

QA Matters: PSA Lab Value Timing Update

August 2026

The Vermont Cancer Registry requires the collection of several Site-Specific Data Items (SSDIs). This month, we would like to highlight a 2026 change to the timing rules for **PSA (Prostatic Specific Antigen) Lab Value [3920]**.

Some SSDIs have specific timing rules that determine which result should be coded. The timing rule for PSA Lab Value changed with the 2026 updates. The updated rule may be applied to cases diagnosed in 2018 or later. Registries are not expected to review previously abstracted cases solely to apply this change.

Key Points

- **A The 2026 update changes the timing criteria used to select the PSA Lab Value.**
- **The appropriate PSA value depends on whether a diagnostic biopsy was performed.**
- **The updated rule may be applied to cases diagnosed in 2018 or later. Registries are not expected to review previously abstracted cases solely to apply the change.**
- **PSA Lab Value should be supported by appropriate documentation in the applicable text fields.**

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

Why This Matters

Previously, PSA Lab Value was subject to the general laboratory timing rule requiring the value to be within approximately three months before the date of diagnosis. The 2026 update provides specific PSA timing instructions based on whether a diagnostic biopsy was performed.

Coding Guidance and Scenarios

- If a **diagnostic biopsy** was performed, record the last PSA Lab Value obtained before and within three months of the diagnostic biopsy.

Coding Scenario: Diagnostic biopsy performed

Medical record: 2/4/26 PSA, 12.7. Additional PSA done 4/5/26, 10.6. Date of Diagnosis on 6/4/26 when the diagnostic biopsy was done.



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Code: PSA 10.6 based on the 4/5/26 PSA since that was the last PSA done prior to and within 3 months of the diagnostic biopsy.

- If **no diagnostic biopsy** was performed, **or it is unknown** whether one was performed, record the last PSA Lab Value obtained within three months of the date of diagnosis or additional confirmatory testing.

Coding Scenario: No diagnostic biopsy performed

Medical record: 4/15/26 PSA, 6.4. 5/2/26 MRI done, which confirms prostate cancer. No diagnostic biopsy done.

Code: PSA 6.4 based on the 4/15/26 PSA, which was done within 3 months of the date of diagnosis and no diagnostic biopsy was done.

Recommendations for Registrars

As with all coded data items, PSA Lab Value should be supported by appropriate documentation in the applicable text fields. Include the date of the PSA test to support quality assurance and case consolidation.

References

NAACCR webinar: [V26 Updates: Solid Tumor Rules, SSDIs, Cancer PathCHART and More!](#) – SSDI update presented by Jennifer Ruhl, ODS

[NAACCR Site-Specific Data Item Manual v3.3](#)

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.