

QA Matters: 2026 Coding Updates

July 2026

Beginning with cases diagnosed January 1, 2026, the National Program of Cancer Registries (NPCR) adopted the NAACCR Volume II, Version 26 record layout and data collection requirements. These updates include changes to several data items that affect abstraction and coding.

This QA Matters brief highlights selected 2026 changes that Vermont registrars should be aware of and identifies the current resources for complete coding guidance.

Key Points

- **Sex [220] is retired with Version 26 and replaced by Sex Assigned at Birth [225].**
- **VCR added Sex_VT [9510] for cases diagnosed in 2026 and later.**
- **Available codes and selected schema guidance were updated for Grade.**
- **NPCR expanded reporting requirements for Microsatellite Instability (MSI) [3890].**
- **PSA Level coding guidance changed for cases diagnosed in 2026.**

If you need help accessing or understanding this information, contact Linda.Bloschies@vermont.gov.

Why This Matters

- Version 26 includes changes that affect data items registrars abstract and code.
- Using current manuals and guidance helps ensure that 2026 cases are coded consistently and accurately.
- Complete coded values and supporting text documentation contribute to high-quality registry data.

Coding Changes and Updates

Sex and Sex Assigned at Birth

The data item Sex [220] is retired with Version 26 and replaced by Sex Assigned at Birth [225]. NPCR requires Sex Assigned at Birth for all cases, regardless of diagnosis year. Existing values from Sex [220] will be converted and used to populate the new data item.



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Coding instructions for Sex Assigned at Birth are referenced in the [SEER Program Coding and Staging Manual 2026](#) and [STORE Manual 2026](#).

VCR also added the Vermont-specific data item Sex_VT [9510] beginning with cases diagnosed in 2026. Sex_VT continues to collect the same values previously reported in Sex [220]. Coding guidance for these values can be found in historical reference materials, including the [SEER Program Coding and Staging Manual 2025](#) and [STORE Manual 2025](#).

Grade

Updates were made to the available codes for the following Grade Data Items:

- Grade Clinical [3843]
- Grade Pathological [3844]
- Grade Post Therapy Clin (yc) [1068]
- Grade Post Therapy Path (yp) [3845]

The [Grade Coding Instructions and Tables v3.3](#) also include additional updates for selected schemas, including a new Grade table for Major Salivary Gland cases diagnosed in 2026 and later. Registrars should use the current [Grade Coding Instructions and Tables](#) and other applicable guidance when assigning Grade.

Microsatellite Instability (MSI)

Beginning with cases diagnosed in 2026, NPCR expanded the reporting requirements for Microsatellite Instability [3890]. MSI is required, when applicable, for the Colon and Rectum and Corpus Carcinoma and Carcinosarcoma schemas.

The 2026 Vermont Edit Set includes an edit requiring MSI to be coded for all cases in these schemas.

Refer to the [Site-Specific Data Item Manual](#) for complete coding instructions.

PSA Level

Beginning with cases diagnosed in 2026, the criteria for the timing of allowable PSA test results changed. Specific instructions apply based on whether a diagnostic biopsy is performed.

Refer to the [Site-Specific Data Item Manual](#) for complete coding instructions.

Documentation Reminder

All coded values should be supported by appropriate documentation in the applicable text fields.

References

[NAACCR Volume II, Version 26](#)
[SEER Program Coding and Staging Manual 2026](#)
[STORE Manual 2026](#)
[Grade Coding Instructions and Tables](#)
[Site-Specific Data Item Manual](#)

[2026 Reporting Requirements](#)

Questions?

If you have questions regarding this topic, need assistance interpreting coding guidance, or have other cancer registry-related questions, please contact the Vermont Cancer Registry at AHS.VDHHSICancerRegistry@vermont.gov.