

Introduction

The *National Health Data Dictionary* was first published as *the National Minimum Data Set—Institutional Health Care* in September 1989. In March 1993 the *National Health Data Dictionary—Institutional Health Care (Version 2.0)* was published. Since the establishment of the first National Health Information Agreement in June 1993 there have been many changes in the development and management of national health information resulting in the expansion of both the scope and content of the seven subsequent versions of the *National Health Data Dictionary*. The National Health Information Agreement was renewed in 1998 for a further five-year term. Arrangements for a further continuation of the agreement are currently under consideration.

Under the National Health Information Agreement and the National Health Information Standards Plan for Australia, the *National Health Data Dictionary* is the authoritative source of health data definitions used in Australia where national consistency is required. For further details, see:

- the Health Online web site of the National Health Information Standards Plan at www.health.gov.au/healthonline
- A Report to the Australian Health Ministers' Conference from Australian Health Care Agreement Reference Groups September 2002 at www.health.gov.au/haf/ahca.htm
- The National Health Information Agreement Process at www.aihw.gov.au/html/NHIAproc.htm

The Dictionary is designed to improve the comparability of data across the health field. It is also designed to make data collection activities more efficient by reducing duplication of effort in the field, and more effective by ensuring that information to be collected is appropriate to its purpose.

The objectives of the *National Health Data Dictionary* are to:

- establish a core set of uniform definitions relating to the full range of health services and a range of population parameters (including health status and determinants);
- promote uniformity, availability, reliability, validity, consistency and completeness in the data;
- accord with nationally and internationally agreed protocols and standards, wherever possible;
- promote the national standard definitions by being readily available to all individuals and organisations involved in the generation, use and/or development of health and health services information;
- facilitate and promote the development of good data definitions across the health sector.

The National Health Data Committee is responsible for coordinating the development and revision of the *National Health Data Dictionary*.

The National Health Data Committee

The National Health Data Committee is a standing committee of the National Health Information Management Group—a body established under the National Health Information Agreement to oversee implementation of the Agreement. All data element definitions to be included in the *National Health Data Dictionary* require endorsement by the National Health Information Management Group.

The primary role of the National Health Data Committee is to assess data definitions proposed for inclusion in the *National Health Data Dictionary* and to make recommendations

to the National Health Information Management Group on revisions and additions to each successive version of the Dictionary. In particular, the Committee's role is to ensure that the *National Health Data Dictionary* definitions comply with endorsed standards for the definition of data elements and that all data definitions being considered for the Dictionary have undergone sufficient national consultation with recognised experts and stakeholders in the relevant field.

The rules applied to each data element definition are designed to ensure that each definition is clear, concise, comprehensive and provides sufficient information to ensure that all those who collect, provide, analyse and use the data understand its meaning.

All definitions in the *National Health Data Dictionary* are presented in a format that is described in more detail at Appendix B.

The National Health Data Committee comprises representatives of:

- The Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing
- Each State and Territory government health authority
- The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
- The Australian Bureau of Statistics
- The Australian Private Hospitals' Association
- The private health insurance industry (through Lysaght's Hospital and Medical Club)
- The Department of Veterans' Affairs
- The National Centre for Classification in Health;
- The Health Insurance Commission
- Other members designated by the National Health Information Management Group.

The National Health Information Management Group appoints the Chair of the National Health Data Committee, currently Dr Ching Choi of the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.

A list of Committee members and their contact details (as at 1 January 2003) is provided at Appendix A.

The National Health Data Committee does not normally develop data definitions directly. Rather, it provides a channel through which standards emerging from nationally-focussed data development work are documented and endorsed by the National Health Information Management Group for implementation in national data collections and made more widely available to stakeholders in the national health information arena. The range and relevance of the data definitions included in the *National Health Data Dictionary* are dependent, to a significant extent, on the material submitted to the National Health Data Committee by the expert working groups that are actively developing data in the health field.

More information about the National Health Data Committee and its processes is available from the Secretariat (see the address at the end of this section).

The Knowledgebase

The Knowledgebase – Australia's Health, Community Services and Housing Metadata Registry is an electronically accessible registry of national data definitions. The Knowledgebase was designed and created by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare on behalf of the National Health Information Management Group. Organisations that may place data definitions into the Knowledgebase are given the status of 'Registration Authority'. The organisation authorised to register *National Health Data Dictionary* data definitions in the Knowledgebase is the National Health Information Management Group. The organisation authorised to register *National Community Services Data Dictionary* data

definitions in the Knowledgebase is the National Community Services Information Management Group. The Knowledgebase is also a registry for other Registration Authorities that are approved by the relevant national information management groups. These other groups are allowed to have data definitions with 'DRAFT' status only. DRAFT definitions are not available in print form.

The Knowledgebase integrates and presents information about:

- the *National Health Data Dictionary*
- National Minimum Data Set (NMDS) agreements
- National Health Performance Indicators
- the National Health Information Model
- the National Community Services Information Model
- the *National Community Services Data Dictionary*
- proposed data sets under development
- related data dictionaries from other organisations.

The integrating features of the Knowledgebase enable information managers and policy developers to query and view information in ways not possible with traditional paper-based records, repositories, dictionaries or manuals. It is envisaged that, over time, access to the *National Health Data Dictionary* will be primarily electronic – via the Knowledgebase.

The Knowledgebase is an Internet application, accessible through any Browser compatible with HTML version 3.2 or later. It has been written using Oracle's Webserver technology.

The Internet address for the Knowledgebase – Australia's Health, Community Services and Housing Metadata Registry is
www.aihw.gov.au
Select **Knowledgebase** from the 'Choose a portal' drop down list.

National Health Data Dictionary

All data definitions that are included in the latest version of the *National Health Data Dictionary* as well as all previous versions of those data definitions are available on the Knowledgebase. DRAFT data definitions under development by the National Health Data Committee are also available on the Knowledgebase under the National Health Data Committee as Registration Authority.

National Health Data Dictionary, Version 12

The publication format for Version 12 differs from all other versions in that:

- It is presented as two volumes due to the number of definitions.
- Data definitions are presented in alphabetical order.
- For the first-time, data definitions are referred to using the updated International Standard ISO 11179-3: 2002. This standard introduces the terms metadata, metadata item, metadata set, metadata type and steward. Appendix B provides definitions of some of these terms used in this publication.
- It introduces, for the first-time, a new product called Data Set Specification (DSS) as a generic name for groups of metadata (metadata sets) that are intended for collection as a set. NMDSs are a special type of DSS because of the mandatory nature of their collection. Three DSS have been introduced in this version.

This hard copy publication of Version 12 contains only data elements that are CURRENT as at 1 January 2003 i.e. they are available for use as a nationally endorsed standard. Data elements that are included in NMDSs are active in those collections from 1 July 2003.

All data elements including those that have been superseded by new data elements or new versions of data elements or rendered obsolete are available on the Knowledgebase. An 'Advanced Search' facility is available from the *National Health Data Dictionary* page or select by alphabet.

Version 12 comprises:

- the addition of 87 new data elements
- the modification of 25 data elements requiring a version change
- the modification of 13 data elements that did not require a version change
- the retirement of 3 obsolete data elements concepts
- the introduction of a new NMDS for Non-admitted patient emergency department care
- changes to the NMDS for Alcohol and other drug treatment services
- three new types of metadata set; Data Set Specifications (DSS) for Cardiovascular disease (clinical), Diabetes (clinical) and Health care client identification.

These modifications have been endorsed by the National Health Information Management Group.

The full version of the Dictionary is also available from the Publications portal on the AIHW web site at www.aihw.gov.au/publications/index.cfm . Also available on the Publications portal are individual NMDSs and their associated data elements as well as other DSSs and their associated data elements.

Summary of changes

National Minimum Data Sets

- Modification to NMDS – Alcohol and other drug treatment services:
 - 2 new data elements: Geographical location of service delivery outfit, Service delivery outlet

- change to Client type-alcohol and other drug treatment services;
- change to Injecting drug use
- change to Other drugs of concern
- change to Principal drug of concern
- change to Source of referral to alcohol and other drug treatment service.
- New NMDS – Non-admitted patient emergency department care.
- New DSS – Cardiovascular disease (clinical).
- New DSS – Diabetes (clinical).
- New DSS – Health care client identification.
- In some cases a data element may be included in more than one Data Set Specification. See Appendix D for a table presenting a cross tabulation of data elements by NMDS.

Data elements

Modified in version 12

- The following Body Mass Index definitions have been changed so that they no longer refer only to adults. Appropriate changes have been made to the wording to reflect this. The following name changes and other relevant changes have been made:
 - *Body mass index – classification* (formerly Adult body mass index – classification)
 - *Body mass index* (formerly Adult body mass index)
 - *Height – self-reported* (formerly Adult height – self-reported)
 - *Height – measured* (formerly Adult height – measured)
 - *Hip circumference measured* (formerly Adult hip circumference – measured)
 - *Waist circumference – measured* (formerly Adult abdominal circumference measured)
 - *Waist to hip ratio* (formerly Adult abdomen to hip ratio)
 - *Weight – measured* (formerly Adult weight – measured)
 - *Weight – self-reported* (formerly Adult weight – self-reported).
- *Carer availability*
 - changes were made to align with the National Community Services Data Dictionary.
- *Client type – alcohol and other drug treatment services:*
 - the term ‘contact’ is replaced by the term ‘treatment episode’.
- *Indigenous status:*
 - change to the Definition such that it is consistent with what is actually measured by the standard Indigenous Status question; and
 - an explanation about how this differs from the Commonwealth working definition has been added to Comments section.
- *Injecting drug use:*
 - wording in the Data Domain was amended to allow for the correct capture of clients who may have injected precisely three months or 12 months ago.
- *Principal drug of concern:*
 - the Data Domain was updated to ensure that the correct title and catalogue number is listed for the Australian Classifications of Drugs of Concern

- one wording changes made to the definition and additional information has been included under Collection methods, Related data and Guide for use.
- *Other drugs of concern:*
 - similar changes were made as Principal drug of concern.
- *Source of referral to alcohol and other drug treatment service:*
 - the Data domain and the Guide for use were revised to more accurately capture the most common sources of referral and to make the categories mutually exclusive.
- Changes were made to the wording in the following data elements in order to reflect their inclusion in the new NMDS – Non-admitted patient emergency department care and the new Data Set Specifications – Cardiovascular disease (clinical), Diabetes (clinical) and Health care client identification:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Area of usual residence</i> • <i>Birth order</i> • <i>Birth plurality</i> • <i>Compensable status</i> • <i>Country of birth</i> • <i>Date of birth</i> • <i>Date patient presents</i> • <i>Department of Veterans' Affairs patient</i> • <i>Establishment identifier</i> • <i>Establishment sector</i> • <i>Estimated date flag</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Height-measured</i> • <i>Person identifier</i> • <i>Region code</i> • <i>Service contact date</i> • <i>Sex</i> • <i>State/Territory identifier</i> • <i>Time patient presents</i> • <i>Triage category</i> • <i>Type of visit to emergency department</i>
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New in version 12

- *Address*
- *Address type*
- *Alcohol consumption – concept*
- *Alcohol consumption frequency – self-report*
- *Alcohol consumption in standard drinks per day – self-report*
- *Australian postcode*
- *Behaviour-related risk factor intervention*
- *Behaviour-related risk factor intervention – purpose*
- *Blindness – diabetes complication*
- *Blood pressure – concept*
- *Blood pressure – diastolic measured*
- *Blood pressure – systolic measured*
- *Cardiovascular medication – current*
- *Cataract – history*
- *Centrelink customer reference number*
- *Cerebral stroke due to vascular disease – history*
- *Cholesterol-total – measured*
- *Cholesterol-HDL – measured*
- *Cholesterol-LDL – calculated*
- *Coronary artery disease – history of intervention or procedure*
- *Creatinine serum – measured*
- *CVD drug therapy – condition*
- *Date of diagnosis*
- *Date of referral to rehabilitation*
- *Diabetes status*
- *Diabetes therapy type*
- *Division of General Practice number*
- *Dyslipidaemia – treatment*
- *Emergency department – public hospital*
- *Emergency department arrival mode-transport*
- *Erectile dysfunction*
- *Family name*
- *Fasting status*
- *Foot deformity*
- *Foot lesion – active*
- *Foot ulcer – current*
- *Foot ulcer – history*
- *Formal community support access status*
- *Geographical location of service delivery outlet*
- *Given name(s)*
- *Glycosylated haemoglobin (HbA1c) – measured*
- *Glycosylated haemoglobin (HbA1c) – upper limit of normal range*
- *Health professionals attended – diabetes mellitus*
- *Hypertension – treatment*
- *Hypoglycaemia – severe*
- *Initial visit – diabetes mellitus*
- *Labour force status*
- *Length of non-admitted patient emergency department service episode*
- *Living arrangement*
- *Lower limb amputation due to vascular disease*
- *Microalbumin – units*
- *Microalbumin – upper limit of normal range*
- *Microalbumin/protein – measured*
- *Mother’s original family name*
- *Myocardial infarction – history*
- *Name*
- *Name context flag*
- *Name suffix*
- *Name title*
- *Name type*
- *Non-admitted patient emergency department service episode*
- *Ophthalmological assessment – outcome*
- *Ophthalmoscopy – performed*
- *Peripheral neuropathy – status*
- *Peripheral vascular disease in feet – status*
- *Person identifier type – health care*
- *Physical activity sufficiency status*
- *Postal delivery point identifier*
- *Pregnancy – current status*
- *Premature cardiovascular disease family history – status*
- *Proteinuria – status*
- *Referred to ophthalmologist – diabetes mellitus*
- *Renal disease – end stage, diabetes complication*
- *Renal disease therapy*
- *Service delivery outlet*
- *Suburb/town/locality*
- *Telephone number*
- *Telephone number type*
- *Tobacco smoking status – diabetes mellitus*
- *Triglycerides – measured*
- *Vascular history*
- *Vascular procedures*
- *Visual acuity*
- *Waist circumference risk indicator – adults*
- *Year insulin started*
- *Year of diagnosis of diabetes mellitus*

Retired from version 12

- *Adult height (concept)*
- *Adult hip circumference (concept)*
- *Adult weight (concept)*

Knowledgebase

Modifications are made to the Knowledgebase. *National Health Data Dictionary* version 12 is created by downloading all Dictionary definitions with an administrative status of 'CURRENT' as at 01 July 2003 and printing the resulting document. This includes those that are still 'CURRENT' as of that date.

Feedback

Your feedback on this publication, the web site, the Knowledgebase or anything in relation to national health standards development is more than welcome. Please feel free to contact the Institute by any of the means listed below. There is a Feedback area on the Knowledgebase for your convenience.

Contacts

National Data Development Unit

Further information about the *National Health Data Dictionary* and for any comments and suggestions about national standards development processes can be obtained by contacting the National Data Development Unit at the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.

Contact: David Neilsen
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Secretariat

For further information about the National Health Data Committee and its processes please contact the National Health Data Committee Secretariat at the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.

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