

3.01 Antenatal care

Number, rate and percentage of Indigenous women who utilised antenatal care provided by skilled birth attendants for reasons related to pregnancy at least once during pregnancy among all women who gave birth whether resulting in a live or still birth, if the birthweight is at least 400 grams or the gestational age is 20 weeks or more

Data sources

Data for this measure come from the state/territory based Perinatal Collections ('Midwives Collections').

Each state and territory has a perinatal collection based on birth notification forms completed by midwives and other staff, using information obtained from mothers and other hospital records (the Midwives Collection). Jurisdictions record some aspects of most antenatal care, but the data collected vary by jurisdiction.

The Australian Capital Territory, Queensland and South Australia collect data on the number of antenatal care sessions attended during pregnancy and the type of healthcare professional consulted. New South Wales and the Northern Territory do not record the number of sessions of antenatal care attended or the type of professional consulted but do record the duration of pregnancy at first antenatal session. The Australian Capital Territory also records this information. Data on the use of antenatal care services are not available for Victoria, Western Australia or Tasmania.

Analyses

Use of antenatal care services by state/territory

Data on the use of antenatal care for Indigenous mothers in New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia, the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory for 2003 are presented below.

- In 2003, in New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia, the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory, the rate at which Indigenous mothers attended at least one antenatal care session during pregnancy was similar to non-Indigenous mothers (Table 3.01.1).
- The rate at which Indigenous mothers attended at least one antenatal care session ranged from 838 per 1,000 in the Australian Capital Territory to 982 per 1,000 in Queensland.
- In the three jurisdictions where data are collected on the duration of pregnancy at first antenatal visit (New South Wales, the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory), Indigenous mothers were three to five times as likely as non-Indigenous mothers to be in their third trimester of pregnancy at their first antenatal session and less likely to be in their first trimester.

- In Queensland, South Australia and the Northern Territory, Indigenous mothers were less likely to have attended five or more antenatal sessions during pregnancy than non-Indigenous mothers.
- In the Australian Capital Territory, data were provided on the number of Indigenous and non-Indigenous mothers attending one–five and six or more antenatal sessions. Indigenous mothers were less likely to have attended six or more sessions than non-Indigenous mothers (525 per 1,000 compared to 723 per 1,000).

Table 3.01.1: Use of antenatal services by mothers, by Indigenous status, NSW, Qld, SA, ACT and NT, 2003^{(a)(b)(c)}

		NSW			Qld ^(d)			SA			ACT ^(e)			NT ^(f)		
		No.	Rate per 1,000 ^(g)	Rate ratio ^(h)	No.	Rate per 1,000 ^(g)	Rate ratio ^(h)	No.	Rate per 1,000 ^(g)	Rate ratio ^(h)	No.	Rate per 1,000 ^(g)	Rate ratio ^(h)	No.	Rate per 1,000 ^(g)	Rate ratio ^(h)
Total attended at least one antenatal session																
	Indigenous	2,073	959.3	1.0	2,808	981.8	1.0	355	946.7	1.0	67	837.5	1.0	1,344	962.8	1.0
	Non-Indigenous	82,441	995.3		46,485	996.6		15,333	996.4		4,088	874.1		2,204	991.9	
No. of sessions attended^(e)																
1	Indigenous	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	129	45.1	8.0*	14	39.4	13.0*	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	71	50.9	5.9*
	Non-Indigenous	n.a.	n.a.		263	5.6		44	2.9		n.a.	n.a.		19	8.6	
2–4	Indigenous	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	545	190.6	3.3*	77	216.9	11.4*	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	329	235.7	3.7*
	Non-Indigenous	n.a.	n.a.		2,713	58.2		300	19.6		n.a.	n.a.		143	64.4	
5 or more	Indigenous	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	2,134	746.0	0.8*	264	743.7	0.8*	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	1,015	727.1	0.8*
	Non-Indigenous	n.a.	n.a.		43,509	933.0		14,989	977.6		n.a.	n.a.		2,061	927.5	

(continued)

Table 3.01.1 (continued): Use of antenatal services by mothers, by Indigenous status, NSW, Qld, SA, ACT and NT, 2003^{(a)(b)(c)}

Duration of pregnancy at first antenatal session^(f)																
First trimester (<14 weeks)	Indigenous	1,129	522.4	0.8*	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	15	187.5	0.5 *	455	325.9	0.6*
	Non-Indigenous	52,867	638.3		n.a.	n.a.		n.a.	n.a.		1,835	392.3		1,154	519.4	
Second trimester (14–28 weeks)	Indigenous	748	346.1	1.1	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	40	500.0	1.1	557	399.0	1.2*
	Non-Indigenous	26,893	324.7		n.a.	n.a.		n.a.	n.a.		2,083	445.4		758	341.1	
Third trimester (>28 weeks)	Indigenous	196	90.7	2.8*	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	19	237.5	4.5*	203	145.4	2.7*
	Non-Indigenous	2,681	32.4		n.a.	n.a.		n.a.	n.a.		249	53.2		121	54.5	

*Represents results with statistically significant differences in the Indigenous/non-Indigenous comparisons at the p<.05 level.

- (a) Indigenous and non-Indigenous data exclude births where the mother's Indigenous status is not stated.
- (b) Jurisdiction-level data are based on place where birth occurred, not place of usual residence. Cross-border issues need to be considered here, e.g. a high proportion of births in ACT hospitals are for NSW mothers.
- (c) Data not available from Victoria, Western Australia and Tasmania.
- (d) For Qld, 1 session is determined by: number of visits category '<2 visits' and care type 'no antenatal care'.
- (e) Data not collected in NSW or NT. Data on number of sessions attended for the ACT are available, however, could only be categorised into 1–5 sessions and 6 or more sessions. Indigenous and non-Indigenous rates for mothers attending 1–5 sessions are 312.5 and 150.7 per 1,000 (rate ratio 2.1). Indigenous and non-Indigenous rates for mothers attending 6 or more sessions are 525.0 and 723.3 per 1,000 (rate ratio 0.7).
- (f) In the NT, the sum of the three trimesters does not make up the total who attended at least one antenatal session due to invalid gestation age at first antenatal session in a small proportion of records.
- (g) Rate per 1,000 women who gave birth in the period, whether resulting in a live or still birth, if the birthweight is at least 400grams or the gestational age is 20 weeks or more.
- (h) Rate ratio: Indigenous rate divided by the non-Indigenous rate.
- (i) Data not collected in Qld or SA.

Source: State/territory Perinatal Collections.

Time series analyses

Data on the antenatal care of Indigenous mothers are available for 1998–2004 for New South Wales and South Australia, 1998–2003 for Queensland and the Australian Capital Territory and 2000, 2001, 2003 and 2004 for the Northern Territory.

- In New South Wales over the period 1998–2004, there were non-significant increases in the rate at which Indigenous mothers attended at least one antenatal care session during pregnancy. Over the same period, there were significant increases in the rate at which non-Indigenous mothers attended at least one antenatal care session during pregnancy (Table 3.01.2; Figure 3.01.1).
- In Queensland, over the period 1998–2003, there were no significant changes in the rates at which Indigenous mothers or non-Indigenous mothers attended at least one antenatal care session during pregnancy.
- In South Australia over the period 1998–2004, there were non-significant increases in the rate at which Indigenous mothers attended at least one antenatal care session during pregnancy. Over the same period, there were significant increases in the rate at which non-Indigenous mothers attended at least one antenatal care session.
- In the Australian Capital Territory over the period 1998–2003, there were apparent declines in the rate at which Indigenous and non-Indigenous mothers attended at least one antenatal care session during pregnancy, however, these declines were not statistically significant. Most of this decline is attributable to a high proportion of 'missing' responses recorded in 2003. It should also be noted that between 1998 and 2003 the Australian Capital Territory had between 10–15% of non-residents who gave birth in the Territory.
- In the Northern Territory, data were only provided for 2000, 2001, 2003 and 2004. This was because in 1998, 1999 and 2002 a system error occurred where a large number of women had birthing records created with no antenatal data attached.
- There were no significant changes in the rate ratio between Indigenous and non-Indigenous mothers who attended at least one antenatal care session in New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia or the Australian Capital Territory for the periods under study.

Table 3.01.2: Mothers who attended at least one antenatal care session, by Indigenous status, NSW, Qld, SA, ACT and NT, 1998–2004^{(a)(b)}

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Annual change ^(c)
Number								
NSW								
Indigenous	1,909	1,947	1,968	1,980	2,008	2,073	2,191	..
Non-Indigenous	81,536	83,103	83,543	81,560	81,683	82,441	81,490	..
Qld								
Indigenous	2,657	2,783	2,735	2,636	2,644	2,808	n.a.	..
Non-Indigenous	44,559	44,998	45,443	45,977	45,451	46,485	n.a.	..
SA								
Indigenous	289	325	307	296	331	355	385	..
Non-Indigenous	14,418	15,160	14,588	14,920	14,976	15,333	15,446	..
ACT^(d)								
Indigenous	56	56	53	51	69	67	n.a.	..
Non-Indigenous	4,490	4,442	4,549	4,305	4,453	4,088	n.a.	..
NT^(e)								
Indigenous	n.p.	n.p.	1,252	1,421	n.p.	1,344	1,269	..
Non-Indigenous	n.p.	n.p.	2,145	2,209	n.p.	2,204	2,095	..
Rate per 1,000^(f)								
NSW								
Indigenous	934.4	945.6	934.9	938.4	931.8	959.3	949.3	2.5
Non-Indigenous	984.9	990.5	990.9	991.9	991.5	995.3	994.4	1.4*
Qld								
Indigenous	972.9	976.8	976.4	978.8	971.7	981.8	n.a.	0.9
Non-Indigenous	996.6	995.7	994.1	995.0	996.9	996.6	n.a.	0.1
SA								
Indigenous	932.3	928.6	933.1	945.7	945.7	946.7	932.2	1.7
Non-Indigenous	997.4	997.4	996.8	997.1	997.2	996.4	996.6	0.1*
ACT^(d)								
Indigenous	933.3	949.2	1,000.0	980.8	958.3	837.5	n.a.	-13.5
Non-Indigenous	998.0	999.1	998.9	997.7	999.3	874.1	n.a.	-17.7
NT^(e)								
Indigenous	n.p.	n.p.	946.3	959.5	n.p.	962.8	952.7	n.p.
Non-Indigenous	n.p.	n.p.	968.0	988.4	n.p.	991.9	994.8	n.p.
Rate ratio^(g)								
NSW	0.9	1.0	0.9	0.9	0.9	1.0	1.0	0.0
Qld	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	n.a.	0.0
SA	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	1.0	0.9	0.0
ACT	0.9	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.9	0.0
NT ^(e)	n.p.	n.p.	1.0	1.0	n.p.	1.0	1.0	n.p.

(continued)

Table 3.01.2 (continued): Mothers who attended at least one antenatal care session, by Indigenous status, NSW, Qld, SA, ACT and NT, 1998–2004^{(a)(b)}

* Represents results with statistically significant increases or declines at the $p < .05$ level over the period 1998–2004

n.p. Not published.

- (a) Indigenous and non-Indigenous data exclude births where the mother's Indigenous status is not stated.
- (b) Jurisdiction-level data are based on place where birth occurred, not place of usual residence. Data not available from Victoria, Western Australia and Tasmania.
- (c) Rate per 1,000 women who gave birth in the period, whether resulting in a live or still birth, if the birthweight is at least 400grams or the gestational age is 20 weeks or more.
- (d) Rate ratio Indigenous:non-Indigenous.
- (e) Average annual change in rates and rate ratios determined using linear regression analysis.
- (f) A high proportion of births in ACT hospitals are for non-ACT mothers (10–15%).
- (g) In the NT in 1998, 1999 and 2002 a system error occurred where a large number of women had birthing records created with no antenatal data attached.

Source: AIHW analysis of state/territory Perinatal Collections.

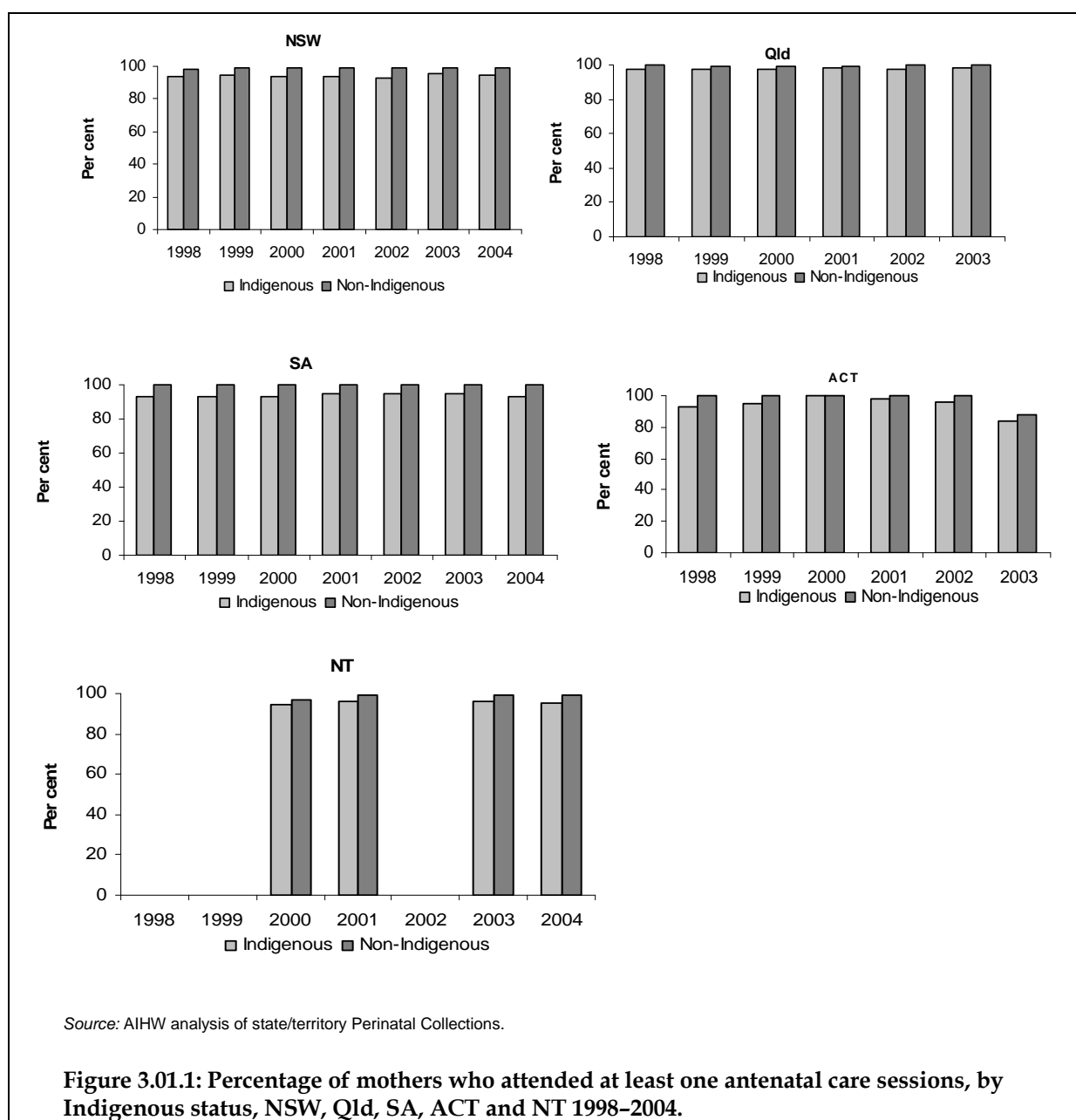


Figure 3.01.1: Percentage of mothers who attended at least one antenatal care sessions, by Indigenous status, NSW, Qld, SA, ACT and NT 1998–2004.

Data quality issues

Antenatal care data

All jurisdictions record self-reported information on some aspects of antenatal health status. The inventory of antenatal medical conditions reported on varies from jurisdiction to jurisdiction and they are not comparable.

The current situation with regard to information on antenatal care visits is as follows:

Victoria, Tasmania and Western Australia do not collect such information in their Perinatal Collections at all.

The Australian Capital Territory, Queensland and South Australia collect data on the number of antenatal care visits during pregnancy and the type of healthcare professional consulted. However, the categories for this latter item are not comparable.

New South Wales and the Northern Territory do not record the number of sessions of antenatal care attended or the type of professional consulted, but do record the duration of pregnancy at first antenatal visit. The Australian Capital Territory also records this information.

The Northern Territory data suffer from under-recording in Aboriginal communities and have suffered from IT problems which make reporting difficult (personal communication).

Only the Australian Capital Territory reports on all the aspects of routine antenatal care which, ideally, should be assessed in this context.

All jurisdictions are working towards improving the quality of the Indigenous status data.