

National Health Data Dictionary

Version 12 Supplement

The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare is Australia's national health and welfare statistics and information agency. The Institute's mission is *better health and wellbeing for Australians through better health and welfare statistics and information.*

National Health Data Dictionary

Version 12 Supplement

**Health Data Standards Committee
2004**

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
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Foreword

The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) is pleased to produce this supplement to the twelfth version of the *National Health Data Dictionary* (NHDD), which is a vital tool for use in ensuring the quality of Australian health data.

In this time of constant change and with initiatives such as *HealthConnect* it is imperative that the health care community maintains the ability to standardise the meaning and representation of data used in the communication and analysis of health information. It is only through the cooperation and consensus of Australia's health sector that it is possible to produce in the Dictionary a set of core data specifications for use in all Australian health data collection settings. All Australian health departments, the Australian Bureau of Statistics, the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, the National Centre for Classification in Health, the Australian Government Department of Veterans' Affairs, the Australian Private Hospitals Association, representatives of the private health insurance industry and the Health Insurance Commission cooperate in this endeavour.

Use of the Dictionary will help ensure that data elements are collected uniformly in all services and jurisdictions throughout Australia and thereby improve the quality of information for clinical communication, community discussion and public policy debate on health issues in Australia.

This supplement to Version 12 of the *National Health Data Dictionary* contains seventy new data items and sixty-six modified data items. Many of these items are included in new Data set specifications (DSS) designed to improve the quality of data used in the care of patients suffering from cancer and acute coronary syndromes. Data items from a new National Minimum Data Set (NMDS) for residential mental health care are also included in this publication. In addition, twenty-three modified data items reflect agreement between Australia's health and community services information authorities to integrate data standards across these sectors wherever possible.

Data elements in this edition continue to be presented in a format based on the ISO/IEC Standard 11179 (1994) *Specification and Standardization of Data Elements* – the international standard for defining data elements issued by the International Organization for Standardization and the International Electrotechnical Commission.

The AIHW Knowledgebase (Australian's Health, Community Services and Housing Assistance Metadata Registry) has been updated to incorporate this supplement to the twelfth version of the NHDD and is accessible via the following Internet page <<http://www.aihw.gov.au/knowledgebase/index.html>>.

The Knowledgebase is currently being redeveloped by the AIHW using a 2003 version of the ISO/IEC 11179 standard for metadata registries. The resulting Metadata Online Registry (METeOR) will be available in early 2005.

Thanks are due to Institute staff who have prepared the material for this supplement to the twelfth edition, and to all members of the Health Data Standards Committee who have overseen its preparation.

I urge all collectors of health-related data in Australia to use the Dictionary and so improve the quality of Australian health data.

Richard Madden

Director

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare

Preface

With the increasing use of electronic means of dissemination, the decision was taken to publish in paper form a full version of the *National Health Data Dictionary* only every two years.

This is the second time in which this publication contains only changes and additions to the previous version of the Data Dictionary – i.e. it only contains items that have been added, updated or revised since the publication of Version 12 NHDD. Data items that have not been modified since Version 12 can be found in the *National Health Data Dictionary* Version 12. The full NHDD Version 12 is available on the AIHW Knowledgebase and on CD-ROM. Electronic copies of the previous complete NHDD Version 12 can also be referenced from <http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/hwi/nhdd12/index.html>. A CD-ROM amalgamating NHDD Version 12 and this supplement is also available.

Currently, the Knowledgebase is being redeveloped using the updated ISO/IEC 11179 standard (2003). The resulting Metadata Online Registry (METeOR) will be completed in early 2005 and will also provide guidelines for data developers.

The Institute welcomes your views on this publication and your suggestions for improving the content and dissemination of national health data standards. Please send your feedback by post or fax using the feedback form at the back of this publication or by email to knowledgebase@aihw.gov.au.

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