts.

Communications were also improved through the development of email lists for the Executive Committee ([ec@asiacohort.org](mailto:ec@asiacohort.org)) and Biospecimens WG ([bio@asiacohort.org](mailto:bio@asiacohort.org)). The portal and email lists continue to be maintained by the CC.

Communication with researchers and agencies interested in partnering with the ACC was also addressed during Q1 through the development of a draft brochure. The brochure provides information on the mission, structure and collaborative projects of the consortium. The Steering Committee will review the draft brochure and revisit the need for a publication to introduce the ACC to the scientific community at the Spring meeting.

## **Cohort Development**

Harmonization of data and data collection instruments continues to be a priority for the ACC. The recently established cohorts in Korea, Singapore and Malaysia will convene at the Spring meeting to discuss how best to advance harmonization. Representatives will also discuss the potential for a biospecimens project which may address quality control concerns relevant to new cohort samples.

## **Coordinating Center**

The close of Q1 marked a full year of operation for the Coordinating Center. John Potter, Ziding Feng, Mark Thornquist and Betsy Rolland of the CC gave an update on ACC and CC progress over the past year, including preliminary results from the BMI project; the presentation was given at the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center on March 5<sup>th</sup> and was attended by President Lee Hartwell, Division Director Ross Prentice, program heads, and interested researchers at the Center. ACC and CC progress during the past year will also be assessed by ACC collaborators through an evaluation survey developed by the CC. Areas identified as needing improvement will be addressed in Q2.

## **Spring Meeting, Denver**

The next ACC meeting will be held in Denver, Colorado, USA, April 17-18, 2009, in conjunction with the annual meeting of the American Association of Cancer Research. The general membership meeting will be held on Friday and working group meetings on Saturday. Please visit the ACC website for the most current information about the [Spring meeting](#).

## **Q2 Objectives**

The following objectives have been proposed for Q2:

### **ACC**

- Continue to advance the BMI pilot project and commit to a feasible number of new pilot projects, including a biospecimens project
- Continue harmonization efforts amongst the new cohorts
- Agree upon a plan for moving forward with the nutrient database proposal

### **CC**

- Provide statistical and organizational support for the BMI and other pilot projects
- Continue the development of portal tools to help track progress
- Develop a CC Protocol
- Assist harmonization efforts
- Prepare a grant for further ACC and CC support

*We welcome your feedback and comments.  
Thank you for your contributions to the success of the ACC.*