



Australian Government

**Australian Institute of
Health and Welfare**

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identification in community services data collections

An updated data quality report



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*Authoritative information and statistics
to promote better health and wellbeing*

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Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
Canberra

Cat no. IHW 80

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Australian Institute of Health and Welfare

Board Chair

Dr Andrew Refshauge

Director

David Kalisch

Any enquiries about or comments on this publication should be directed to:

Communications, Media and Marketing Unit

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare

GPO Box 570

Canberra ACT 2601

Tel: (02) 6244 1032

Email: info@aihw.gov.au

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Abbreviations

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ACAP	Aged Care Assessment Program
ACAT	Aged Care Assessment Team
ACT	Australian Capital Territory
ACWG	Aged Care Working Group
AIHW	Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
AODTS NMDS	Alcohol and Other Drugs Treatment Services National Minimum Data Set
CACP	Community Aged Care Packages
CSTDA	Commonwealth State/Territory Disability Agreement
DEEWR	Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations
DS NMDS	Disability Services National Minimum Data Set
DoHA	Department of Health and Ageing
EACH	Extended Aged Care at Home
EACHD	Extended Aged Care at Home Dementia
FaHCSIA	Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs
HACC	Home and Community Care
HACC MDS	Home and Community Care Minimum Data Set
JJ NMDS	Juvenile Justice National Minimum Data Set
JJ RIG	Juvenile Justice Research and Information Group
MDS	Minimum Data Set
NAHA	National Affordable Housing Agreement
NCP	National Child Protection
NCSIMG	National Community Services Information Management Group
NDA	National Disability Agreement
NDC	National Data Collection
NDDN	National Disability Data Network
NHDD	National Health Data Dictionary

NMDS	National Minimum Data Set
NPAH	National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness
NSW	New South Wales
NT	Northern Territory
PDWG	Performance and Data Working Group
Qld	Queensland
RACS	Residential Aged Care Services
RoGS	Report on Government Services
SA	South Australia
SAAP	Supported Accommodation Assistance Program
SAAP NDC	Supported Accommodation Assistance Program National Data Collection
SCCDSAC	Standing Council on Community and Disability Services Advisory Council
SHIP	Specialist Homelessness Information Platform
SHOR	Specialist Homelessness Online Reporting
SHS	Specialist Homelessness Services
SHSC	Specialist Homelessness Services Collection
Tas	Tasmania
TCP	Transition Care Program
Vic	Victoria
WA	Western Australia

Symbols

—	nil or rounded to zero
..	not applicable
n.a.	not available
n.p.	not publishable because of small numbers, confidentiality or other concerns about the quality of the data

Summary

Improvements to Indigenous status data quality

Nationally, the quality of Indigenous status data has improved since the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare's 2007 data quality report (AIHW 2007) for almost all of the community services data collections examined in this report. The proportion of clients with a not stated response for Indigenous status decreased in most collections. For example:

- Disability Services National Minimum Data Set (DS NMDS) – rates decreased from 20.5% in 2004–05 to 5.1% in 2009–10.
- Home and Community Care Minimum Data Set (HACC MDS) – rates decreased from 16.2% in 2005–06 to 6.9% in 2010–11.

While decreases in rates were observed for most jurisdictions, there continues to be wide variation across states and territories.

Collecting and recording Indigenous status data

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) developed a national standard for collecting and recording Indigenous status data in 1995 ('ABS standard'). Although a number of agencies have adopted the ABS standard since the 2007 report, there are still inconsistencies in the collection and recording practices used for a number of data collections.

For collections such as the Juvenile Justice NMDS, Child Protection Data Collection, and DS NMDS, some agencies do not use the standard Indigenous status question or response options, as additional recording categories for Indigenous status are used to help identify records for follow-up. These are then recoded to the national standard for submission to the national collection.

For other collections such as the Specialist Homelessness Services Collection, and the HACC NMDS, data collection manuals specify the national standard, and it is understood that agencies follow these when collecting and recording Indigenous status information.

Data quality improvement activities

Since the 2007 report, a number of activities have been, or are being, undertaken to improve the identification of Indigenous people in community services data collections. These include:

- modifying client forms and client information management systems to be consistent with the national standard question and recording categories for Indigenous status
- the provision of staff training, including cultural awareness training, and training on how to collect Indigenous status data.

Recommendations

This report provides recommendations for each data collection to improve Indigenous status data quality in the future. These include referencing the *National best practice guidelines for collecting Indigenous status in health data sets* (AIHW 2010) in data collection manuals and training materials. Where necessary, jurisdictions should consider modifying client forms and client information management systems to ensure consistency with these guidelines.

1 Introduction

Good quality data is important to accurately assess the health and welfare of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population. Knowing whether Indigenous Australians have adequate access to services, and the extent to which the health and welfare of Indigenous people has changed over time and relative to other Australians, is important for assessing the effectiveness of policies and programs aimed at improving Indigenous health and wellbeing. However, it is difficult to assess and fully understand such issues if Indigenous status is not accurately identified in key administrative data sets.

Information on the Indigenous status of clients of community services has been collected nationally for a number of years, and efforts to improve the quality of this information have been – and are being – undertaken in a number of national data collections. Two assessments of the quality of Indigenous identification in community services data collections have previously been carried out by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW). In 2004, *Data quality of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identification: seven community services data collections* ('2004 report') (AIHW 2004) was published. This report was updated in 2007, in *Quality of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identification in community services data collections: update on eight community services data collections* (AIHW 2007) ('2007 report').

This report provides an update of analyses in the 2004 and 2007 reports for six community services data collections (community and residential aged care programs are considered to be one data collection despite comprising data collected for multiple programs). This report differs slightly from the 2007 report in terms of the data collections assessed. While the Alcohol and Other Drug Treatment Services National Minimum Data Set (AODTS NMDS) was in the 2007 report, it has not been included in this report because it is being assessed as part of the evaluation of the *National best practice guidelines for collecting Indigenous status in health data* now being undertaken by the AIHW under Schedule F of the National Indigenous Reform Agreement. Four additional community aged care data programs have been included in this report: the Aged Care Assessment Program (ACAP) Minimum Data Set, the Extended Aged Care at Home (EACH) program, the Extended Aged Care at Home Dementia (EACHD) program, and the Transition Care Program (TCP). It should also be noted that since the 2007 report, the name of the Commonwealth State/Territory Disability Agreement (CSTDA) NMDS has changed to the Disability Services NMDS, although there have been no changes to the structure or content of the NMDS. The Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP) National Data Collection has also been replaced by the Specialist Homelessness Services Collection (SHSC).

Like the 2007 report, the data quality assessment in this report includes both quantitative and qualitative measures. The quantitative component focuses on the degree to which Indigenous status is missing or not stated in data sets, and explores this through a range of data analyses, such as by jurisdiction and over time. The term 'not stated' is used consistently throughout this report to describe records that have a missing or not stated (usually code 9) Indigenous status field. The qualitative component focuses on the current practices used to collect and record Indigenous status information and staff training, as well as data quality improvement activities planned, undertaken or completed, in each jurisdiction for each community services collection since the 2007 report.

Another potential approach to assess data quality would be to evaluate the recorded Indigenous status for clients in each of the data collections, to assess the likely impact of

under-identification on rates of access and use of community services for Indigenous compared with non-Indigenous clients. No such independent verification of the Indigenous status of clients was carried out as part of this project, however, it would be useful to examine in future projects.

It is anticipated that the information in this report will enable further and ongoing improvements in the identification of Indigenous Australians within community services. It is also anticipated that this will improve the information available on the need for, and use of, community services among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The importance of Indigenous identification

The National Community Services Information Management Group (NCSIMG) acknowledges the importance of good quality data on Indigenous Australians; its 2010–2015 Strategic Plan includes a number of priority areas to improve the quality and availability of information on Indigenous people in the community services sector. However, despite continued efforts to improve – and subsequent improvements to – the identification of Indigenous people in health and community services data collections, problems still exist. This has implications for the interpretation and usefulness of analyses conducted using such data; for example, there may be under-identification of Indigenous service users, or a misrepresentation of the discrepancy in service use between Indigenous and other Australians.

The standard Indigenous status question and recording categories

The development and implementation of a standard method for identifying Indigenous people in data collections has helped improved Indigenous status data quality in recent years.

The standard Indigenous status question and reporting format (the ‘national standard’, also referred to as the ‘ABS standard’) was developed to improve the quality, availability, and comparability of Indigenous statistics within and between different data collections, and is included in the *National Health Data Dictionary* and the *National Community Services Data Dictionary*. The *National Community Services Data Dictionary* is the authoritative source of community services data definitions where national consistency is required. Similarly, the *National Health Data Dictionary* is the authoritative source of health data definitions where national consistency is required under the National Health Information Agreement. There has been a gradual increase in the number of health and community services data collections that include the standard Indigenous status question and reporting format as a mandatory reporting requirement.

In 2010, the *National best practice guidelines for collecting Indigenous status in health data sets* (‘the guidelines’) (AIHW 2010) were published by the AIHW. These guidelines specify national best practices for collecting and recording Indigenous status information (as per the national standard), and strategies for supporting best practice that can be used by data collectors, data managers, and data custodians; for example, staff training, how to ask the Indigenous status question, and recommendations for data quality assurance and validation. Although this document was initially intended for the health sector for key national administrative data sets, it can be applied generally to all data collections for which Indigenous status

information is collected, including those in the community services sector. Between November 2011 and March 2012, the guidelines were disseminated to committees that oversee community services data collections in this report and, in turn, to data collectors, managers and custodians.

The standard method for identifying Indigenous persons involves two main components: the standard Indigenous status question and response options, and the standard recording categories for entering Indigenous status data into client information management systems. These are both outlined in Box 1.1. The complete national standard for the Indigenous status data item documented in the *National best practice guidelines for collecting Indigenous status in health data sets* is in Appendix A.

The guidelines contain the recommended ABS standard question for the collection of Indigenous status, the ABS standard response options with an optional fourth response category, and the ABS recommended national categories for recording Indigenous status. They also include information on identifying records for follow-up, and encourage local data management systems to use additional recording categories for code 9 (Not stated/inadequately described) for workflow management and follow-up. The data must be mapped to the correct national category before they are provided to the national data custodian. 'Mapping' to the national standard means to re-code data to align with the ABS standard recording categories. For example, if an agency's information system includes the response options of 'Declined to answer' and 'Question not able to be asked' (which differ to the ABS standard) both of these categories should be re-coded as 'Not stated/inadequately described' for submission to data custodians.

It should be noted that the National Indigenous status data element currently in the AIHW's online data repository, METeOR, is being updated to align with the guidelines. There are three proposed amendments to the data element to align it with best practice.

Firstly, the data element makes partial reference to the three components of the Commonwealth legal definition. This approach is potentially confusing as not all elements are explained, and for the purposes of data collection the legal construct is not relevant. It is proposed that this approach be replaced with that taken in the guidelines, which explains that for the purposes of data collection Indigenous status is derived from an individual's response to the national standard question.

Secondly, the data element uses the term 'refused' in relation to those individuals who choose not to answer the standard identification question. It is proposed this be replaced with the term 'declined' to answer, as this approach (which is taken in the guidelines) more accurately reflects the personal choice involved in disclosing Indigenous status.

Thirdly, the data element describes the coding category to be used when an incompatible response (for example, both non-Indigenous and Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander status) has been ticked. The present approach outlined in METeOR is for non-Indigenous status to be ignored and the response to be recorded as one or both of the Indigenous categories. However, the guidelines were amended in June 2012 so that contradictory responses to the standard question should not be coded as Indigenous but should be checked and clarified with the respondent. If this is not possible, the response should be coded as not stated. This same approach is proposed for the National Indigenous status data element in METeOR.

Box 1.1: The standard Indigenous status question and recording categories

How to ask the Indigenous status question

The following question should be asked of all clients to establish their Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander or non-Indigenous status:

'Are you [Is the person] of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin?'

The standard response options

The standard response options to the Indigenous status question are:

- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes, Aboriginal
- ☐ Yes, Torres Strait Islander

For clients of both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin, both 'Yes' boxes should be marked.

Alternatively, a fourth response category may also be included if this better suits the data collection practices of the agency or establishment concerned:

- ☐ Yes, both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

If the question has not been completed on a returned form, this should be followed up and confirmed with the client.

How to record responses

Information systems should record Indigenous status information using the national categories for recording Indigenous status as set out in the *National health data dictionary*.

These categories are:

1. *Aboriginal but not Torres Strait Islander origin*
2. *Torres Strait Islander but not Aboriginal origin*
3. *Both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin*
4. *Neither Aboriginal nor Torres Strait Islander origin*
9. *Not stated/inadequately described*

Identifying records for follow-up

Local data management systems should be able to identify those records that are coded as 9 (Not stated/inadequately described), because of situations where it was impossible for the question to be asked during the contact episode and other situations where the response was left blank or incomplete. These records require follow-up and therefore should be distinguished from records that were coded as 9 because the client had declined to respond.

While additional categories could be used in local systems for the purposes of workflow management and follow-up, finalised records must be mapped to the correct national category before the data are provided to the state, territory or national data custodian.

Throughout this report, the terms 'national standard' (or 'ABS standard') and 'national best practice guidelines' (or 'the guidelines') are used with regard to the Indigenous status data item. National standard refers only to the Indigenous status question, response options and recording categories developed by the ABS, whereas national best practice guidelines refers to the document produced by the AIHW in 2010 containing information about the national standard as well as other recommendations for best practices for collecting and recording Indigenous status data.

Limitations of existing data on Indigenous Australians

Limitations of existing community services data collections are the result of various influences:

Diversity in community service providers' purpose

Clients' willingness to identify as Indigenous may be influenced by a number of factors related to the type of the service provided, including the service's purpose and the voluntary nature of the clients' access to it. This should be taken into consideration when analysing Indigenous identification in the community services sector. For instance, for some of the services represented in the data collections analysed in this report, clients make voluntary contact with the service (such as for disability support services or Home and Community Care), while other services are imposed on the client (for example, child protection or juvenile justice). In the particular case of homelessness (SAAP/ SHSC), although clients voluntarily contact service providers, a sense of social stigma surrounding their situation may impede their readiness to identify as Indigenous.

These aspects of a client's interaction with a service mean that there is likely to be considerable variability between data collections in the client's willingness to provide – and of the service provider to collect – information on Indigenous status, the quality of the information provided by the client, and the perceived relevance of the information by both the client and the service provider. For this and other reasons, direct comparison should not be drawn between the community services data collections analysed in this report. The purpose of the analysis in each chapter is to highlight the improvement, or otherwise, in the quality of Indigenous status data within each collection.

Poor coverage of agencies or services within the data collection

No data collection has complete coverage of the agencies and services that fall within the scope of that data collection.

In some collections, agencies that provide a service (for example, homelessness services) may not report to the national data collection, or clients may be asked to provide consent for personal information such as Indigenous status to be provided to the national data collection agency. In the case of homelessness data reported for the SAAP and now SHSC, these are referred to as 'agency non-participation' and 'client non-consent'. The completeness of reporting on Indigenous people receiving homelessness services will improve by increasing agency participation rates and decreasing client non-consent rates. This is discussed in more detail in Chapter 3.

For other data collections, certain services are not collected and reported on, for example, the Multi-Purpose Services in Residential Aged Care Services (RACS) and Community Aged Care Packages (CACP). Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people may receive aged care services through this service, but the data are not collected or reported on through the RACS or CACP programs.

No data collected

Although community services agencies are required to record and report the Indigenous status of clients for the majority of data collections, this is not mandatory for some agencies. One example is recreation and holiday programs provided by agencies within the scope of the Disability Services NMDS. Agencies providing these services/programs are only required to collect data on clients' age and sex, while Indigenous status is not collected or reported on. Although this is not considered to be 'missing/unknown/not stated' data, these programs/services contribute to the incomplete representation of the number of Indigenous people who receive disability support services in Australia.

Poor identification in currently collected data

This report focuses on poor identification of Indigenous people accessing community services. The presence of not stated Indigenous status data in community service data collections is one indication that identification of Indigenous people accessing the services is incomplete. Not stated Indigenous status data may occur for a number of reasons; for example, staff members who collect data may hold negative attitudes, lack training, or have other reasons for hesitating to ask the Indigenous status question (for instance, due to concerns about provoking aggressive responses from both Indigenous and non-Indigenous clients); staff members might make assumptions about a client's Indigenous status based on their appearance and therefore fail to ask the question; and clients may be concerned about the differential treatment of Indigenous clients and refuse to answer the question. A certain level of not stated rates should be regarded as acceptable (that is, less than 3%), given that it is information based on self-identification.

No formal assessment of the level of Indigenous under-identification based on an independent evaluation of the recorded Indigenous status of clients has been undertaken for any of the community services data collections examined in this report.

Structure of this report

This report has six chapters, each focusing on one of the community services sector data collections examined:

- Chapter 2 – Disability Services National Minimum Data Set
- Chapter 3 – Supported Accommodation Assistance Program National Data Collection (replaced by the Specialist Homelessness Services data collection from July 2011).
- Chapter 4 – National Child Protection Data Collections.
- Chapter 5 – Juvenile Justice National Minimum Data Set.
- Chapter 6 – Home and Community Care Minimum Data Set.
- Chapter 7 – Community and residential aged care programs comprising:
 - Aged Care Assessment Program, Residential Aged Care Services, Community Aged Care Packages, Extended Aged Care at Home, Extended Aged Care at Home Dementia, and Transition Care Program.

The report's purpose is:

1. To examine the extent to which Indigenous status is missing/not stated in each data collection.
2. To document current practices –jurisdictionally and nationally – in collecting, recording and reporting Indigenous status information, and to identify inconsistencies with the national standard for Indigenous status as documented in the AIHW's *National best practice guidelines for collecting Indigenous status in health data sets*.
3. To document data quality improvement activities undertaken or under way in each of the community services data collections since the publication of the 2007 data quality report.

Each chapter begins with a background section that provides an overview of the data collection examined. This is followed by an update since the 2007 report on analysis by Indigenous status, disaggregated by jurisdiction as well as by other relevant characteristics (for example, remoteness and service type). The years of data include the last year of data presented in the 2007 report (generally 2004–05), and the latest year of data available (generally 2009–10). Changes over time in rates of not stated Indigenous status are then presented.

Qualitative evaluations of Indigenous status data quality are in sections 3 and 4 of each chapter. Section 3 presents information on current Indigenous status data collection and reporting practices in each jurisdiction, and whether they are consistent with the *National best practice guidelines for collecting Indigenous status in health data sets*. Information about staff training and support systems for collecting Indigenous status data is also provided. Section 4 contains information about national and jurisdictional data quality improvement activities.

Each chapter finishes with a number of recommendations for future improvements to Indigenous status data quality in each of the community services data collections examined.

2 Disability Services National Minimum Data Set

Background

From 1 January 2009, the National Disability Agreement (NDA) replaced the CSTDA for the provision of disability services in Australia. Correspondingly, the CSTDA NMDS has been referred to as the Disability Services (DS) NMDS since July 2009, although there have been no changes to the structure or content of the NMDS. The term 'DS NMDS' will be used to denote both the DS NMDS and CSTDA NMDS throughout this chapter.

The DS NMDS collects information on services and clients where funding has been provided, during the specified period, by a government organisation operating under the NDA. The scope of services varies across jurisdictions for programs that receive NDA funding. For example, in 2009–10 in Victoria and Queensland, specialist psychiatric disability services were provided under the NDA. However, in all other jurisdictions specific mental health services were funded and provided under health, rather than disability, portfolios.

A statistical linkage key enables the number of service users to be estimated from data collected from service type outlets and agencies. A statistical linkage key is a derived variable used to link data for statistical and research purposes that is generated from elements of an individual's personal demographic data and attached to de-identified data relating to the services received by that individual. A service type outlet is a unit of an agency that provides a particular NDA service type at, or from, a designated location. During any given financial year, a service user can receive services from more than one service type outlet, more than one agency, and multiple jurisdictions. In each of these cases, unique service user counts can be estimated by using the statistical linkage key. The focus of this chapter is on these counts – that is, person-based estimates.

Some of the data for which Indigenous status continues to be missing in the DS NMDS relate to service type 3.02 (recreational/holiday), for which Indigenous status of clients is not required to be collected. Those records are described as 'not collected', and are presented separately in several tables in this chapter.

The 2007 data quality report presented 'snapshot' data for 2002, and data for 2003–04 to 2004–05 from the redeveloped NMDS. This chapter presents data from 2004–05 onwards.

Update on analysis results by Indigenous status

This section contains relevant tables for 2004–05 from the 2007 report, and new tables for years 2005–06 to 2009–10. These tables provide information on the rate of not stated and not collected Indigenous status data in the DS NMDS by state/territory, age group, remoteness, residential setting, service group, and disability group.

Table 2.1 shows the number and proportion of disability service users in each state and territory, by Indigenous status in 2004–05 and 2009–10.

Differences between jurisdictions and across years should be interpreted with care where small jurisdictions are concerned, as large fluctuations in the rates may be expected.

Table 2.1: Number and proportion of users of disability support services, by Indigenous status, by state and territory, 2004–05 and 2009–10

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Australia
2004–05									
	Number								
Indigenous	1,565	986	1,268	1,141	636	154	50	518	6,285
Non-Indigenous	41,854	39,900	25,495	17,650	18,043	4,734	3,531	1,043	151,774
Not stated	1,724	33,946	420	4,504	370	99	55	27	41,140
Not collected ^(a)	5	278	46	51	563	167	117	67	1,294
Total	45,148	75,110	27,229	23,346	19,612	5,154	3,753	1,655	200,493
	Per cent								
Indigenous	3.5	1.3	4.7	4.9	3.2	3.0	1.3	31.3	3.1
Non-Indigenous	92.7	53.1	93.6	75.6	92.0	91.9	94.1	63.0	75.7
Not stated	3.8	45.2	1.5	19.3	1.9	1.9	1.5	1.6	20.5
Not collected ^(a)	0.0	0.4	0.2	0.2	2.9	3.2	3.1	4.0	0.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
2009–10									
	Number								
Indigenous	4,672	2,659	2,775	1,974	1,063	307	163	783	14,251
Non-Indigenous	76,407	87,298	40,236	20,513	27,316	7,883	4,905	766	264,331
Not stated	2,309	11,347	765	131	96	106	112	58	14,922
Not collected ^(a)	13	352	271	100	536	146	40	62	1,520
Total	83,401	101,656	44,047	22,718	29,011	8,442	5,220	1,669	295,024
	Per cent								
Indigenous	5.6	2.6	6.3	8.7	3.7	3.6	3.1	46.9	4.8
Non-Indigenous	91.6	85.9	91.3	90.3	94.2	93.4	94.0	45.9	89.6
Not stated	2.8	11.2	1.7	0.6	0.3	1.3	2.1	3.5	5.1
Not collected ^(a)	0.0	0.3	0.6	0.4	1.8	1.7	0.8	3.7	0.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) Indigenous status is not collected for recreation/holiday programs (service type 3.02).

Notes

1. Service user data are estimates after use of a statistical linkage key to account for individuals who received services from more than one service type outlet during the 12-month period. Totals for Australia may not equal the sum of the jurisdictions because individuals may have accessed services in more than one state or territory during the 12-month period.
2. Linkage processes (to obtain unique service user counts) from 2007–08 have changed from previous years. For further information, see Chapter 1 in Disability support services 2008–2009 (AIHW 2011a).

Source: AIHW, Disability Services National Minimum Data Set

In 2004–05:

- The proportion of disability support service users in Australia who identified as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin was 3.1%, ranging from 1.3% in Victoria and the Australian Capital Territory to 31.3% in the Northern Territory.

- Nationally, the proportion of disability support service users with 'not stated' Indigenous status was 20.5%. However, this was largely affected by the high rates of not stated Indigenous status in Victoria (45.2%) and Western Australia (19.3%). This is particularly notable given that Victoria had the highest number of disability support service users in 2004-05 (about 75,000). The proportion of not stated Indigenous status for the remaining jurisdictions ranged from 1.5% to 3.8%.

In 2009-10:

- Almost 5% of disability support service users in Australia were identified as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin, ranging from 2.6% in Victoria to 46.9% in the Northern Territory.
- The proportion of not stated Indigenous status was 5.1% nationally; this was highest in Victoria at 11.2%, while the remaining jurisdictions ranged from 0.3% in South Australia to 3.5% in the Northern Territory.

Table 2.2 shows the number and proportion of disability service users by Indigenous status by selected characteristics in 2009-10. Note that the proportions are calculated out of total service users to assess which characteristics have the highest representation of users with a not stated/not collected Indigenous status. This differs to corresponding data published by the AIHW in the Disability Services NMDS 2009-10 report in which proportions were calculated out of the total Indigenous, non-Indigenous and not stated/not collected service users.

Table 2.2: Characteristics of users of disability support services, by Indigenous status, 2009-10

Service user characteristic	Indigenous		Non-Indigenous		Not stated/ not collected		Total	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
Age group (years)								
0-4	1,065	5.3	18,290	90.4	888	4.4	20,243	100.0
5-14	2,471	6.6	32,281	86.2	2,681	7.2	37,433	100.0
15-24	3,526	6.8	45,718	87.9	2,771	5.3	52,015	100.0
25-44	4,191	4.7	80,771	90.7	4,043	4.5	89,005	100.0
45-54	1,691	3.6	43,361	92.6	1,768	3.8	46,820	100.0
55-64	929	2.9	29,173	92.6	1,400	4.4	31,502	100.0
65+	378	2.1	14,737	81.8	2,891	16.1	18,006	100.0
Residential setting								100.0
Private residence	10,898	4.8	213,844	93.4	4,238	1.9	228,980	100.0
Aboriginal community	934	64.6	460	31.8	51	3.5	1,445	100.0
Domestic-scale supported living facility	689	4.5	14,386	93.5	308	2.0	15,383	100.0
Supported accommodation facility	390	3.9	9,502	94.4	171	1.7	10,063	100.0
Short-term crisis, emergency, transitional accommodation	857	5.6	13,874	90.7	570	3.7	15,301	100.0
Other	44	8.0	444	81.2	59	10.8	547	100.0
Not stated/not collected	439	1.9	11,821	50.7	11,045	47.4	23,305	100.0

(continued)

Table 2.2 (continued): Characteristics of Indigenous and non-Indigenous service users of disability support services, 2009–10

Service user characteristic	Indigenous		Non-Indigenous		Not stated/ not collected		Total	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
Remoteness area								
Major cities	5,550	3.0	170,084	91.7	9,797	5.3	185,430	100.0
Inner regional	3,828	5.5	62,987	89.8	3,352	4.8	70,167	100.0
Outer regional	2,743	10.2	23,279	86.3	957	3.5	26,978	100.0
Remote	877	28.0	2,198	70.2	54	1.7	3,129	100.0
Very remote	989	64.5	534	34.8	11	0.7	1,533	100.0
Not stated/not collected	264	3.4	5,249	67.4	2,271	29.2	7,787	100.0
Use of services by service group								
Accommodation support	1,937	4.9	36,203	90.8	1,714	4.3	39,854	100.0
Community support	7,705	6.0	112,564	88.0	7,640	6.0	127,909	100.0
Community access	2,169	3.7	50,583	86.3	5,880	10.0	58,632	100.0
Community access (excluding service type 3.02) ^(a)	1,919	3.8	44,607	87.8	4,306	8.5	50,832	100.0
Respite	2,163	6.0	31,569	87.7	2,246	6.2	35,978	100.0
Employment	4,883	4.1	113,578	95.6	340	0.3	118,801	100.0
Primary disability group								
Intellectual	4,809	5.7	77,515	92.5	1,467	1.8	83,791	100.0
Specific learning/ADD	667	6.3	9,818	92.6	122	1.2	10,607	100.0
Autism	673	3.5	17,920	94.4	382	2.0	18,975	100.0
Physical	2,513	5.2	45,244	93.3	759	1.6	48,516	100.0
Acquired brain injury	772	6.8	10,172	90.0	357	3.2	11,301	100.0
Neurological	491	3.8	11,845	92.5	464	3.6	12,800	100.0
Deaf/blind	36	5.3	625	92.0	18	2.7	679	100.0
Vision	256	1.7	12,119	80.5	2,677	17.8	15,052	100.0
Hearing	246	3.8	5,498	85.3	702	10.9	6,446	100.0
Speech	211	6.4	2,968	89.6	133	4.0	3,312	100.0
Psychiatric	2,258	4.3	47,376	90.5	2,699	5.2	52,333	100.0
Developmental delay	539	6.0	8,190	90.7	298	3.3	9,027	100.0
Not stated/not collected	780	3.5	15,041	67.8	6,364	28.7	22,185	100.0
Total	14,251	4.8	264,331	89.6	16,442	5.6	295,024	100.0

(a) Indigenous status is not collected for 3.02 (recreation/holiday) services, which are part of the 'Community access' service type.

Notes

1. Service user data are estimates after use of a statistical linkage key to account for individuals who received services from more than one service type outlet during the 12-month period.
2. Row totals may not be the sum of components because service users may have accessed services in more than one state/territory.
3. Service user data were not collected for all NDA service types.
4. Service types 6.01–6.05 and 7.01–7.04 did not collect service user data, and so are excluded from this table.

Source: AIHW, Disability Services National Minimum Data Set

In 2009–10:

By age:

- The highest number and proportion of Indigenous service users were aged 25 to 44. However, the 5–14 and 15–24 age groups had the highest proportion of disability support service users who identified as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin (6.6% and 6.8% respectively).
- The rate of not stated/not collected Indigenous status was highest for those aged 65 and over, at 16.1%. All other age groups ranged from 3.8% to 7.2%.

By residential setting:

- The majority of Indigenous and non-Indigenous service users lived in private residences. Among those who lived in private residences, 4.8% identified as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin, and 1.9% had not stated/not collected Indigenous status.
- For most residential settings, rates of not stated/not collected Indigenous status ranged from 1.7% to 3.7%. However, for those in 'Other' residential settings, this rate was 10.8%.

By remoteness:

- The proportion of service users who identified as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin increased with increasing remoteness (from 3% in *Major cities*, to 64.5% in *Very remote* regions). Alternatively, rates of not stated/not collected Indigenous status decreased with increasing remoteness, from 5.3% in *Major cities* to 0.7% in *Very remote* areas.

By service group:

- The proportion of service users in each service group who identified as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin ranged from 3.7% for community access services to 6% for community support services and respite services.
- Rates of not stated/not collected Indigenous status were lowest for employment services (0.3%) and highest for community access services (10%).

By primary disability group:

- The proportion of service users who identified as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin was highest for those with 'acquired brain injury' (6.8%).
- Rates of not stated/not collected Indigenous status were below 4% for most primary disability groups. However, rates were particularly high for 'vision' (17.8%) and 'hearing' (10.9%).

It should be noted that about two-thirds of services users with a not stated/not collected Indigenous status did not answer the residential question, 14% did not provide postcode for to determine remoteness classification, and 39% did not answer the primary disability question.

Changes in rates of not stated and not collected Indigenous status

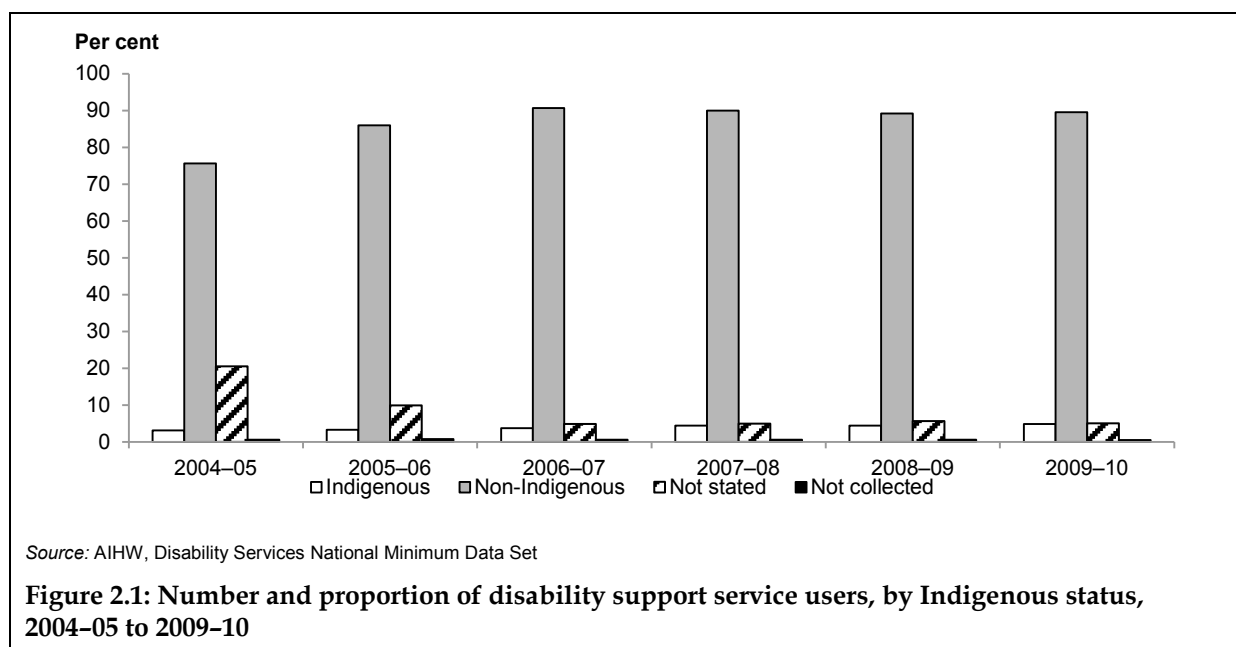
This section presents changes over time in the rate of not stated and not collected Indigenous status in the Disability Services NMDS.

Not stated responses represent records for users of services that are required to collect information on Indigenous status but have not done so, for reasons that may include a client not consenting to answer the question or the service staff not asking the question.

Not collected responses represent the records for service type 3.02 – recreational services, in which service providers are not required to collect demographic data other than age and sex, and therefore Indigenous status is not collected.

National

Figure 2.1 presents the proportion of disability support service users in Australia, by Indigenous status, from 2004–05 to 2009–10.

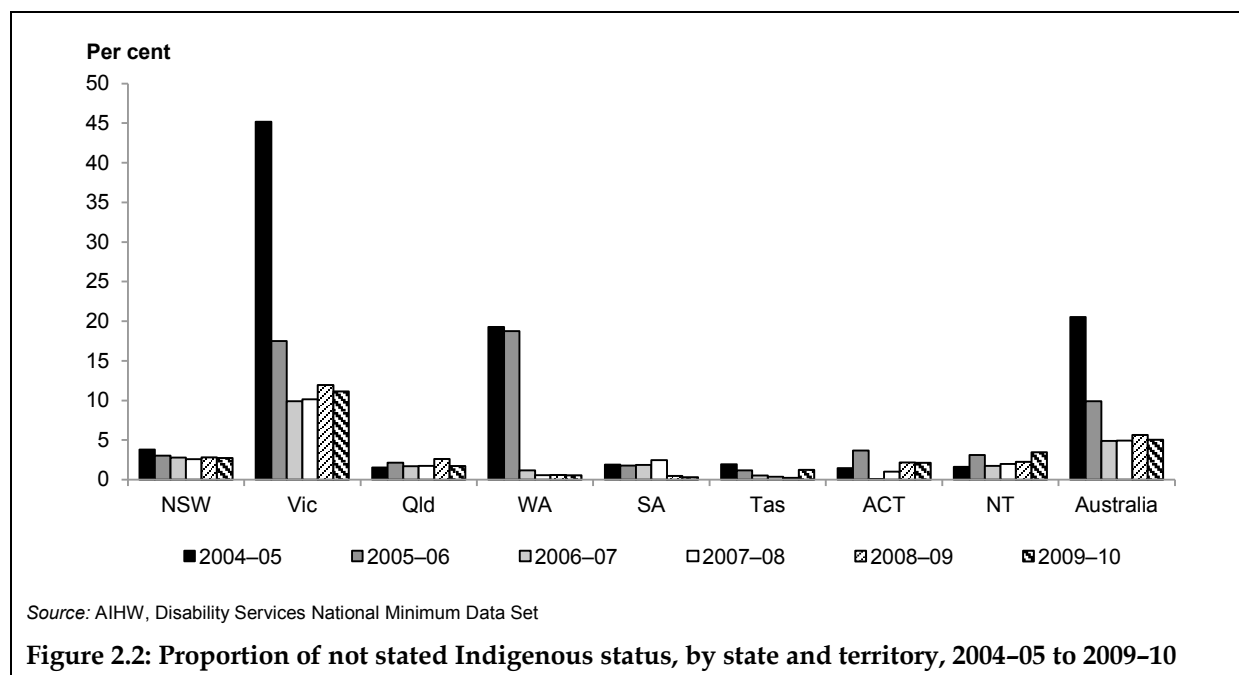


- Overall, between 2004–05 and 2009–10, the proportion of disability support service users with a not stated Indigenous status decreased markedly from 20.5% in 2004–05 to 5.1% in 2009–10.
- The main decrease occurred between 2004–05 and 2006–07, when rates of not stated Indigenous status halved between 2004–05 and 2005–06 (from 20.5% to 9.9%) and then halved again between 2005–06 and 2006–07 (from 9.9% to 4.9%).
- The above-mentioned decline is reflected in a notable increase in the proportion of disability service users who identified as non-Indigenous between 2004–05 and 2006–07 (from 75.7% to 90.7%).
- There was also an increase in the proportion of disability service users who identified as being Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander over the 6-year period 2004–05 to 2009–10 (from 3.1% to 4.8%).

- Rates of not collected Indigenous status remained relatively constant at about 0.6% over the 6 years.

State/territory

The 2007 data quality report noted that, at the time of writing, all jurisdictions were involved in data quality improvement activities, including improving the quality of the Indigenous status data in the DS NMDS. The results are evident through a marked reduction in the rates of not stated Indigenous status since 2004–05, particularly between 2004–05 and 2006–07 in the larger states and territories (see Figure 2.2).



- Victoria and Western Australia had the greatest reductions in rates of not stated Indigenous status over 2004–05 to 2009–10 (from 45.2% to 11.2% in Victoria, and from 19.3% to 0.6% in Western Australia). Despite improvements in the rate in Victoria, it remained the highest in Australia in 2009–10 (11.2%).
- In New South Wales, the proportion of disability support services users with a not stated Indigenous status declined from 3.8% in 2004–5 to 2.8% in 2009–10.
- In Queensland, rates remained relatively stable over the 6 years at about 1.7%.
- In the other states and territories, the proportion of disability support services users with a not stated Indigenous status remained below 4% over the 6 years.

Service group

Between 2004–05 and 2009–10, there were notable improvements in rates of not stated Indigenous status for all disability service groups, as shown in Table 2.3 and Figure 2.3.

Table 2.3: Proportion of users of disability support services with a missing/not stated and not collected Indigenous status by service group, Australia, 2004–05 to 2009–10 (per cent)

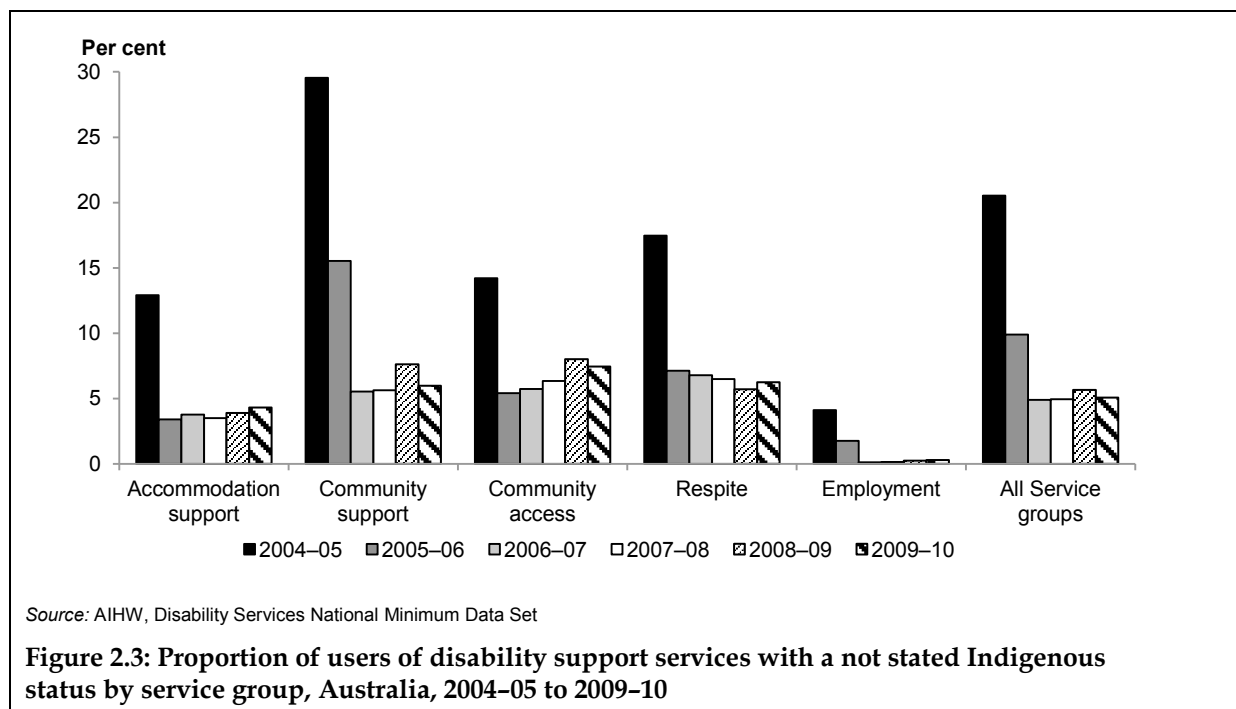
	Accommodation support	Community support	Community access	Respite	Employment	All service groups
Indigenous status						
2004–05						
Not stated	12.9	29.5	14.2	17.5	4.1	20.5
Not collected ^(a)	0.0	0.0	2.9	0.0	0.0	0.6
2005–06						
Not stated	3.4	15.5	5.4	7.1	1.8	9.9
Not collected ^(a)	0.0	0.0	3.5	0.0	0.0	0.8
2006–07						
Not stated	3.8	5.5	5.7	6.8	0.1	4.9
Not collected ^(a)	0.0	0.0	2.8	0.0	0.0	0.6
2007–08						
Not stated	3.5	5.6	6.3	6.5	0.1	4.9
Not collected ^(a)	0.0	0.0	2.8	0.0	0.0	0.6
2008–09						
Not stated	3.9	7.6	8.0	5.7	0.2	5.7
Not collected ^(a)	0.0	0.0	3.1	0.0	0.0	0.6
2009–10						
Not stated	4.3	6.0	7.4	6.2	0.3	5.1
Not collected ^(a)	0.0	0.0	2.6	0.0	0.0	0.5

(a) Indigenous status is not collected for recreation/holiday programs (service type 3.02).

Notes

1. Service user data are estimates after use of a statistical linkage key to account for individuals who received services from more than one service type outlet during the 12-month period. Totals for Australia may not equal the sum of the service groups because individuals may have accessed services from more than one service group during the 12-month period.
2. Linkage processes (to obtain unique service user counts) from 2007–08 have changed from previous years. For further information, see Chapter 1 in Disability support services 2008-2009 (AIHW 2011a).

Source: AIHW, Disability Services National Minimum Data Set



- Between 2004-05 and 2005-06, there was a considerable decrease in the rates of not stated Indigenous status for users of all disability support service groups. This decrease was most notable for community support services (halving from 29.5% to 15.5%), respite services (17.5% to 7.1%), and accommodation support services (12.9% to 3.4%).
- Similarly, between 2005-06 and 2006-07, there was a notable decrease in the proportion of users of community support services and employment services with a not stated Indigenous status (from 15.5% to 5.5% for community support services and from 1.8% to 0.1% for employment services).
- From 2006-07 to 2009-10, the rates of not stated Indigenous status remained relatively stable for all service group types.

Update on data collection and reporting practices

This section provides updated information on the current collection and reporting practices for the Disability Services NMDS for Indigenous status information, as well as staff training and support systems in place to facilitate the accuracy of data collection.

It focuses on any inconsistencies between current practices of disability support services and the national standard for collecting and recording Indigenous status documented in the *National best practice guidelines for collecting Indigenous status in health data sets* (see Introduction for more detail).

In December 2011, the guidelines were disseminated by the AIHW to members of the National Disability Data Network (NDDN) (which includes national and state/territory data custodians of the DS NMDS), and to individual disability service providers. Agencies were asked to review their procedures for collecting information on the Indigenous status of clients within their agency and inform their jurisdictional representative of any inconsistencies between their procedures and the best practice approach outlined in the guidelines. Findings from this exercise are outlined in the following sections.

Indigenous status question, response categories and recording practices

Table 2.4 shows whether jurisdictional practices for collecting and recording Indigenous status data are consistent with the national standard.

In this table, 'Input data' refers to whether the ABS standard Indigenous status question is asked of clients to establish their Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander or non-Indigenous status ('Are you [is the person] of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin?'); whether the standard response options are provided to clients to answer the question (No; Yes; Yes, Torres Strait Islander; Yes both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander); and whether information systems use the five national standard categories for recording Indigenous status (1. *Aboriginal but not Torres Strait Islander origin* 2. *Torres Strait Islander but not Aboriginal origin*. 3. *Both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin*. 4. *Neither Aboriginal nor Torres Strait Islander origin*. 9. *Not stated/inadequately described*). A column is also included to indicate whether local data management systems use additional categories for 9. *Not stated/inadequately described*, for the purposes of identifying records for follow-up (that is, to identify if the client declined to respond, and for situations where it was impossible for the question to be asked during the contact episode).

'Output data' refers to whether the jurisdiction's coding categories can be mapped to the five national standard recording categories for submission to the national collection (DS NMDS).

Note that in the 2009–10 DS NMDS Data Guide, the Indigenous status question differs slightly to the standard ('Is the service user of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin?').

- Queensland and South Australia currently collect and record Indigenous status data in accordance with the ABS national standard.
- In Western Australia and the Australian Capital Territory, the large majority of disability support services use the standard Indigenous status question, response options and coding categories. However, it is understood that a small proportion of services do not collect this information in line with the national standard.
- In New South Wales, the Indigenous status question differs slightly to the national standard, while the response options and coding categories are consistent with the national standard.
- In the Northern Territory, the standard Indigenous status question and coding categories are used. The response categories include the additional option of 'Not stated', so that data collection staff can ascertain whether this question has been accidentally missed or intentionally left blank.
- Tasmania uses additional coding categories in their information system to better reflect not stated responses and to assist in identifying records for follow-up: 'Service user refused to provide a response', 'Service user/advocate was unable to provide a response'. Some agencies in Victoria also include the additional categories of 'declined to answer' and 'question not able to be asked'. These additional responses are recoded to the category 'Not stated/inadequately described' for submission to the AIHW for national collation.
- For service providers funded by the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA), clients' Indigenous status is entered directly into a client database. The coding categories in this database were revised by FaHCSIA in April 2012 to comply with the national standard.

- For service providers funded by the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) and for clients who receive income support payments from Centrelink, Indigenous status information is collected by Centrelink and is consistent with the standard. For clients not on income support payments, Indigenous status information is collected by the service provider and is not consistent with the national standard.

Staff training and support systems for collecting Indigenous status data

- For FaHCSIA-funded service providers, FaHCSIA has a dedicated Disability Services Census Helpdesk during the data collection assessment period. The DS NMDS Data Guide also provides additional information on data requirements.
- Queensland employs five regional staff who visit disability support service providers and provide training on all aspects of the DS NMDS data collection, including the accurate collection of Indigenous status data.
- Northern Territory Department of Health staff have the opportunity to undertake cross-cultural training, and non-governmental organisations are also encouraged to provide this training to their staff. Helpdesk support is available from the NT Department of Health to assist non-governmental organisations with recording and submitting data.
- In South Australia, information on Indigenous status is included as part of the Disability Services NMDS training in relation to asking the Indigenous status question, and recording and reporting this data. This training is provided to organisations in group or individual sessions as required. In addition, a 2-day workshop, Aboriginal Cultural Sensitivity and Respect, is offered to staff internally at the Department for Communities and Social Inclusion. The program objectives include the development of a respectful relationship with Aboriginal people and community, and to raise awareness of the issues experienced by Aboriginal people and community. It is envisaged that this training will assist staff to feel more comfortable to ask the question about a person's Indigenous status.
- In Tasmania, the DS NMDS Helpdesk provides all state-funded disability service providers with the DS NMDS Data Guide. The Helpdesk also follows up with any organisations that require clarification of requirements.
- In New South Wales, a project officer is dedicated to training service providers on the recording and reporting of NMDS data. This training incorporates asking the Indigenous status question.

Table 2.4: Jurisdictional practices in collecting, recording and reporting Indigenous status in the DS NMDS, 2012

Jurisdiction	Input data				Output data	Comments
	Standard Indigenous status question	Standard response options	National standard recording categories	Additional recording categories for <i>Not stated/inadequately described</i>	Data mapped to national standard for submission to NMDS	
NSW	N	Y	Y	N	Y	A slight variation of the standard question is used: 'Do you identify as being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin?' instead of 'Are you of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin?'. The response and coding categories used are consistent with the ABS standard – Aboriginal but not Torres Strait Islander origin, Torres Strait Islander but not Aboriginal origin, Both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin, Neither Aboriginal nor Torres Strait Islander origin, Not stated/inadequately described.
Vic	Y – for most services	Y – for most services	Y – for most services	Y – for some services	Y	Most agencies use the standard question and response options. However, in some agencies, Indigenous status is collected in the following response format: Aboriginal but not Torres Strait Islander origin, Torres Strait Islander but not Aboriginal origin, Both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin, Neither Aboriginal nor Torres Strait Islander origin, Declined to Answer, Question not able to be asked.
Qld	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	The Indigenous status categories on Queensland's DS NMDS data collection forms are consistent with the national DS NMDS data guide. Queensland provides advice to organisations on the use of the Indigenous status variable, however, cannot guarantee that all organisations interpret and implement data standards and advice through their internal processes and systems.
WA	Y – for most services	Y – for most services	Y – for most services	N	Y	Most disability service providers use the standard Indigenous status question and response options. However, about 2% of service providers currently do not collect this data. Reasons for this include that data collection is paper based; electronic data systems do not comply with the guidelines; and some service providers simply do not ask the Indigenous status question. With respect to the coding of Indigenous status in client management systems, the majority of service providers use the standard coding categories. However, a small proportion of service providers do not have the 'Not stated/inadequately described' category.
SA	Y – for most services	Y – for most services	Y – for most services	N	Y	Most organisations surveyed currently use the standard Indigenous status question. The majority of organisations also indicated that their information systems met the national standard for recording Indigenous status.

(continued)

Table 2.4 (continued): Jurisdictional practices in collecting, recording and reporting Indigenous status in the DS NMDS, 2012

Jurisdiction	Input data				Output data	Comments
	Standard Indigenous status question	Standard response options	National standard recording categories	Additional recording categories for <i>Not stated/inadequately described</i>	Data mapped to national standard for submission to NMDS	
Tas	Y	..	N	Y	Y	Tasmania uses the standard question as outlined in the DS NMDS Data guide. Tasmania uses an online collection tool, the Tasmanian Disability Services Information System, to collect client information. All standard categories are used in Tasmania's information system except 'Not stated/inadequately described'. Instead, the system incorporates additional categories to better reflect 'not stated' responses: Service user refused to provide a response, Service user/advocate was unable to provide a response. These two responses are recoded to the not stated/inadequately described category for submission to the national repository.
ACT	Y – for most services	Y – for most services	Y	N	Y	A number of organisations include the standard Indigenous status question and response options on their client intake forms. Organisations in the ACT that do not currently collect Indigenous status data according to the guidelines are mainly new and/or small service providers.
NT	Y	N	Y	N	Y	On service user forms, although the standard Indigenous status question is asked, the response categories contain an additional option of 'not stated'. This extra option has been made available to resolve confusion when the Indigenous status question has been left blank, so that data collection staff at the Northern Territory Department of Health can ascertain whether this question has been accidentally missed or intentionally left blank (that is, the 'not stated' option).
Commonwealth (FaHCSIA)	Y	..	Y	N	Y	Service providers funded by FaHCSIA enter client's Indigenous status data directly into a client database called the FaHCSIA Online Funding Management System. The coding categories for the Indigenous status field in this database are consistent with the national standard.
Commonwealth (DEEWR)	Y	Y	N	Y	Y (for clients who receive income support payments)	For service providers funded by DEEWR, Indigenous status data is collected and supplied by the Department of Human Services (DHS)/Centrelink. However, the source of data entry depends on the client. For clients who receive income support payments from Centrelink, Indigenous status information is collected by Centrelink and this data is of a high standard. For those clients not on income support payments, their information is entered by the provider. The available options for Centrelink and providers are Aboriginal, South Sea Islander, Torres Strait Islander, Not Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, and Did Not Answer. There is no identification of clients who are of both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin and there are currently no plans to collect this information.

.. Not applicable. Hard copy forms are not used to record Indigenous status.

Activities to improve Indigenous status data quality

This section provides information on activities and practices undertaken to improve the quality of Indigenous data in the Disability Services NMDS since the 2007 data quality report, at the national and jurisdictional level. This information was provided by the National Disability Data Network.

The National Disability Agreement calls for jurisdictions to work on 'improvements in the quality of data reported under the National Minimum Data Set'. While there were a few reported activities specifically addressing Indigenous identification (such as the implementation of the standard Indigenous status question), a number of mechanisms have been implemented to improve overall DS NMDS data quality (including data on Indigenous status).

Jurisdictional Indigenous data quality improvement activities

New South Wales

- In New South Wales, there has been a specific focus on addressing issues with missing values for Indigenous status by providing feedback to service providers after each reporting quarter. Also, as part of ongoing data improvement, all training materials will incorporate further details outlining the rationale for the collection of Indigenous status and other data.

Victoria

- As part of Victoria's data quality improvement initiative, agencies with high non-response rates to the Indigenous status data item have been targeted. This includes a Quarterly Data Collection helpdesk which provides feedback and support to agencies.

South Australia

- In South Australia, a small number of organisations that do not follow the guidelines are updating their systems to comply with the national standard after their dissemination to NDDN members.

Tasmania

- In Tasmania, all disability service providers who are funded via the NDA are required to use the Tasmanian Disability Services Information System (TasDIS) for reporting DS NMDS data. TasDIS is a centralised, online and secure database that has been designed to be configurable in the instance that updates/modifications are required to standard responses. It also provides validation checking at both the data entry and authorisation stages to ensure that Indigenous status is completed prior to submission. Thus, the likelihood for any coding inconsistencies to occur has been significantly reduced. The DS NMDS Helpdesk has also followed up with service providers where large numbers of 'not stated' responses have occurred and provided clarification about the collection of Indigenous status data where necessary.

Australian Capital Territory

- In the Australian Capital Territory, after the guidelines were disseminated to NDDN members, Disability ACT has advised that service providers now have greater

awareness about collecting Indigenous status data and will be updating their forms and recording procedures to comply with the standard.

Northern Territory

- In the Northern Territory, the Department of Health ensures that disability service agencies are aware and have a copy of the DS NMDS Data Guide. Agencies that do not consistently complete the Indigenous status question are followed up by data collection staff at the Department of Health as part of standard validation processes.

National Indigenous data quality improvement activities

To continue improving the quality of Indigenous data in the DS NMDS, it is important to have an understanding of where Indigenous identification is occurring accurately and where it is not. This will help target where additional training and other measures to improve the quality of Indigenous data are required.

Nationally, a number of data quality improvement activities are being, or will be, undertaken to improve Indigenous data quality:

- In 2012, NDDN members circulated the *National best practice guidelines for collecting Indigenous status information in health data sets* to all jurisdictional service providers. Additionally, FaHCSIA provides a Data Guide to assist disability service outlets provide data for the DS NMDS. The Data Guide for 2012–13 DS NMDS includes a reference to the guidelines.
- Work is under way to improve the identification of Indigenous clients in future DS NMDS collections. In April 2012, FaHCSIA revised the Indigenous field on FaHCSIA's Online Funding Management System to bring it into line with the recommended national standards.
- The NDDN and the AIHW intend to address the findings and recommendations included in this current report, for input into the new edition of the Data Guide. The need for further staff training will also be reviewed. Also, as part of a DS NMDS redevelopment project being undertaken (see section below), the NDDN will consider any implications of the findings for the strategic redesign of the DS NMDS in relation to Indigenous status data.

DS NMDS redevelopment project

The DS NMDS redevelopment project aims to enhance the content and quality of the DS NMDS so that it provides a better evidence base for the administration, planning, and management of specialist services for people with disability, in addition to supporting research. This will lead to improved quality of information collected about all clients, including Indigenous clients.

The first phase of the DS NMDS redevelopment is to prepare a data dictionary with full metadata in METeOR format. Any implementation of new or revised data elements is subject to decisions by the Standing Council on Community and Disability Services Advisory Council (SCCDSAC).

The DS NMDS already contains the Indigenous status data element. Additional data elements that are proposed can provide better quality information about geographical location including remoteness area. Enhanced data elements about carers – including living arrangements, availability and supports provided – are also proposed.

The redevelopment project will also consider how the data could support person-centred reporting and the implementation of the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

Additional information related to data quality

Jurisdictions participating in the DS NMDS are part of broad quality control measures that the AIHW applies to improve the data integrity of collections for which it is data custodian. The current process for the DS NMDS involves:

- Jurisdictional review of the quality of data submitted by service providers, according to annually agreed and improved national edit checks, before submission to the DS NMDS team. To assist in this, the DS NMDS Network Guide is regularly updated, and the DS NMDS team at the AIHW has provided jurisdictions with a validation tool to improve the identification and correction of data quality problems before submission.
- Jurisdictional submission of validated data sets to the DS NMDS team for aggregation into a single national data set.
- DS NMDS team data checking and exception reporting, through a range of edit checks that include examination of the reporting of Indigenous status at an agency level to verify accuracy.
- Referral of data quality issues identified by the DS NMDS team back to the relevant jurisdiction for correction, before final submission.
- Correction and final submission of verified data sets by the jurisdictions.
- Final approval by jurisdictions of data for release.
- Annual reporting by the DS NMDS team on the basis of the aggregated data set addresses data quality issues generally and includes details about the level of 'not stated' and 'not known' responses to every data item by jurisdiction.
- A thematic analysis of problems highlighted during the submission process by the DS NMDS team, and common issues are reported back to the NDDN for follow-up at the jurisdictional level.
- NDDN face-to-face meetings that provide members with the opportunity to share information about successful strategies they have used to improve data quality. These are incorporated into the annually revised Data Guide.

Summary of findings

- Nationally, the proportion of disability support service users in Australia with not stated Indigenous status has decreased markedly from 20.5% in 2004–05 to 5.1% in 2009–10.
- The proportion continues to vary by jurisdiction, ranging from 0.3% in South Australia to 11.2% in Victoria in 2009–10.
- The highest rates of not stated/not collected Indigenous status were reported for community access services (10% in 2009–10), users living in *Major cities* (5.3%), and users with 'vision' as their primary disability group (17.8%).
- The greatest declines in rates of not stated Indigenous status were observed in Victoria and Western Australia. In Victoria, rates declined from 45.2% in 2004–05 to 11.2% in 2009–10. In Western Australia, the rate was markedly higher than other jurisdictions in 2004–05 (19.3%), but comparable with other jurisdictions in 2009–10 (0.6%).

- For all service groups, rates of not stated Indigenous status decreased between 2004–05 and 2009–10 (most notably between 2004–05 and 2005–06). The greatest decline in rates was observed for community support services (from 29.5% in 2004–05 to 6% in 2009–10), respite services (17.5% to 6.2%), and accommodation support services (12.9% to 4.3%).
- Jurisdictions vary in their practices to collect and record Indigenous status data. Not all disability services in all jurisdictions are using the standard Indigenous status question, response options or recording categories. However, steps are being taken to ensure consistency among service providers in different jurisdictions, such as the amendment of the DS NMDS Data Guide for 2012–13 to reference the *National best practice guidelines for collecting Indigenous status information in health data sets*. Tasmania and Victoria uses additional coding categories in their information systems to better reflect not stated responses and to help identify records for follow-up. These are mapped (recoded) to the national standard categories for reporting to the AIHW for the DS NMDS.

Recommendations for improvements to Indigenous status data quality

Recommendation 1

Jurisdictions and individual service providers that do not currently collect and record Indigenous status information in accordance with the national standard to consider making changes to client forms and management systems to be consistent with best practice as documented in the *National best practice guidelines for collecting Indigenous status in health data sets* (see Attachment A).

Recommendation 2

Efforts could be directed at the small number of services that do not collect Indigenous status information or have comparatively high rates of not stated/not collected Indigenous status. Similarly, efforts could be directed at collecting the Indigenous status of clients in areas where rates of not stated/not collected Indigenous status are particularly high. It should be noted that the target areas/services to which such efforts should be directed may not be the same for all jurisdictions. Within state analysis could be conducted to develop suitable improvement strategies for individual jurisdictions, particularly for those with relatively high rates of not stated Indigenous status.

Recommendation 3

All training materials to include a rationale for the collection of Indigenous status data, and to reference the *National best practice guidelines for collecting Indigenous status in health data sets* (AIHW 2010).

Recommendation 4

The DS NMDS Data Guide to be amended to reference the *National best practice guidelines for collecting Indigenous status in health data sets* (AIHW 2010).

3 Supported Accommodation Assistance Program National Data Collection/ Specialist Homelessness Services Collection

Background

The Supported Accommodation Assistance Program National Data Collection (SAAP NDC) was collected from 1996 to June 2011. It was designed to capture data on government response to homelessness, and focused on services provided by agencies funded under the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program, which provided services specifically to homeless people and those at risk of homelessness. Therefore, service providers that were not 'specialist homelessness agencies' (that is, those that did not receive government funding, and general service providers) were not included in this data collection.

From July 2011, the SAAP NDC was replaced by the Specialist Homelessness Services Collection (SHSC). The SHSC was developed by the AIHW in collaboration with FaHCSIA and relevant departments of all state and territory governments. Key differences between the SAAP NDC and SHSC include the expanded scope of agencies in the SHSC to include agencies funded under the National Affordable Housing Agreement (NAHA) and National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness (NPAH), the inclusion of children as clients in their own right in SHSC (whereas accompanying children were recorded on their parent's form in SAAP NDC), and the monthly collection of client information and services provided for the SHSC (whereas SAAP NDC information was only collected at the end of a support period).

Data in the SAAP NDC and SHSC are collected in relation to support periods. A support period is a discrete period over which a person receives ongoing support from a government-funded specialist homelessness agency. A person may have one or more periods of support within a year.

Informed consent – a statement by a client that he or she agrees to have personal information recorded and sent to the AIHW for analysis – was (for SAAP) and is (for SHSC) a requirement for both the SAAP NDC and SHSC for information that may be considered sensitive. For the SHSC, client consent must be provided for sensitive data items, such as Indigenous status, country of birth, and formally diagnosed mental health conditions. Rates of client non-consent to the Indigenous status data item in the SAAP NDC are discussed in this chapter.

This chapter first reports on the quality of Indigenous status data in the final years of the SAAP NDC from 2004–05 to 2010–11, followed by first results of the SHSC from the first quarter of data collection (July to September 2011).

Update on analysis results by Indigenous status

Supported Accommodation Assistance Program

This section contains relevant data for 2004–05 from the 2007 data quality report (AIHW 2007), and tables with updated figures for 2010–11 for the SAAP NDC. These tables provide information on the proportion of support periods for Indigenous and non-Indigenous SAAP clients, as well as the proportion of support periods with not stated and not consented Indigenous status, by jurisdiction and by remoteness.

‘Not consented’ refers to support periods for which clients did not agree to have their personal information on the Indigenous status item sent to the AIHW for analysis. ‘Not stated’ refers to support periods for which clients provided consent, but for which Indigenous status was missing/not stated.

State/territory

Table 3.1 presents the rates of SAAP support periods by Indigenous status for 2004–05 and 2010–11, by state and territory.

It is important to note that the approaches to delivering homelessness services vary between jurisdictions. In particular, accommodation related data for Victoria, both in regard to the assessed need for accommodation and the provision of accommodation, is affected by the model of homelessness service delivery used in this state. Consequently, accommodation related data for Victoria is not strictly comparable with that reported by other jurisdictions. Similarly, accommodation data for South Australia is also affected by the model of homelessness service delivery used, where a large number of agencies do not provide accommodation (they provide support services only).

States and territories also differ in their client focus for service delivery. For example, Western Australia has a high proportion of agencies primarily focused on delivering services to women escaping domestic violence, and the Australian Capital Territory has a high proportion of agencies primarily focused on delivering services to young people. These variations should be considered when analysing national results and comparing states and territories.

In 2004–05:

- Nationally, the proportion of support periods for clients who identified as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin was 14.4%, ranging from 4% in Victoria to 58.3% in the Northern Territory.
- Nationally, the proportion of not stated Indigenous status was 2.4%.
- Across all jurisdictions, rates of not stated Indigenous status were generally consistent and low, ranging from 0.4% in the Northern Territory to 3.6% in Tasmania.
- Rates of client non-consent ranged from 4.2% in the Northern Territory to 19.7% in Tasmania, with a national average of 11.2 %.

In 2010–11:

- Nationally, the proportion of support periods for clients who identified as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin was 15%. This varied widely between jurisdictions, from 6% in Victoria to 66.1% in the Northern Territory.

- The proportion of support periods with not stated Indigenous status was 5.1% in Australia, ranging from 1.9% in the Northern Territory to 6.4% in New South Wales.
- Rates of client non-consent ranged from 6% in the Northern Territory to 20.6% in South Australia, with a national average of 10.6%.

Table 3.1: Number and proportion of SAAP support periods, by Indigenous status, by state and territory, 2004–05 and 2010–11

State/territory	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Australia
2004–05									
	Number								
Indigenous	5,550	2,196	4,580	5,179	2,356	493	220	2,417	22,991
Non-Indigenous	26,687	47,415	15,979	7,102	10,416	4,450	1,542	1,540	115,131
Not stated	1,342	1,003	659	296	292	230	49	15	3,886
Consent not provided	4,911	4,829	3,432	1,152	1,939	1,267	292	172	17,994
Total	38,490	55,443	24,650	13,729	15,003	6,440	2,103	4,144	160002
	Per cent								
Indigenous	14.4	4.0	18.6	37.7	15.7	7.7	10.5	58.3	14.4
Non-Indigenous	69.3	85.5	64.8	51.7	69.4	69.1	73.3	37.2	72.0
Not stated	3.5	1.8	2.7	2.2	1.9	3.6	2.3	0.4	2.4
Consent not provided	12.8	8.7	13.9	8.4	12.9	19.7	13.9	4.2	11.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
2010–11									
	Number								
Indigenous	8,950	4,357	7,455	4,574	3,205	544	318	3,226	32,629
Non-Indigenous	42,329	57,110	22,835	9,147	11,087	4,322	1,916	1,273	150,019
Not stated	3,952	4,182	1,076	575	817	277	146	93	11,118
Consent not provided	6,910	7,119	2,517	1,641	3,930	496	177	291	23,081
Total	62,141	72,768	33,883	15,937	19,039	5,639	2,557	4,883	216,847
	Per cent								
Indigenous	14.4	6.0	22.0	28.7	16.8	9.6	12.4	66.1	15.0
Non-Indigenous	68.1	78.5	67.4	57.4	58.2	76.6	74.9	26.1	69.2
Not stated	6.4	5.7	3.2	3.6	4.3	4.9	5.7	1.9	5.1
Consent not provided	11.1	9.8	7.4	10.3	20.6	8.8	6.9	6.0	10.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Notes

1. Clients may have support periods in more than one state or territory.

2. Data are unweighted.

Source: AIHW, SAAP National Data Collection (unpublished).

By remoteness

Table 3.2 presents the number and proportion of SAAP support periods by Indigenous status and remoteness, in 2005–06 and 2010–11.

Table 3.2: Number and proportion of SAAP support periods, by Indigenous status, by remoteness, 2005–06 and 2010–11

Geographical location	Major cities	Inner regional	Outer regional	Remote	Very remote	Total
2005–06						
	Number					
Indigenous	7,612	3,829	5,247	3,095	2,361	22,144
Non-Indigenous	81,384	21,275	9,273	1,138	369	113,440
Missing/not stated	7,085	1,010	570	54	100	8,820
Consent not provided	15,938	3,686	2,112	353	253	22,343
Total	112,019	29,801	17,203	4,641	3,084	166,747
	Per cent					
Indigenous	6.8	12.9	30.5	66.7	76.6	13.3
Non-Indigenous	72.7	71.4	53.9	24.5	12.0	68.0
Missing/not stated	6.3	3.4	3.3	1.2	3.2	5.3
Consent not provided	14.2	12.4	12.3	7.6	8.2	13.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
2009–10						
	Number					
Indigenous	13,142	5,781	8,022	2,382	3,303	32,629
Non-Indigenous	108,219	27,872	12,336	1,146	446	150,019
Missing/not stated	8,689	1,623	696	52	58	11,118
Consent not provided	17,676	2,918	2,131	147	208	23,081
Total	147,725	38,194	23,185	3,728	4,015	216,847
	Per cent					
Indigenous	8.9	15.1	34.6	63.9	82.3	15.0
Non-Indigenous	73.3	73.0	53.2	30.8	11.1	69.2
Missing/not stated	5.9	4.2	3.0	1.4	1.4	5.1
Consent not provided	12.0	7.6	9.2	4.0	5.2	10.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Notes

1. Clients may have support periods in more than one state or territory.
2. Data are unweighted.
3. Where the remoteness of an agency is uncertain, its support periods may be allocated between more than one remoteness category (for example, if it is believed that an agency has a 50% chance of being in a major city and a 50% chance of being inner regional, half of the agency's support periods are assigned to 'major city' and half to 'inner regional').

Source: AIHW, SAAP National Data Collection (unpublished).

In 2005–06:

- The proportion of support periods for clients who identified as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin increased with increasing remoteness, ranging from 6.8% in *Major cities* to 76.6% in *Very remote* areas.
- The proportion of support periods for clients with not stated Indigenous status was highest in *Major cities* (6.3%) and lowest in *Remote* areas (1.2%). In *Inner regional*, *Outer regional* and *Very remote* areas, these rates were about 3%.
- The rate of client non-consent was lowest for *Remote* (7.6%) and *Very remote* (8.2%) areas and highest in *Major cities* (14.2%).

In 2010–11:

- The proportion of support periods for clients who identified as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin increased with increasing remoteness, from 8.9% in *Major cities* to 82.3% in *Very remote* areas.
- Agencies in *Remote* and *Very remote* areas had the lowest rates of not stated Indigenous status (1.4% each) and client non-consent (1.4% and 5.2%). In *Major cities*, the proportion of not stated Indigenous status was 5.9% and the proportion of non-consent was 12%.

Specialist Homelessness Services Collection

First results of the new SHSC from the first quarter of data collection—July to September 2011—were released in April 2012 (AIHW 2012b). Among the 88% of clients who had Indigenous status recorded, almost one-fifth (19%) were Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander (AIHW 2012b). This is higher than the 5% of not stated responses reported for the last year of the SAAP NDC. However, it should be noted that analysis of the September quarter 2011 SHSC data identified some implementation issues. In particular, the rate of invalid/don't know/missing responses was high for many data items. It is expected that rates of missing/not stated information will greatly reduce over the next few quarters of data collection as implementation issues are resolved.

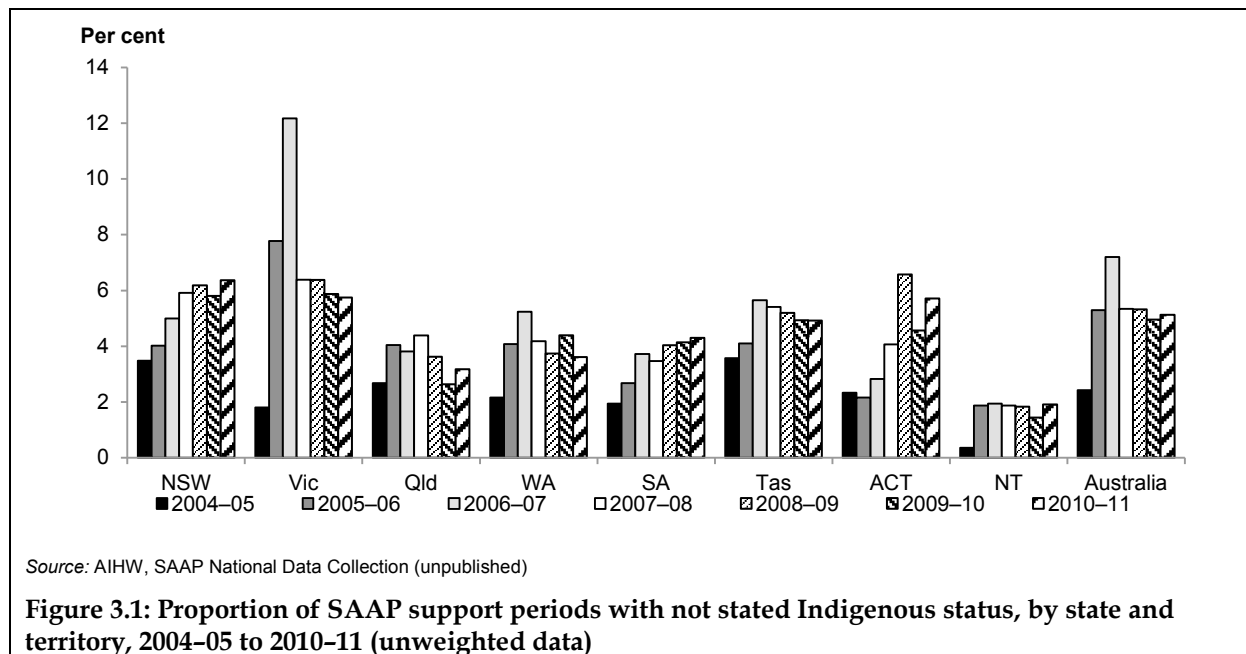
With respect to agency participation rates in the new SHSC, 93% of relevant agencies returned support period data for at least one month in the September quarter 2011. This compares favourably with the SAAP agency participation rate, which was 90% in 2010–11 and 92% on average between 2001–02 and 2010–11.

Changes in rates of not stated Indigenous status and non-consent

Figures 3.1 and 3.2 show the rates of not stated Indigenous status and non-consent for each jurisdiction from 2004–05 to 2010–11 in the SAAP NDC.

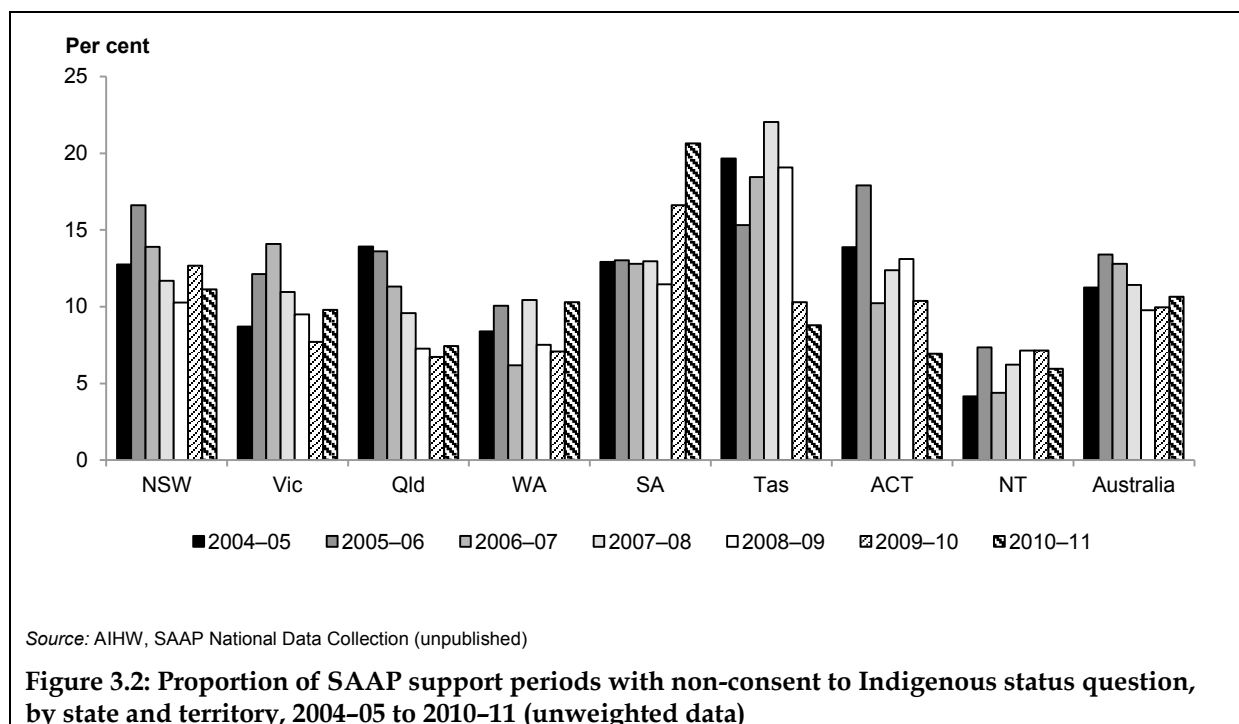
It should be noted that during this 7-year period, agency participation rates declined slightly from 92.6% in 2004–05 to 89.5% in 2010–11. Also, during the 2008–09 financial year (in January 2009), SAAP was discontinued and replaced by the NAHA. For this reason, caution is recommended when comparing data with previous years. Although the SAAP NDC continued under the new arrangements, the adoption of the NAHA affected the scope and interpretation of data in the collection. In particular, under the NAHA, the inclusion of

agencies in the SAAP NDC was determined by the state and territory departments responsible for administering the government response to homelessness. During this transition period, the rate of inclusion of 'SAAP-like' agencies and new agencies funded under the revised arrangements in the collection was not uniform across jurisdictions.



Between 2004-05 and 2010-11:

- Nationally, rates of SAAP support periods with not stated Indigenous status increased from 2.4% in 2004-05 to 7.2% in 2006-07, after which they fell and remained at about 5%.
- In New South Wales, South Australia and the Australian Capital Territory, rates of not stated Indigenous status steadily increased between 2004-05 and 2010-11 (from 3.5% to 6.4% for New South Wales, 1.9% to 4.3% for South Australia, and 2.3% to 5.7% for the Australian Capital Territory).
- Rates of not stated Indigenous status in the Northern Territory remained below 2% over the 7 years.
- In the other jurisdictions, rates of not stated Indigenous status typically increased from 2004-05 until about 2006-07, after which they declined and remained stable. This pattern is particularly evident in Victoria where rates increased from 1.8% in 2004-05 to 12.2% in 2006-07, and then declined to about 6% between 2007-08 and 2010-11.



Between 2004-05 and 2010-11:

- Nationally, rates of non-consent to the Indigenous status question remained just over 10% (ranging from 10% to 13.4% during this period).
- Non-consent was lowest in the Northern Territory, generally remaining between 4% and 7%.
- Overall, rates of non-consent decreased in New South Wales, Queensland, Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory. This was particularly notable in Tasmania (for which the rate decreased from 19.7% in 2004-05 to 8.8% in 2010-11) and the Australian Capital Territory (where the rate halved from 13.9% in 2004-05 to 6.9% in 2010-11).
- In South Australia, there was a considerable increase in non-consent rates, from 12.9% in 2004-05 to 20.6% in 2010-11.

Update on data collection and reporting practices

This section provides information on data collection and reporting practices regarding Indigenous status information for the SAAP NDC before its cessation in 2011, as well as current data collection practices in the new SHSC. It also provides information on staff training and support systems to facilitate the accuracy of data collection in the SHSC.

Indigenous status question, response categories and recording practices

SAAP National Data Collection

The SAAP NDC manual (July 2005) specifies the Indigenous status question and response options, as well as how to complete the question on client forms, shown in Box 3.1. This is consistent with the ABS national standard as documented in the *National best practice guidelines for collecting Indigenous status in health data sets*. The manual does not, however, specify the Indigenous status coding categories that should be included in client management systems.

Box 3.1: SAAP National Data Collection manual (July 2005) – Collection of Indigenous status data

Indigenous status question

Does the client identify as being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin?

Indigenous status response options

- 1 ☐ No
- 2 ☐ Yes, Aboriginal
- 3 ☐ Yes, Torres Strait Islander
- 4 ☐ Yes, both

How to complete this question

Consent from the client is required to complete this question

Tick only one box

This question must always be asked regardless of your perception based on appearance or other factors

Data for the SAAP NDC were collected on either paper forms or electronically using the SAAP Management and Reporting Tool and a number of other approved electronic client management systems that enabled agencies to collect and record information for the purposes of the National Data Collection.

Informed client consent was a requirement of the SAAP NDC for a number of data items, including Indigenous status. For the purposes of the NDC, informed consent is a statement by a client that he or she agrees to have personal information about them sent to the National Data Collection Agency, the AIHW) for analysis. This requires that the client be given appropriate background information about why the information is being recorded, how it will be used, and who will have access to it. Client consent was only obtained once, and the initial response provided was used for all times when information was added to the client information form.

Specialist Homeless Services Collection

Data for the SHSC is collected either on paper forms (which only account for about 10–15% of data submitted) or electronically on client management systems, including the Specialist Homelessness Information Platform (SHIP) (which about 80% of agencies use), as well as

other approved electronic client management systems. All data items are the same between paper-based and electronic forms. Data are submitted from agencies to the AIHW via the Specialist Homelessness Online Reporting (SHOR) tool, which is a website operated by the AIHW where data from agencies are uploaded and stored.

Box 3.2 shows how the Indigenous status question and response options are presented on client forms, which is also reflected in the SHS Collection Manual. The standard Indigenous status question is used; however, the standard response options are not included (No; Yes, Aboriginal; Yes, Torres Strait Islander; Yes, both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander). Instead, the coding categories for recording Indigenous status in client information management systems are included – these are the same as the five ABS standard categories except that ‘Don’t know’ is used instead of ‘Not stated/inadequately described’, and an additional category of ‘Not applicable’ is included for clients who have not given consent for their personal information to be provided to the AIHW.

Box 3.2: Specialist Homelessness Services Collection – Collection of Indigenous status data

Indigenous status question

Is the client of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin?

Indigenous status response options

- 1 ☐ *Aboriginal, but not Torres Strait Islander origin*
- 2 ☐ *Torres Strait Islander, but not Aboriginal origin*
- 3 ☐ *Both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin*
- 4 ☐ *Neither Aboriginal nor Torres Strait Islander origin*
- 99 ☐ *Don’t know (there is consent for information to be provided to the AIHW but the information is not known or the client refuses to provide the information)*
- 0 ☐ *Not applicable (there is no consent for information to be provided to the AIHW)*

Similar to the SAAP NDC, sensitive information collected from clients requires consent, including Indigenous status. However, in contrast to the SAAP NDC, specialist homelessness services clients can choose at any time during their support period to not have – or have – Indigenous status information provided to the AIHW as part of the SHSC. The Indigenous status question is asked only once for each support period, upon initial contact with an agency, and is not re-checked unless the response is missing.

In the SHS Collection Manual, information is provided about why Indigenous status data are collected, how to complete the data item, and response definitions. Instructions are provided that the Indigenous status question should be asked of all clients regardless of appearance, country of birth or whether staff know of the client or their family background; and it is strongly recommended that this question be asked directly wherever possible.

Staff training and support systems for collecting Indigenous status data

- To facilitate the accurate collection of data on clients in the SHSC, staff training is provided to all agency workers collecting data. Staff are also provided with a SHS Agency Training Manual and an SHS Collection Manual. The training manual includes basic information on Indigenous status and refers to the SHS Collection Manual for more information. The training manual specifies that Indigenous status must always be asked regardless of one's perception of the client based on appearance or other factors, and that this information is important to show whether the needs of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander client group are being met.
- For the initial implementation of the SHSC, training was provided to trainers in each jurisdiction, and these trainers then trained workers in agencies on how to collect data. In the long term, it is envisioned that training will be provided periodically. The AIHW is in the process of determining how and when this training will be conducted. One option is a web-based training course or online training tool, which would be particularly useful given the high rate of staff turnover in many agencies.
- The AIHW has a hotline (email and phone) for Specialist Homelessness Services agencies that provides advice and assistance with data definitions and concepts, completing paper forms, and recording client information, including Indigenous status in SHIP and submitting data via SHOR.

Activities to improve Indigenous status data quality

Compared with the SAAP NDC, the SHSC aims to significantly improve the quality of homeless services data, including information captured on Indigenous clients.

Improvements include:

- The scope of agencies has expanded. Agencies that reported in SAAP and have continued to be funded have been included in SHSC, along with agencies that were not required to report in SAAP and some agencies that were newly funded under the NAHA and NPAH. This will capture more Indigenous clients in the SHSC as some of the previously non-participating SAAP-funded agencies are likely to have large numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients (AIHW 2007).
- The SHSC provides better information about clients of homelessness agencies. This is for a number of reasons, but is particularly because changes in the data collection protocols allow more complete reporting of the information needed to derive the statistical linkage key (SLK). The SLK is used to distinguish between unique individuals and to identify multiple support periods that are likely to relate to an individual. These changes will improve the ability to build a picture of clients and how their circumstances change over the course of their support.
- SHSC data will be submitted for all clients to the AIHW monthly (compared with the SAAP NDC, for which data about client outcomes was collected only at the end of a support period – which may span several months). This will provide more timely and complete information about agencies and their clients (for example, to monitor changes to client outcomes over time), as well as improved data submission and feedback processes for agencies.

- Improved client management systems—SHIP has replaced the SAAP Management and Reporting Tool to help agencies meet the reporting requirements of the new data collection. SHIP provides enhanced client and case management functionality. For example, it will help reduce the data collection burden for repeat clients by avoiding the re-entry of client details.
- For clients with inconsistent responses to the Indigenous status question between support periods, the SHSC allows the overwriting of previous responses to the Indigenous status question with the most recent response, except for not stated responses. For example, if a client responds as non-Indigenous on first episode, but Indigenous on the second episode, then all previous episodes can be replaced with 'Indigenous' so that responses are consistent between episodes).
- The SHS Collection Manual will be updated periodically by the AIHW (on a financial year basis) so that the collection and reporting of data is consistent during financial years. With respect to Indigenous status data, it is anticipated that relevant sections of the *National best practice guidelines for collecting and recording Indigenous status in health data sets* will be included in the manual for the next financial year (2012–13).

Additional information related to data quality

- Informed client consent is required for data items considered sensitive in both the SAAP NDC and SHSC. In the SHSC, it was agreed (with approval from the AIHW Ethics Committee) that information used to construct the SLK could not identify an individual and is not sensitive information. As such, consent is not required for SLK information in SHSC. This change enables better collection of SLK information and, in turn, SLK validity rates have risen from 86% in the last quarter of the SAAP NDC to 93% in the first quarter of the SHSC; the SLK validity rate is expected to improve further (AIHW 2012b).
- SHOR is the website operated by the AIHW where data from agencies are uploaded and stored. It contains a series of edit checks and validations of the data. The results of these edit checks will be available to agencies on SHOR, so that any data errors can be resolved. SHOR displays only the essential data values necessary to describe and fix errors—never the complete client record.

Summary of findings

- Nationally, the proportion of SAAP client support periods with not stated Indigenous status increased between 2004–05 and 2006–07, after which they fell and remained at about 5% in 2010–11. There was little change in rates of non-consent to the Indigenous status data item over this period (ranging from 10% to 13.4%).
- Rates of not stated Indigenous status continued to increase in some states and territories over the period 2004–05 to 2010–11 (NSW, SA and ACT), while in the other jurisdictions, rates have remained relatively stable since about 2007–08.
- Rates of non-consent in the SAAP NDC markedly decreased in Queensland, Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory, and increased in South Australia from 2004–05 to 2010–11.
- In 2010–11, rates of not stated Indigenous status decreased with increasing remoteness (being highest in *Major cities* at 5.9% and lowest in *Remote* and *Very remote* areas at 1.4%). Rates of non-consent to the Indigenous status data item were also higher in *Major cities* compared with *Remote* and *Very remote* regions.

- First results from the first quarter of data collection for the SHSC reported that 19% of clients who provided information on their Indigenous status were Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, and 12% of clients did not have information on Indigenous status recorded.
- The SAAP Data Collection Manual includes the standard Indigenous status question and response options. However, it does not specify the standard Indigenous status coding categories that should be used in client management systems. The new SHS Collection Manual includes the standard Indigenous status question, however, does not specify the response options that should be used on data collection forms. It specifies the recording categories that should be used in client information management systems – these are the same as the national standard, however, instead of ‘Not stated/inadequately described’, ‘Don’t know’ is used, and an additional category of ‘not applicable’ is included for clients that have not given consent for their personal information to be provided to the AIHW.
- A number of improvements have been made to the SHSC that are expected to result in improved Indigenous data quality, including changes to data collection protocols resulting in improved SLKs and better client information, improved client management systems with enhanced case management functionality, monthly data submissions allowing more timely data, and expanded coverage of agencies that will capture more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients of homelessness services.

Recommendations for improvements to Indigenous status data quality

Recommendation 1

Develop strategies to improve the consent rate of clients, particularly among agencies with a high proportion of Indigenous clients

Recommendation 2

Consider the feasibility of amending client forms (used for 20% of agencies) so that the response options for the question on Indigenous status comply with the national standard. The response options that should be used are *No; Yes, Aboriginal; Yes, Torres Strait Islander; Yes, both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander*.

Recommendation 3

Amend SHS Collection Manual so that the Indigenous status data item complies with the national standard as outlined in the *National best practice guidelines for collecting Indigenous status in health data sets*. This will require including the standard response options to be used on client forms as outlined above. Whether the coding category of 99 (‘Don’t know’), which is currently used in client information management systems, should be changed to code 9 (‘Not stated/inadequately described’) should also be considered, to be consistent with the national recording categories.

Recommendation 4

SHS Collection Manual and Agency Training Manual to include a reference to the AIHW’s *National best practice guidelines for collecting Indigenous status in health data sets* (AIHW 2010).

4 National Child Protection Data Collection

Background

The National Child Protection (NCP) Data Collection is comprised of data from state and territory child protection administrative data sets, and consists of six sub-collections comprising notifications, investigations and substantiations; care and protection orders; out-of-home care; foster carers; relative/kinship carers; and intensive family support services. Consistent with the 2007 data quality report, this chapter provides an evaluation of Indigenous status data for investigations and substantiations, care and protection orders, and out-of-home care.

The reporting process for child protection involves a number of stages. At the notification stage, children in need of protection come into contact with departments responsible for child protection. Notifications may be followed through with an investigation and/or referral to support services. The aim of an investigation is to determine whether notifications are 'substantiated' or 'not substantiated'. A substantiation indicates there is sufficient reason (after an investigation) to believe the child has been, is being, or is likely to be, abused, neglected, or otherwise harmed. In situations where further intervention is required, the child may be placed on a care and protection order and/or in out-of-home care (including foster care and relative/kinship care).

Information on Indigenous status may be collected at each stage of a child protection case; this varies by jurisdiction, with some collecting only at the investigation stage, others at the notification and investigation stages, and others at all stages. However, data are not reported at the notification stage as the quality of these data is questionable, as many notifications are from third parties who do not know the child or family well.

There are some important differences between jurisdictions in child protection policies and practices that should be taken into account when making comparisons across jurisdictions. For example, jurisdictions vary in the threshold of what is substantiated; while some substantiate based on harm or risk of harm to the child, others substantiate based on the actions of the parent or incidents that cause harm. In addition to jurisdictional variations in policy, the definition of what constitutes child abuse and neglect has also broadened at a national level over time (AIFS: Bromfield & Holzer 2008).

The practices used to identify and record the Indigenous status of children in the child protection system also vary across states and territories, with some jurisdictions recording large numbers of children with unknown Indigenous status. No state or territory can validate the data on Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children by other means and the quality of the data is therefore unknown. Over the last few years, several jurisdictions have introduced measures to improve the identification of Indigenous children in the child protection system. However, in some jurisdictions the quality of data on Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children is still affected by the high proportion of children whose Indigenous status is unknown.

The 2007 data quality report presented data for 2001–02 to 2004–05. However, there are data quality and comparability issues for years before 2004–05; therefore, this chapter presents data from 2004–05 onwards. In interpreting these data, note that despite broadly similar

processes nationally within the statutory system, there are some important differences between jurisdictions' child protection policies and practices that should be taken into account when making comparisons across jurisdictions and over time (see AIFS: Bromfield & Higgins 2008, and AIHW 2012a for further information). System changes are one example of where differences can occur, for example, the introduction of a new client management system in Western Australia in March 2010 in which it is not mandatory to record Indigenous status and the default value is 'Not recorded'. Consequently, the proportion of clients reported with not stated Indigenous in Western Australia in 2010–11 was higher than those in previous years recorded under the former client information system.

Update on analysis results by Indigenous status

This section contains relevant tables for 2004–05 from the 2007 data quality report, and new tables with updated figures for 2010–11.

Indigenous status data are presented for investigations and substantiations – note that due to availability of comparable trend information, these data are based on counts of cases rather than children. Although Indigenous status data are collected at the notification stage in some jurisdictions, these data are not published as they are not considered reliable. 'Not stated' refers to unknown, missing and not stated Indigenous status information.

Child protection investigations and substantiations

Tables 4.1 and 4.2 show the number and proportion of investigations and substantiations by Indigenous status for 2004–05 and 2010–11, respectively.

In 2004–05:

- Children who were identified as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin accounted for 16.1% of investigations and 15.8% of substantiations in Australia.
- The proportion of not stated Indigenous status was 9.7% at the point of investigation and 7.2% for substantiations.
- There were substantial differences in the proportion of not stated Indigenous status between jurisdictions. For investigations, this ranged from 0.3% in Victoria to 75.6% in Tasmania. For substantiations, this ranged from 0.1% in Victoria to 68.8% in Tasmania.

Table 4.1: Number and proportion of investigations and substantiations, by Indigenous status, by state and territory, 2004–05

Indigenous status	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Investigations									
	Number								
Indigenous	10,770	1,251	3,645	1066	1,716	74	337	753	19,612
Non-Indigenous	42,526	10,607	29,026	1,840	4,326	373	1489	403	90,590
Not stated ^(a)	5,276	30	3,479	256	237	1386	1191	24	11,879
Total	58,572	11,888	36,150	3,162	6,279	1,833	3,017	1,180	122,081
	Per cent								
Indigenous	18.4	10.5	10.1	33.7	27.3	4.0	11.2	63.8	16.1
Non-Indigenous	72.6	89.2	80.3	58.2	68.9	20.3	49.4	34.2	74.2
Not stated ^(a)	9.0	0.3	9.6	8.1	3.8	75.6	39.5	2.0	9.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Substantiations									
	Number								
Indigenous	3,140	816	1,707	385	736	43	136	337	7,300
Non-Indigenous	11,713	6,577	14,048	677	1,581	201	610	131	35,538
Not stated ^(a)	640	5	1,552	42	67	538	467	5	3,316
Total	15,493	7,398	17,307	1,104	2,384	782	1,213	473	46,154
	Per cent								
Indigenous	20.3	11.0	9.9	34.9	30.9	5.5	11.2	71.2	15.8
Non-Indigenous	75.6	88.9	81.2	61.3	66.3	25.7	50.3	27.7	77.0
Not stated ^(a)	4.1	0.1	9.0	3.8	2.8	68.8	38.5	1.1	7.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) Not known/missing/not stated

Source: AIHW, National Child Protection Data Collection

In 2010–11:

- Children who were identified as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin accounted for 24.9% of investigations and 28.3% of substantiations in Australia.
- The proportion of not stated Indigenous status was 6.3% at the point of investigation and 3.0% for substantiations.
- The proportion of not stated Indigenous status varied greatly between jurisdictions. For investigations, rates were less than 6.5% in most jurisdictions, except Western Australia (40.1%), Tasmania (21.6%), and the Australian Capital Territory (13.5%). For substantiations, rates were less than 6% for most jurisdictions, except Western Australia (33.7%) and Tasmania (18.5%).

Table 4.2: Number and proportion of investigations and substantiations, by Indigenous status, by state and territory, 2010–11

Indigenous status	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Investigations									
	Number								
Indigenous	17,358	1,451	5,758	1,844	1,694	307	372	3,073	31,857
Non-Indigenous	51,166	12,481	14,498	2,358	3,971	1,480	1,074	888	87,916
Not stated ^(a)	2,865	9	1,399	2,813	150	491	226	33	7,986
Total	71,389	13,941	21,655	7,015	5,815	2,278	1,672	3,994	127,759
	Per cent								
Indigenous	24.3	10.4	26.6	26.3	29.1	13.5	22.2	76.9	24.9
Non-Indigenous	71.7	89.5	66.9	33.6	68.3	65.0	64.2	22.2	68.8
Not stated ^(a)	4.0	0.1	6.5	40.1	2.6	21.6	13.5	0.8	6.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Substantiations									
	Number								
Indigenous	5,843	829	1,972	560	567	165	152	1,363	11,451
Non-Indigenous	12,707	6,811	4,444	705	1,603	833	448	270	27,821
Not stated ^(a)	46	3	182	642	50	227	36	8	1,194
Total	18,596	7,643	6,598	1,907	2,220	1,225	636	1,641	40,466
	Per cent								
Indigenous	31.4	10.8	29.9	29.4	25.5	13.5	23.9	83.1	28.3
Non-Indigenous	68.3	89.1	67.4	37.0	72.2	68.0	70.4	16.5	68.8
Not stated ^(a)	0.2	0.0	2.8	33.7	2.3	18.5	5.7	0.5	3.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) Not known/missing/not stated

Source: AIHW, National Child Protection Data Collection

Children on care and protection orders

Table 4.3 shows the number and proportion of children on care and protection orders, by Indigenous status, at 30 June 2005 and 30 June 2010.

At 30 June 2005:

- Indigenous children accounted for 22.7% of children on care and protection orders in Australia, ranging from 12.6% in Victoria to 67.9% in the Northern Territory.
- The proportion of children on care and protection orders with not stated Indigenous status was less than 1% for most states and territories. However, these rates were comparatively high for the Australian Capital Territory (17.2%), Tasmania (12.0%), and South Australia (5.4%).

At 30 June 2011:

- Almost one-third (31.4%) of children on care and protection orders in Australia were recorded as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin, ranging from 15.7% in Victoria to 79.6% in the Northern Territory.
- Nationally, the proportion of children on care and protection orders with not stated Indigenous status was 0.6%, and was close to 0% for several states and territories. Western Australia and South Australia had the highest proportions of children with not stated Indigenous status, at 3.6% and 2.2% respectively.

Table 4.3: Number and proportion of children on care and protection orders, by Indigenous status, by state and territory, as at 30 June, 2005 and 2011

Indigenous status	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
As at 30 June 2005									
	Number								
Indigenous	2,113	587	1,342	660	322	94	70	281	5,469
Non-Indigenous	6,455	4,062	4,515	1,122	1,147	536	314	130	18,281
Not stated ^(a)	52	19	0	1	84	86	80	3	325
Total	8,620	4,668	5,857	1,783	1,553	716	464	414	24,075
	Per cent								
Indigenous	24.5	12.6	22.9	37.0	20.7	13.1	15.1	67.9	22.7
Non-Indigenous	74.9	87.0	77.1	62.9	73.9	74.9	67.7	31.4	75.9
Not stated ^(a)	0.6	0.4	0.0	0.1	5.4	12.0	17.2	0.7	1.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
As at 30 June 2011									
	Number								
Indigenous	4,900	1,060	3,181	1,496	658	234	176	575	12,280
Non-Indigenous	10,435	5,665	5,247	1,663	1,904	936	535	146	26,531
Not stated ^(a)	4	10	28	118	58	16	12	1	247
Total	15,339	6,735	8,456	3,277	2,620	1,186	723	722	39,058
	Per cent								
Indigenous	31.9	15.7	37.6	45.7	25.1	19.7	24.3	79.6	31.4
Non-Indigenous	68.0	84.1	62.1	50.7	72.7	78.9	74.0	20.2	67.9
Not stated ^(a)	0.0	0.1	0.3	3.6	2.2	1.3	1.7	0.1	0.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) Not known/missing/not stated

Source: AIHW, National Child Protection Data Collection

Children in out-of-home care

Table 4.4 shows the number and proportion of children in out-of-home care by Indigenous status at 30 June 2005 and 30 June 2011.

At 30 June 2005:

- Nationally, the proportion of Indigenous children in out-of-home care was 24%.
- Only 0.9% of children in out-of-home care had a not stated Indigenous status.
- Proportions of not stated Indigenous status were relatively high in the Australian Capital Territory (17.5%) and Tasmania (10.1%) compared with the other jurisdictions, which had rates of less than 1%.

At 30 June 2011:

- Almost one-third (32.8%) of children in out-of-home care were identified as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin.
- 1% of children in out-of-home care had a not stated Indigenous status.
- The proportion of children in out-of-home care with not stated Indigenous status was below 2% for most states and territories. Western Australia had the highest proportion of children recorded as having a not stated Indigenous status, at 4.6%.

Table 4.4: Number and proportion of children in out-of-home care, by Indigenous status, by state and territory, as at 30 June, 2005 and 2011

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
As at 30 June 2005									
	Number								
Indigenous	2,543	526	1,275	692	286	78	60	218	5,678
Non-Indigenous	6,610	3,868	4,382	1,136	1,043	440	222	104	17,805
Not stated ^(a)	77	14	0	1	0	58	60	2	212
Total	9,230	4,408	5,657	1,829	1,329	576	342	324	23,695
	Per cent								
Indigenous	27.6	11.9	22.5	37.8	21.5	13.5	17.5	67.3	24.0
Non-Indigenous	71.6	87.7	77.5	62.1	78.5	76.4	64.9	32.1	75.1
Not stated ^(a)	0.8	0.3	0.0	0.1	0.0	10.1	17.5	0.6	0.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
As at 30 June 2011									
	Number								
Indigenous	5,737	877	2,850	1,448	630	196	119	501	12,358
Non-Indigenous	10,994	4,701	4,722	1,527	1,690	754	409	132	24,929
Not stated ^(a)	9	100	30	145	48	16	12	1	361
Total	16,740	5,678	7,602	3,120	2,368	966	540	634	37,648
	Per cent								
Indigenous	34.3	15.4	37.5	46.4	26.6	20.3	22.0	79.0	32.8
Non-Indigenous	65.7	82.8	62.1	48.9	71.4	78.1	75.7	20.8	66.2
Not stated ^(a)	0.1	1.8	0.4	4.6	2.0	1.7	2.2	0.2	1.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) Not known/missing/not stated

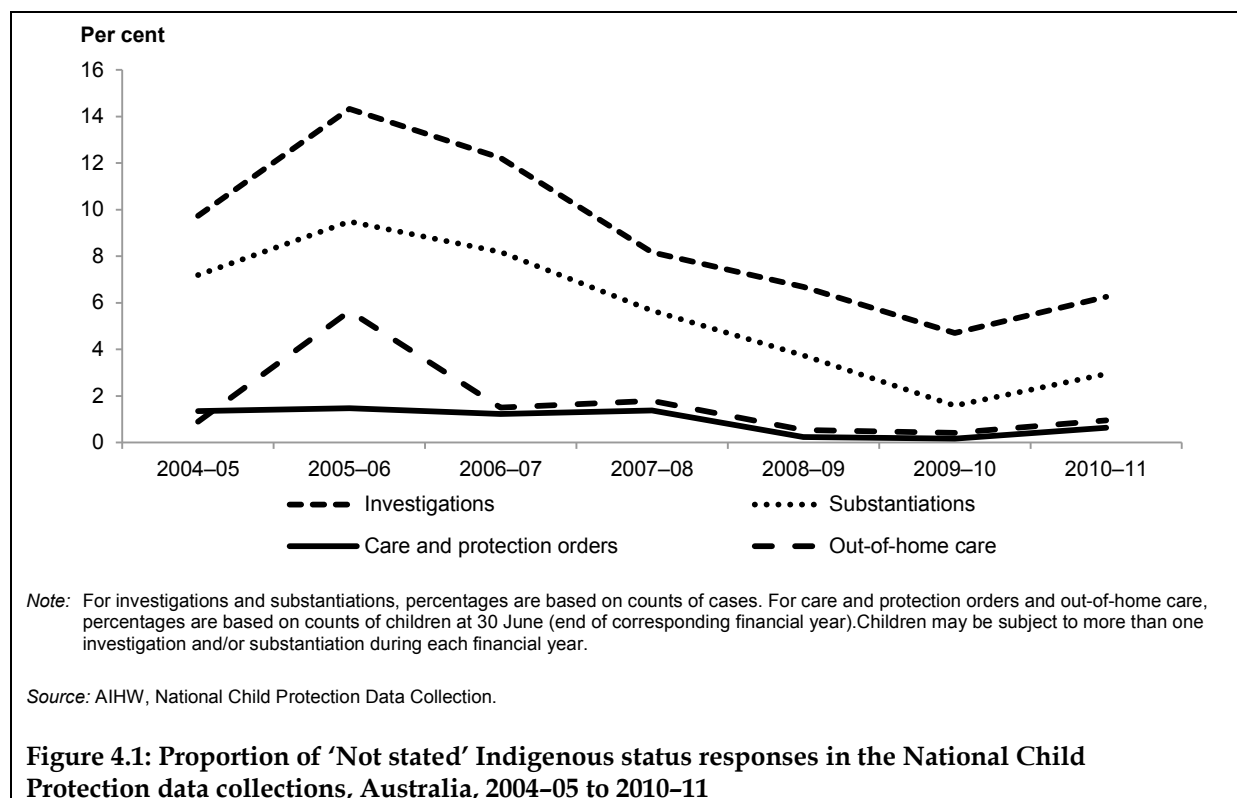
Source: AIHW, National Child Protection Data Collection

Changes in rates of not stated Indigenous status

This section presents rates of not stated Indigenous status between 2004–05 and 2010–11 nationally and by jurisdiction for each of the child protection data collections (investigations, substantiations, care and protection orders and out-of-home care).

National

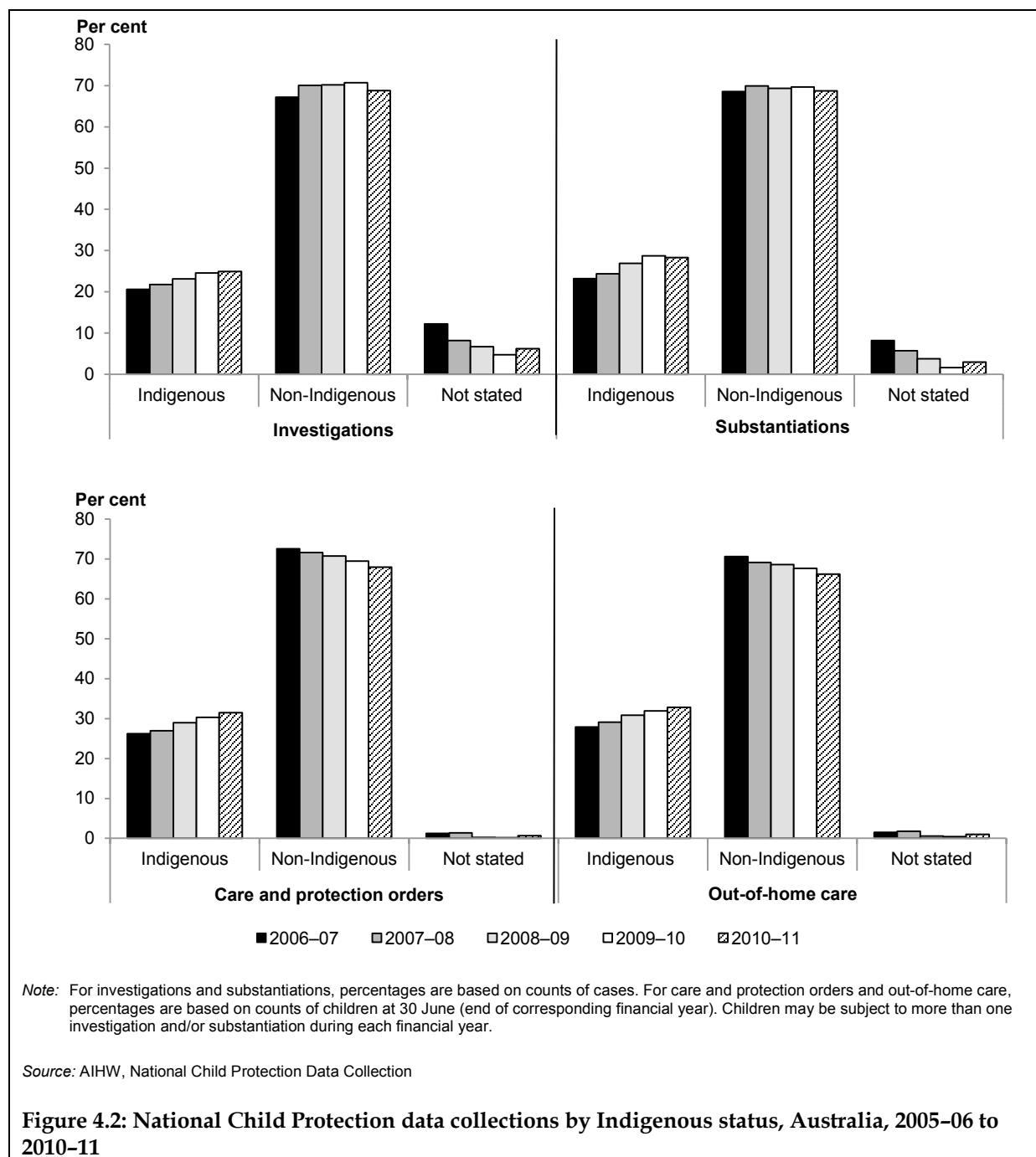
Figure 4.1 shows the proportion of not stated Indigenous status in each NCP Data Collection from 2004–05 to 2010–11 in Australia.



Overall, there have been improvements in the proportions of not stated Indigenous status in Australia across all of the child protection data collections over the period 2004–05 to 2010–11. These rates typically increased between 2004–05 and 2005–06, after which they steadily declined until 2009–10, and then increased again in 2010–11.

- For investigations, rates decreased from 14.3% in 2005–06 to 4.7% in 2009–10, and then increased to 6.3% in 2010–11.
- For substantiations, rates decreased from 9.5% in 2005–06 to 1.6% in 2009–10, and then increased to 3.0% in 2010–11.
- For children in out-of-home care, rates of not stated Indigenous status peaked in 2005–06 at 5.6%, fell to about 1.5% during 2006–07 and 2007–08, and then decreased further to almost 0% between 2008–09 and 2009–10.
- For children on care and protection orders, rates of not stated Indigenous status remained at about 1.5% between 2004–05 and 2007–08, after which they fell to almost 0%.

Improvements in Indigenous status data quality (that is, decreases in the proportion of children with not stated Indigenous status) are reflected in changes over time in proportions of Indigenous and non-Indigenous children in the child protection system. Figure 4.2 shows that as proportions of not stated Indigenous status decreased between 2005–06 and 2010–11, the proportions of Indigenous children in each NCP Data Collection increased.



State/territory

Table 4.5 shows the proportion of not stated Indigenous status in each NCP data collection between 2004–05 and 2010–11 for each jurisdiction.

Table 4.5: Proportion of not stated Indigenous status in the National Child Protection data collections, by state and territory, 2004–05 to 2010–11 (per cent)

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
2004–05									
Investigations	9.0	0.3	9.6	8.1	3.8	75.6	39.5	2.0	9.7
Substantiations	4.1	0.1	9.0	3.8	2.8	68.8	38.5	1.1	7.2
Care and protection orders	0.6	0.4	0.0	0.1	5.4	12.0	17.2	0.7	1.3
Out-of-home care	0.8	0.3	0.0	0.1	0.0	10.1	17.5	0.6	0.9
2005–06									
Investigations	3.4	0.3	36.7	7.9	0.0	85.2	37.8	2.3	14.3
Substantiations	0.8	0.0	29.3	6.9	0.0	76.9	39.7	2.5	9.5
Care and protection orders	0.2	0.4	0.0	0.1	4.5	19.2	19.2	2.3	1.5
Out-of-home care	0.3	0.0	0.0	61.0	0.0	18.7	18.6	2.6	5.6
2006–07									
Investigations	4.2	6.9	36.8	8.4	0.0	79.4	37.3	2.1	12.2
Substantiations	0.3	6.5	30.5	5.1	0.0	75.7	33.6	1.3	8.2
Care and protection orders	0.1	0.3	2.5	0.0	2.2	0.0	20.7	1.3	1.2
Out-of-home care	0.2	2.2	3.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	15.5	1.0	1.5
2007–08									
Investigations	3.5	1.5	29.2	10.1	0.0	79.5	10.7	1.5	8.2
Substantiations	0.1	0.3	24.8	5.0	0.0	77.9	7.5	1.1	5.7
Care and protection orders	0.0	0.2	5.7	0.0	0.8	0.0	1.6	0.2	1.4
Out-of-home care	0.1	1.9	6.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.2	0.0	1.8
2008–09									
Investigations	3.8	0.1	22.5	10.8	0.0	75.2	9.4	2.0	6.7
Substantiations	0.1	0.1	13.4	6.6	0.0	74.4	4.1	1.6	3.7
Care and protection orders	0.0	0.2	0.6	0.0	0.5	0.2	0.5	0.5	0.2
Out-of-home care	0.1	1.8	0.9	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.6	0.6	0.5
2009–10									
Investigations	3.7	0.1	7.7	9.6	6.4	48.3	11.6	1.1	4.7
Substantiations	0.1	0.0	3.2	5.9	6.7	20.9	7.7	0.6	1.6
Care and protection orders	0.0	0.3	0.0	0.0	1.4	0.0	0.3	0.4	0.2
Out-of-home care	0.1	1.8	0.1	0.0	1.1	0.0	0.4	0.4	0.4
2010–11									
Investigations	4.0	0.1	6.5	40.1	2.6	21.6	13.5	0.8	6.3
Substantiations	0.2	0.0	2.8	33.7	2.3	18.5	5.7	0.5	3.0
Care and protection orders	0.0	0.1	0.3	3.6	2.2	1.3	1.7	0.1	0.6
Out-of-home care	0.1	1.8	0.4	4.6	2.0	1.7	2.2	0.2	1.0

Note: For investigations and substantiations, percentages are based on counts of cases. For care and protection orders and out-of-home care, percentages are based on counts of children at 30 June (end of corresponding financial year). Children may be subject to more than one investigation and/or substantiation during each financial year.

Source: AIHW, National Child Protection Data Collection

- Over the 7 years from 2004–05 to 2010–11, Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory showed the greatest declines in rates of not stated Indigenous status in the child protection data collections. For example, Tasmania observed a decline of 54 percentage points for investigations, and 50 percentage points for substantiations, and the ACT observed a decline of 26 percentage points for investigations, and 33 percentage points for substantiations. However, despite these improvements, rates of not stated Indigenous status in Tasmania and ACT remained higher than for most other jurisdictions in 2010–11.
- In the Northern Territory, rates of not stated Indigenous status were low (less than 2% in most years) and relatively stable between 2004–05 and 2010–11 for all NCP data collections (except between 2004–05 and 2005–06 when rates increased).
- In Victoria, rates of not stated Indigenous status remained consistently low between 2004–05 and 2010–11 at less than 2% for all NCP data collections. The exception to this was in 2006–07 where rates were almost 7% for investigations and substantiations.
- In Queensland in 2004–05, about 10% of investigations and substantiations had cases with not stated Indigenous status. In 2005–06, these rates increased to 36.7% for investigations and 29.3% for substantiations, and remained relatively high until 2008–09 (22.5% for investigations and 13.4% for substantiations). In 2010–11, the respective rates for investigations and substantiations decreased to 6.5% and 2.8%.
- In Western Australia, rates of not stated Indigenous status remained relatively stable between 2004–05 and 2009–10 for all child protection data collections with the exception of out-of-home care, for which rates increased dramatically to 61% in 2005–06. In 2010–11, rates of not stated Indigenous status noticeably increased for all collections. This is likely to be due to the introduction of a new client management system in March 2010 (see Background section for more information).

Update on data collection and reporting practices

This section provides information on the current collection and reporting practices for the NCP Data Collection regarding Indigenous status information, as well as staff training and support systems in place to facilitate the accuracy of data collection. It focuses on any inconsistencies between current practices of child protection services and the national standard for collecting and recording Indigenous status.

The *National best practice guidelines for collecting Indigenous status in health data sets* were disseminated by the AIHW to members of the Performance and Data Working Group (PDWG) in November 2011. Members of the PDWG were asked to review current practices for collecting information on the Indigenous status of children in the NCP Data Collection and to document whether these were consistent with the best practice approach in the guidelines. Members were also asked to provide details of any staff training and support systems that assist child protection workers to ask the standard question on Indigenous status. Findings from this exercise are outlined in the following sections.

Indigenous status question, response categories and recording practices

As shown in Table 4.6, the use of the ABS standard Indigenous status question, response options and recording categories varies between jurisdictions.

In this table, 'Input data' refers to whether the ABS standard Indigenous status question is asked of clients to establish their Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander or non-Indigenous status ('Are you [is the person] of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin?'); whether the standard response options are provided to clients to answer the question (No; Yes; Yes, Torres Strait Islander; Yes both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander); and whether information systems use the five national standard categories for recording Indigenous status (1. *Aboriginal but not Torres Strait Islander origin*. 2. *Torres Strait Islander but not Aboriginal origin*. 3. *Both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin*. 4. *Neither Aboriginal nor Torres Strait Islander origin*. 9. *Not stated/inadequately described*). A column is also included to indicate whether local data management systems use additional categories for 9. *Not stated/inadequately described*, for the purposes of identifying records for follow-up (that is, to identify if the client declined to respond, and for situations where it was impossible for the question to be asked during the contact episode).

'Output data' refers to whether the jurisdiction's coding categories can be mapped to the five national standard recording categories for submission to the national collection.

- Victoria and Tasmania currently collect and record Indigenous status data consistent with the national standard.
- In New South Wales, the recording categories used in the NSW client system are consistent with the standard, although are in an abbreviated form and in a different order.
- Queensland, Western Australia and South Australia include additional recording categories from the five standard categories in their client management systems. Queensland uses the categories of 'Not specified' and 'Unknown'. Western Australia uses the categories 'Either Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander' and 'Unknown'. South Australia uses the additional categories of 'Question not able to be asked' and 'Declined to answer'. These additional recording categories are mapped to the national standard for reporting to the AIHW for national collation.
- The Northern Territory uses the five national standard recoding categories on client forms (instead of the standard response options of Yes, No, Both) and in their information management system.
- It is believed that staff in service centres in Western Australia and Queensland may not always use the standard Indigenous status question.

Table 4.6: Jurisdictional practices in recording and reporting Indigenous status in the National Child Protection Data Collection, 2012

Jurisdiction	Input data				Output data	Comments
	Standard Indigenous status question	Standard response options	National standard recording categories	Additional recording categories for <i>Not stated/inadequately described</i>	Data mapped to national standard for submission to NMDS	
NSW	N	..	Y	N	Y	The NSW client system does not include the standard Indigenous status question. The recording categories used are consistent with the standard, although are in an abbreviated form and in a different order– (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, Aboriginal; Not Indigenous; Not stated; Torres Strait Islander).
Vic	Y	Y	Y	n.a.	Y	—
Qld	N	N	N	Y	Y	Although practice resources state that the key areas of 'Cultural identity' and whether a person is Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, neither or both, is to be explored with the notifier when gathering information at intake, there are no specific guidelines stipulating the question that should be asked to determine Indigenous status. There are five response options to record Indigenous status: Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander, Both, Neither and Unknown. The Department of Communities' Integrated Client Management System uses slightly different coding categories to the ABS standard; instead of the Not stated/ inadequately described category there are two separate categories for 'Not specified' and 'Unknown'.
WA	N	N	N	Y	Y	Client forms are not generated by WA's client information management system for government services (called Assist). Whether the standard Indigenous status question and response options are used for non-government services is dependent on the service collecting the information. The response categories available in Assist for the Indigenous status question include the five standard responses, as well as the options of Either Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander and Unknown.

(continued)

Table 4.6 (continued): Jurisdictional practices in recording and reporting Indigenous status in the National Child Protection Data Collection, 2012

Jurisdiction	Input data			Output data		Comments
	Standard Indigenous status question	Standard response options	National standard recording categories	Additional recording categories for <i>Not stated/inadequately described</i>	Data mapped to national standard for submission to NMDS	
SA	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	The available recording categories available in Connected Client Case Management System include the five standard categories, as well as the options of Question not able to be asked and Declined to answer.
Tas	Y	Y	Y	n.a.	Y	—
NT	Y	N	Y	N	Y	<p>Client forms ask the client to identify Indigenous status by selecting one of the following options</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aboriginal • Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander • Neither Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander • Not Stated • Torres Strait Islander <p>The Northern Territory Community Care Information System uses the same categories above for the Indigenous status of clients which is consistent with the standard.</p>

. . Not applicable. Hard copy forms are not used to record Indigenous status.

n.a. Information on whether additional recording categories for not stated/inadequately described are used by local systems was not available at the time of publication.

Note: No information was provided from the Australian Capital Territory regarding Indigenous status recording and reporting practices.

Staff training and support systems for collecting Indigenous status data

New South Wales

- Mandatory training is provided to Community Services caseworkers before receiving access to client systems.
- Support systems include casework practice information on the Community Services intranet, as well as Practice Solutions sessions in the workplace.

Queensland

- The Department of Communities' *Child Safety Practice Manual* specifies that at the 'Intake information gathering phase' the officer must record the Indigenous status of all clients in the Integrated Client Management System, so Child Safety can meet the legislative requirements of the *Child Protection Act 1999*.

Western Australia

- Child protection policy requires child protection workers to correctly identify the child's Aboriginal status in a 'Record of Child Information' for persons under 18 where the department has a significant/long-term involvement. Consultation occurs with the Aboriginal Practice Leader or other senior Aboriginal staff members to assist them with this process.
- Staff who are required to record data in the WA Department of Child Protection client information system (Assist) are trained comprehensively. In addition, district mentors and the Assist Support Desk are available to provide further training and support.
- The Aboriginal Engagement and Coordination Directorate provide training workshops for district Aboriginal Practice Leaders and Remote Community Child Protection Workers. Data collection is discussed in these workshops to ensure Indigenous children can be monitored.
- Resources are available to staff in a Casework Practice Manual, including *A Guide to Completing a Record of Child Information (ROCI) Form – Identity and Culture*, and *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Cultural Planning Prompt List*.

South Australia

- All staff at Families SA that use the Connected Client Case Management System are trained to ask the standard question on Indigenous status as part of creating clients, and Indigenous status is a mandatory field in SA's system. It is also covered in Connected Client Case Management System training for child protection workers as part of recording investigation information.

Tasmania

- A user manual for client management systems provides instructions to users for asking the standard Indigenous status question. However, there is a need to invest in staff training to ensure good data quality of Indigenous status for Child Protection clients in Tasmania. The *Outcomes for Aboriginal Children and Young People in Tasmania 2011* report, produced as part of the Kids Come First Project, recommended improvements in cultural competency training for staff, including 'specific training and monitoring of business processes for staff required to collect and record the Indigenous status of clients'.

Northern Territory

- All staff are required to undertake Indigenous cultural awareness training.
- Central Intake Teams have access to a cultural advisor who provides support to staff regarding Indigenous issues. Issues pertaining to Indigenous persons in the child protection system are included in an Information Gathering Guide.
- Child Abuse Taskforce Teams work in partnership with Aboriginal Community Resource Worker Teams when planning and implementing investigations.

Activities to improve Indigenous status data quality

The information in this section was provided by members of the PDWG.

Jurisdictional Indigenous data quality improvement activities

New South Wales

- In New South Wales, a number of measures have been implemented to ensure the quality of Indigenous status data:
 - Regional data co-ordinators located around NSW manage data remediation using a monthly cycle.
 - Targeted data quality reports are produced for Indigenous status where the mandatory field is showing the value of 'Not stated'. These purpose-built reports are updated on a nightly basis.
 - At the child's first notification (when their person record is created), 'Not stated' is a valid response. The field is further reviewed at the stages of investigation and entry to out-of-home care, where 'Not Stated' is no longer a valid option.

Western Australia

- In Western Australia, the design and implementation of the Assist client information system in 2010 enabled field officers to record a more comprehensive set of data regarding a person's Indigenous status than was previously possible. The design specifically catered for the collection of data consistent with the requirements of NCP Data Collection.

Tasmania

- In Tasmania, the implementation of a new Child Protection Information System in August 2010 allowed the recording of the Indigenous status of foster carers, where previously this information was not available. Data linkage work beginning in 2010–11 has also significantly reduced the number of clients with an unknown Indigenous status. This includes linkage with Education and Child Health data sets.

Northern Territory

- The Northern Territory Department of Children and Families introduced a feature in the Community Care Information System to improve the quality and currency of demographic data, including Indigenous status. This feature allows staff to be more confident in the validity of the data through the process of confirming a client's demographic details. In the Community Care Information System, if a case is created more than 3 days after the client registration, the user is prompted to confirm that

demographic information is correct and valid. This will help improve the quality of operational and management reports.

National Indigenous data quality improvement activities

From 2009–10 onwards, all aggregate child protection data are able to be disaggregated by the standard Indigenous status categories (Indigenous, non-Indigenous, unknown/not stated). Previously, a large number of data tables were restricted to the categories 'Indigenous' and 'Other' – that is, it was not possible to separate between non-Indigenous children and cases where Indigenous status was unknown/not stated. The new child protection unit record NMDS will also incorporate this provision.

Additional information related to data quality

Members of PDWG from different jurisdictions also provided information on the stage at which Indigenous status information is collected and recorded in a child protection case. This information is summarised below.

New South Wales

- Client records are created at the child's first notification at which Indigenous status is collected and not stated is a valid response. The field is further reviewed at investigation and entry to out-of-home care, where not stated is no longer accepted.

Victoria

- The Victorian Department of Human Services' Client Relationship Information System will implement a change in 2012 that will require child protection workers to complete, or else confirm, the Indigenous status of the client at each change of phase in the child protection case. Currently, Indigenous status is collected at notification (if known by the notifier), as well as at the investigation stage.

Queensland

- Indigenous status is initially collected at the intake stage and is reviewed throughout the subsequent phases of the child protection process.

Western Australia

- Indigenous status is recorded when the person is first recorded in the WA Department of Child Protection's Client Information system (Assist). The information can be updated at any time. For persons under the age of 18, Indigenous status may also be recorded in a 'Record of Child Information' that contributes to planning for the department's involvement with the person and their family.
- Department staff are required to consult the Aboriginal Practice Leaders or relevant Aboriginal officers in their district on cultural issues, with the aim of developing an effective assessment, client engagement and case management plan. Consultation with Aboriginal Practice Leaders or relevant Aboriginal officers can occur at multiple stages during the assessment of a child protection concern.
- The *Children and Community Services Act 2004* requires all Indigenous children in the Chief Executive Officer's care to be identified. However, families may not choose to identify themselves as Aboriginal, and field workers, or staff working for funded non-government organisations, may not have sufficient confidence to approach this subject during the initial referral process.

- The Assist client system is not programmed to make the recording of Indigenous status data mandatory – the default value being ‘not recorded’. As a result, the proportion of clients reported with an Indigenous status of unknown (which includes ‘not recorded’ is higher than with the previous client system.

South Australia

- Families SA Connected Client Case Management System asks the question about Indigenous status as part of creating a client in the system, and at the point of recording child protection investigation information.

Northern Territory

- Indigenous status is collected on the Client/Person demographic form only, and is not collected separately throughout the child protection process (for notifications, investigations or substantiations, and so forth).

Tasmania

- Indigenous status is collected primarily during the investigation stage. Indigenous status is reviewed upon admission to a care and protection order or to out-of-home care.

Summary of findings

- Nationally, the proportion of records in the NCP Data Collection with not stated Indigenous status has declined between 2005–06 and 2010–11 (after an increase from 2004–05 to 2005–06). Decreases were particularly notable for investigations (from 14.3% to 6.3%) and substantiations (from 9.5% to 3%). Rates declined from 1.5% to 0.6% for children under care and protection orders, and from 5.6% to 1% for children in out-of-home care.
- There continues to be great variation in the reporting of Indigenous status between jurisdictions. New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, and the Northern Territory generally had low rates of not stated Indigenous status (less than 4%) for all NCP data collections. In 2010–11, the highest rates were reported for Western Australia, in particular for investigations and substantiations, at 40% and 34% respectively. Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory also had relatively high rates of not stated Indigenous status compared with the other jurisdictions, however, they also had the greatest declines from 2004–05 to 2010–11.
- There is some variation in the stages of a child protection case at which Indigenous status data is collected and reviewed. For example, some jurisdictions collect this information only at the investigation stage, others at the notification and investigation stages, and others at all three stages. In most jurisdictions, Indigenous status is reviewed at more than one stage of the child protection process, and in some states Indigenous status is also reviewed upon admission to a care and protection order or to out-of-home care.
- Jurisdictions still vary in their use of the ABS standard for collecting and recording Indigenous status data. Some states and territories (for example, Victoria and Tasmania) collect and record data in accordance with the standard. Some states and territories may not always use the standard Indigenous status question and response options, but use the standard recording categories in their information systems. Other states and territories (Queensland, Western Australia and South Australia) include additional recording categories from the five standard categories in their client management

systems to identify records for follow-up that are able to be mapped to the standard categories for reporting to the national collection.

- Various activities are being undertaken in different jurisdictions to improve Indigenous data quality. At a national level, all aggregate child protection data are now able to be disaggregated by the standard Indigenous status categories (Indigenous, non-Indigenous, not stated), whereas this was not necessarily the case before 2009–10.

Recommendations for improvements to Indigenous status data quality

Recommendation 1

Jurisdictions that do not collect and record Indigenous status data in accordance with the national standard to consider making changes to client forms and information systems to be consistent with best practice as outlined in the *National best practice guidelines for collecting Indigenous status in health data sets* (see Appendix A). This could be addressed over time, and includes making changes to ensure that the Indigenous status data item is mandatory to record, in line with its status as a mandatory item in the new unit-record Child Protection National Minimum Data Set that will be implemented in mid-2013.

Recommendation 2

Indigenous status should be reviewed at each change of stage in the child protection process, and upon admission to a care and protection order or to out-of-home care.

Recommendation 3

Jurisdictions could consider a range of Indigenous data quality improvement strategies including:

- data linkage between the NCP Data Collection with other relevant data sets (for example, education and child health data sets) as a way to reduce the number of clients with an unknown Indigenous status
- staff training and strategies to support staff to correctly and consistently collect Indigenous status
- consultation with Indigenous authorities
- following up missing Indigenous status information.

Recommendation 4

Training materials should include a rationale for the collection of Indigenous status data, and reference the *National best practice guidelines for collecting Indigenous status in health data sets* (AIHW 2010).

5 Juvenile Justice National Minimum Data Set

Background

The Juvenile Justice National Minimum Data Set (JJ NMDS) contains information on all children and young people in Australia whom juvenile justice agencies supervise, both in the community and in detention. The data for the JJ NMDS are extracted from the administrative systems of the state and territory departments responsible for juvenile justice in Australia. The NMDS does not contain information on children and young people in the juvenile justice system who are not supervised (for example, young people on unsupervised bail), nor does it contain information on children and young people supervised by agencies other than juvenile justice agencies, such as the police.

Since the 2007 data quality report, the JJ NMDS has been redeveloped. It was initially developed between 2002 and 2004, and the first report containing data from the JJ NMDS published in 2006. This first version of the JJ NMDS contained information on only the most serious supervised legal arrangement or orders for each young person under juvenile justice supervision. In 2009, the JJ NMDS was redeveloped to capture all supervised legal arrangements and orders for young people under juvenile justice supervision, not just the most serious one. This version of the JJ NMDS (known as JJ NMDS 2009) enables a more complete analysis of the numbers and types of supervised orders that juvenile justice agencies administer.

There are a number of data quality issues that may affect the comparability of data between jurisdictions and over time. First, not all states and territories provided JJ NMDS data for 2009–10. Second, not all states and territories were able to provide JJ NMDS data in the new (JJ NMDS 2009) format for all years of the JJ NMDS (2000–01 to 2009–10). For example, complete data for Tasmania are only available from 2006–07, and Western Australia and the Northern Territory did not supply JJ NMDS data for 2008–09 to 2009–10. See *Juvenile justice in Australia 2009–10* (AIHW 2011b) for more information about JJ NMDS data quality.

Information on Indigenous status has been collected since the implementation of the national data collection, although some differences still exist in how jurisdictions collect the information. Not all jurisdictions use the recommended national standard question and standard codes for recording Indigenous status. However, a number of jurisdictions have recently taken steps to improve their data collection forms and information systems to be more in line with the national standard.

In the 2007 data quality report, JJ NMDS data were presented from 2001–02 to 2003–04. This report presents data from 2003–04 to 2009–10. It should be noted that data for 2003–04 differ between this report and the 2007 report due to data revisions.

Update on analysis results by Indigenous status

This section presents analyses of Indigenous status data in the JJ NMDS for 2003–04 and 2009–10. These data are reported by jurisdiction, age, sex, and legal status of the child. ‘Not stated’ is used to refer to missing/unknown/not stated Indigenous status information.

State and territory

Table 5.1 presents the rates of young people under juvenile justice supervision in each state and territory by Indigenous status for 2003–04 and 2009–10. Data for South Australia is not reported as data quality assurance processes are yet to be undertaken to confirm the validity of Indigenous status data after the implementation of a new client management system in 2009–10.

Table 5.1: Number and proportion of young people under juvenile justice supervision, by Indigenous status, by state and territory, Australia, 2003–04 and 2009–10

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
2003–04									
	Number								
Indigenous	1,092	186	1,115	934	n.p.	n.a.	54	246	4,032
Non-Indigenous	1,983	1,747	1,568	639	n.p.	n.a.	282	63	7,209
Not stated	238	0	10	154	n.p.	n.a.	1	1	482
Total	3,313	1,933	2,693	1,727	n.p.	n.a.	337	310	11,723
	Per cent								
Indigenous	33.0	9.6	41.4	54.1	n.p.	n.a.	16.0	79.4	34.4
Non-Indigenous	59.9	90.4	58.2	37.0	n.p.	n.a.	83.7	20.3	61.5
Not stated	7.2	0.0	0.4	8.9	n.p.	n.a.	0.3	0.3	4.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	n.p.	n.a.	100.0	100.0	100.0
2009–10									
	Number								
Indigenous	1,532	387	1,217	n.a.	n.p.	108	55	n.a.	3,677
Non-Indigenous	2,541	2,698	1,512	n.a.	n.p.	465	225	n.a.	8,259
Not stated	374	37	10	n.a.	n.p.	21	1	n.a.	537
Total	4,447	3122	2,739	n.a.	n.p.	594	281	n.a.	12,473
	Per cent								
Indigenous	34.5	12.4	44.4	n.a.	n.p.	18.2	19.6	n.a.	29.5
Non-Indigenous	57.1	86.4	55.2	n.a.	n.p.	78.3	80.1	n.a.	66.2
Not stated	8.4	1.2	0.4	n.a.	n.p.	3.5	0.4	n.a.	4.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	n.p.	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

n.a. not available

n.p. not published

Notes

1. Complete data for Tasmania are only available from 2006–07

2. Western Australia and the Northern Territory did not supply JJ NMDS data for 2009–10

Source: 2003–04 data—AIHW analysis of JJ NMDS (unpublished); 2009–10 data—AIHW 2011b.

In 2003–04:

- Nationally, 34.4% of young people under juvenile justice supervision were reported as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin, ranging from 9.6% in Victoria to 79.4% in the Northern Territory.

- The proportion of young people under supervision with not stated Indigenous status was less than 1% in Victoria, Queensland, Northern Territory, and the Australian Capital Territory, and was highest in Western Australia (8.9%).

In 2009–10:

- Nationally, 29.5% of young people under juvenile justice supervision were reported as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin, ranging from 12.4% in Victoria to 44.4% in Queensland (noting that data for Western Australia and the Northern Territory were not provided in 2009–10).
- The proportion of young people under supervision with not stated Indigenous status was 4.3% nationally; this was lowest in Queensland and the Australian Capital Territory, (0.4%) and highest in New South Wales (8.4%).

Age and sex

Table 5.2 shows the rates of young people aged 10 and over under juvenile justice supervision in 2003–04 and 2009–10, by age and Indigenous status.

In 2003–04:

- For children aged 10 to 13, there were higher proportions of Indigenous than non-Indigenous children under juvenile justice supervision, while for children aged 14 to 18 and over, the reverse was true.
- The proportion of children with not stated Indigenous status varied by age group; rates were less than 1% for children aged 10–13, and highest at 7% for those aged 17.

In 2009–10:

- For children aged 10 to 12, there were higher proportions of Indigenous than non-Indigenous children under juvenile justice supervision, while for children aged 13 to 18 and over, the reverse was true.
- Rates of not stated Indigenous status generally increased with age; for 10–12 year olds, they were relatively low (ranging from 0% to 1.5%), while for 17 year olds they were 5.5%.

Table 5.2: Number and proportion of young people under juvenile justice supervision, by Indigenous status and age, Australia, 2003–04 and 2009–10

Indigenous status	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18+	Total
2003–04	Number									
Indigenous	13	70	149	370	574	781	897	840	338	4,032
Non-Indigenous	5	26	100	275	700	1,302	1,857	1,900	1,044	7,209
Not stated	0	1	2	4	28	68	112	205	62	482
Total	18	97	251	649	1,302	2,151	2,866	2,945	1,444	11,723
	Per cent									
Indigenous	72.2	72.2	59.4	57.0	44.1	36.3	31.3	28.5	23.4	34.4
Non-Indigenous	27.8	26.8	39.8	42.4	53.8	60.5	64.8	64.5	72.3	61.5
Not stated	0.0	1.0	0.8	0.6	2.2	3.2	3.9	7.0	4.3	4.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(continued)

Table 5.2 (continued): Number and proportion of young people under juvenile justice supervision, by Indigenous status and age, Australia, 2003–04 and 2009–10

Indigenous status	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18+	Total
2009–10	Number									
Indigenous	8	43	102	276	506	739	859	756	388	3,677
Non-Indigenous	3	24	72	306	743	1,391	1,944	2,064	1,711	8,259
Not stated	0	1	2	20	50	91	149	164	60	537
Total	11	68	176	602	1,299	2,221	2,952	2,984	2,159	12,473
	Per cent									
Indigenous	72.7	63.2	58.0	45.8	39.0	33.3	29.1	25.3	18.0	29.5
Non-Indigenous	27.3	35.3	40.9	50.8	57.2	62.6	65.9	69.2	79.2	66.2
Not stated	0.0	1.5	1.1	3.3	3.8	4.1	5.0	5.5	2.8	4.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Notes

1. Total includes young people with unknown age
2. Age calculated as at start of financial year if first period of supervision in the relevant year began before the start of the financial year, otherwise age calculated as at start of first period of supervision in the relevant year.
3. Complete data for Tasmania are only available from 2006–07.
4. Western Australia and the Northern Territory did not supply JJ NMDS data for 2009–10.

Source: 2003–04 data—AIHW analysis of JJ NMDS (unpublished); 2009–10 data—AIHW 2011b

Table 5.3 shows the numbers and proportions of young men and women under juvenile justice supervision in 2003–04 and 2009–10, by Indigenous status.

In both 2003–04 and 2009–10:

- The proportion of young people under juvenile justice supervision who identified as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin was higher for females than males.
- The proportion of young people with not stated Indigenous status was slightly higher for females (4.9%) than males (3.9% in 2003–04 and 4% in 2009–10).

Table 5.3: Number and proportion of young people under juvenile justice supervision, by sex and Indigenous status, 2003–04 and 2009–10

	Male	Female	Total
2003–04	Number		
Indigenous	3,247	781	4,032
Non-Indigenous	6,200	1,005	7,209
Not stated	386	92	482
Total	9,833	1,878	11,723
	Per cent		
Indigenous	33.0	41.6	34.4
Non-Indigenous	63.1	53.5	61.5
Not stated	3.9	4.9	4.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

(continued)

Table 5.3 (continued): Number and proportion of young people under juvenile justice supervision, by sex and Indigenous status, 2003–04 and 2009–10

	Male	Female	Total
2009–10	Number		
Indigenous	2,927	750	3,677
Non-Indigenous	6,963	1,288	8,259
Not stated	413	104	537
Total	10,303	2,142	12,473
	Per cent		
Indigenous	28.4	35.0	29.5
Non-Indigenous	67.6	60.1	66.2
Not stated	4.0	4.9	4.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Notes

1. Complete data for Tasmania are only available from 2006–07

2. Western Australia and the Northern Territory did not supply JJ NMDS data for 2008–09 to 2009–10

Source: 2003–04 data—AIHW analysis of JJ NMDS (unpublished); 2009–10 data—AIHW 2011b

Legal status

Table 5.4 presents the number and proportion of young people under community-based supervision and detention by legal status and Indigenous status in 2003–04 and 2009–10.

In 2003–04:

- About one-third (34.4%) of young people under sentenced community-based supervision and 42.1% of those in sentenced detention were identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.
- Rates of not stated Indigenous status were highest for young people under sentenced community-based supervision (4.5%), followed by those under unsentenced community-based supervision (1.8%). The rate of not stated Indigenous status for those in sentenced detention was 1.5%.

In 2009–10:

- About 30% of young people sentenced under community-based supervision and 40% of those sentenced under detention were identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.
- Rates of not stated Indigenous status were highest for young people who were sentenced under community-based supervision (4.7%).
- Rates of not stated Indigenous status were relatively low for those under detention, at 2.2% and 1% for unsentenced and sentenced cases, respectively.

Table 5.4: Young people under community-based supervision and detention during the year, by Indigenous status and legal status, Australia, 2003-04 and 2009-10

Type of supervision	Number				Per cent			
	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	Not stated	Total	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	Not stated	Total
2003-04 ^(a)								
Community-based supervision								
Unsentenced	383	964	24	1,371	27.9	70.3	1.8	100.0
Sentenced	3,286	5,848	432	9,566	34.4	61.1	4.5	100.0
Other	11	17	0	28	39.3	60.7	0.0	100.0
Detention								
Unsentenced	1,767	2176	60	4,003	44.1	54.4	1.5	100.0
Sentenced	613	823	20	1,456	42.1	56.5	1.4	100.0
Other	11	6	0	17	64.7	35.3	0.0	100.0
2009-10 ^(b)								
Community-based supervision								
Unsentenced	732	1970	62	2,764	26.5	71.3	2.2	100.0
Sentenced	2,999	6,341	457	9,797	30.6	64.7	4.7	100.0
Other	10	15	1	26	38.5	57.7	3.8	100.0
Detention								
Unsentenced	1,623	2,713	96	4,432	36.6	61.2	2.2	100.0
Sentenced	588	854	15	1,457	40.4	58.6	1.0	100.0
Other	6	3	0	9	66.7	33.3	0.0	100.0

(a) Excludes Tasmania as complete JJ NMDS data for Tasmania are only available from 2006-07.

(b) Excludes Western Australia and the Northern Territory as these jurisdictions did not supply JJ NMDS data for 2009-10

Notes

1. Number of unsentenced and sentenced young people may not sum to total number of young people as the legal status of some young people may have changed during the year.
2. Number of young people under community-based supervision and in detention may not sum to total number of young people under supervision as some young people may have been under both community-based supervision and in detention during the same year.
3. Unsentenced community-based supervision is not available in Tasmania.
4. For detention in Tasmania, young people on concurrent sentenced and unsentenced orders are recorded as being on a sentenced order.
5. 'Other' legal status refers to cases where there is a type of legal arrangement not elsewhere classified.

Source: AIHW analysis of JJ NMDS (unpublished)

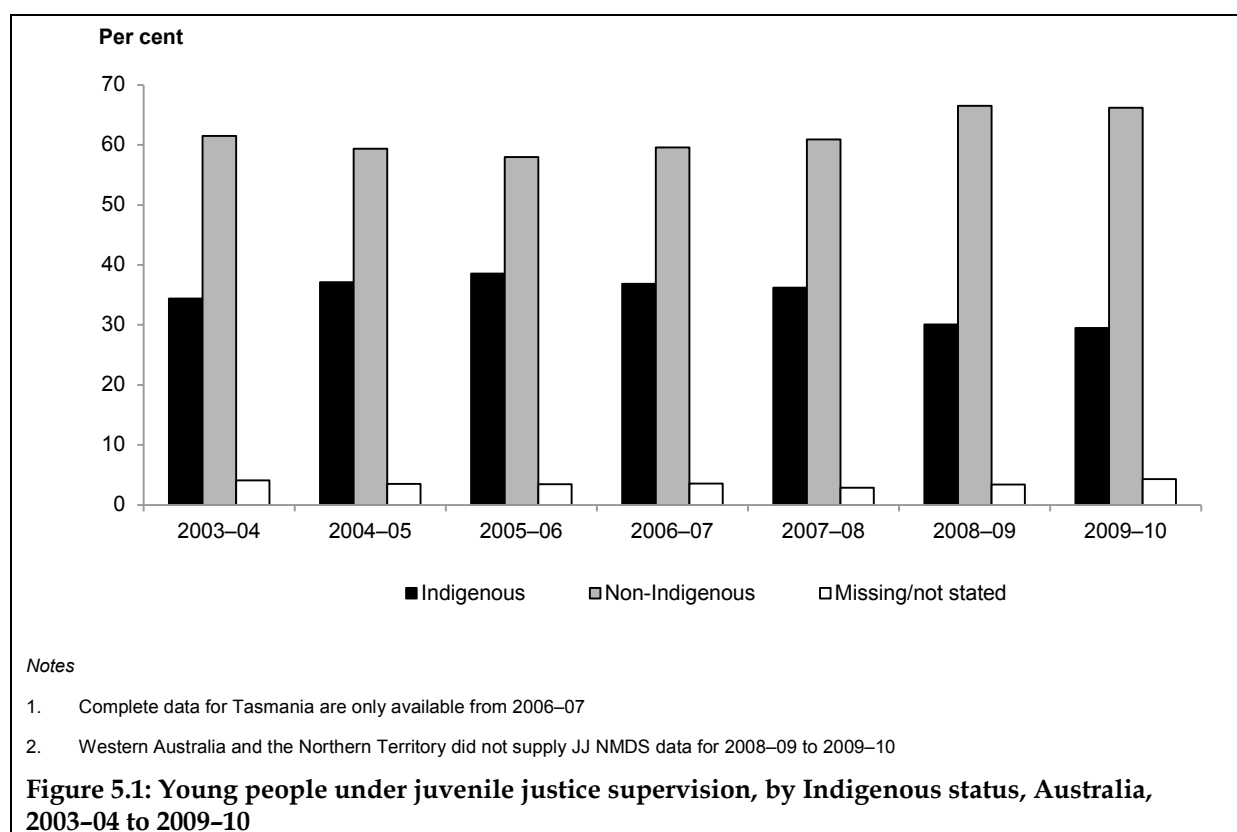
Changes in rates of not stated Indigenous status

National

Figure 5.1 shows the national proportions of young people under juvenile justice supervision disaggregated by Indigenous status from 2003–04 to 2009–10.

Note that Figure 5.1 excludes Tasmania from 2003–04 to 2005–06, and Western Australia and the Northern Territory for 2008–09 and 2009–10 as data were not available for these years.

When Tasmania, Western Australia, and the Northern Territory are excluded from analysis over the entire 7 years, the proportions of not stated Indigenous status are fairly similar to when these data are included. This reflects the fact that rates for Western Australia and the Northern Territory are fairly stable (and relatively low) in the immediate years before 2008–09, and the numbers for Tasmania are very small and therefore will not have much of an impact on the national rates. However, as Western Australia and Northern Territory significantly contribute to the number of Indigenous young people under juvenile justice supervision, changes over time in the proportion of Indigenous young people should be interpreted with caution.



Between 2003–04 and 2009–10:

- The proportion of young people under juvenile justice supervision who identified as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin fluctuated, increasing between 2003–04 and 2005–06 (from 34.4% to 38.6%), and gradually decreasing to 29.5% in 2009–10.
- There was an increase in the proportion of non-Indigenous young people under supervision, from 61.5% in 2003–04 to 66.2% in 2009–10.
- Rates of not stated Indigenous status generally remained stable over the 7 years, ranging from 2.9% in 2007–08 to 4.3% in 2009–10.

State/territory

Table 5.5 shows the proportions of young of people under juvenile justice supervision in each jurisdiction with not stated Indigenous status between 2003–04 and 2009–10.

Data for Tasmania are available from 2006–07 only and data for Western Australia and the Northern Territory are available for 2003–04 to 2007–08 (they did not supply JJ NMDS data for 2008–09 or 2009–10). Data for South Australia is not reported as data quality assurance processes are yet to be undertaken to confirm the validity of Indigenous status data following the implementation of a new client management system in 2009–10.

Table 5.5: Proportion of young people under supervision during the year with not stated Indigenous status, states and territories, 2003–04 to 2009–10 (per cent)

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Australia
2003–04	7.2	0.0	0.4	8.9	n.p.	-	0.3	0.3	4.1
2004–05	6.6	0.5	0.2	5.5	n.p.	-	0.0	0.0	3.5
2005–06	6.5	4.4	0.1	1.6	n.p.	-	0.0	0.0	3.5
2006–07	7.2	4.0	0.0	0.6	n.p.	7.0	0.0	0.3	3.6
2007–08	6.6	0.1	0.1	1.2	n.p.	6.6	0.9	0.4	2.9
2008–09	7.0	0.3	0.0	-	n.p.	5.3	0.0	-	3.4
2009–10	8.4	1.2	0.4	-	n.p.	3.5	0.4	-	4.3

n.p. not published

Notes

1. Complete data for Tasmania are only available from 2006–07
2. Western Australia and the Northern Territory did not supply JJ NMDS data for 2008–09 to 2009–10

Source: AIHW analysis of JJ NMDS (unpublished)

Between 2003–04 and 2009–10 there was great variation by jurisdiction in the proportion of young people under juvenile justice supervision with not stated Indigenous status:

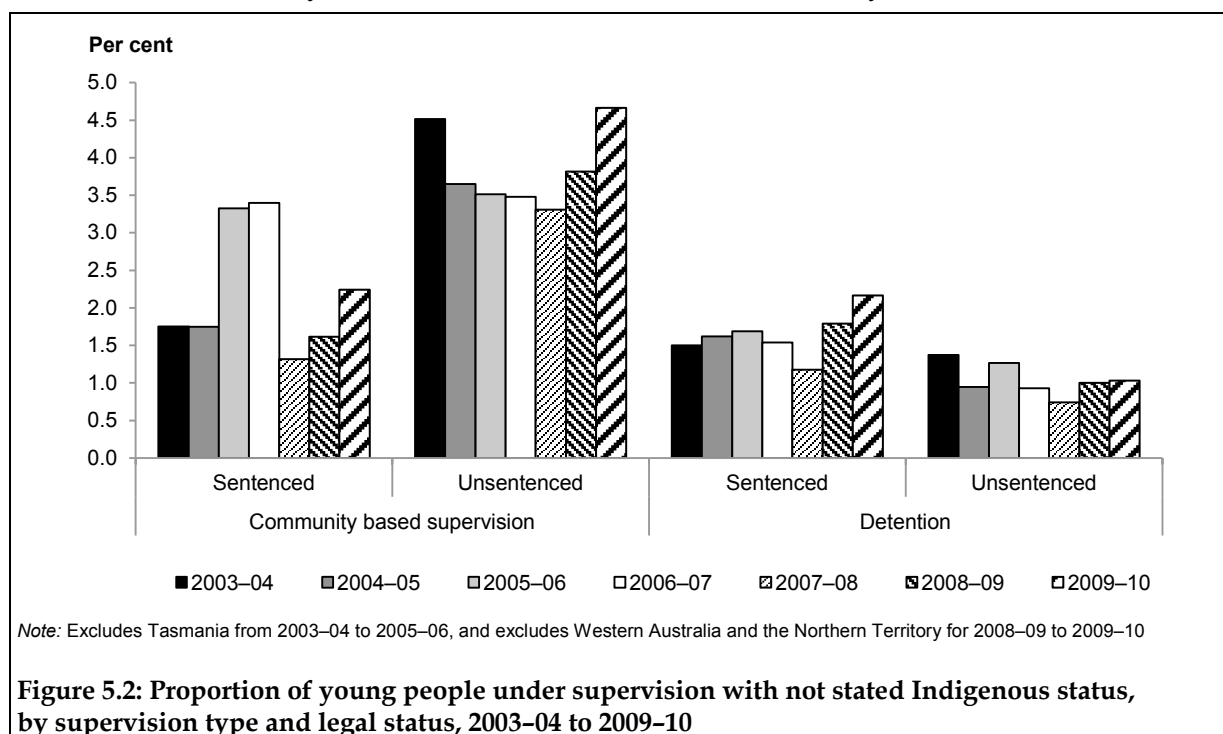
- In New South Wales, the proportion fluctuated between 6.5% and 8.4%.
- In Victoria, rates decreased from about 4% in 2004–05 and 2005–06 to less than 1% in 2007–08 and 2008–09. The rate in 2009–10 was 1.2%.
- In Western Australia, there was a marked decrease in the proportion, which declined from 8.9% in 2003–04 to 1.2% in 2007–08 (noting that WA did not supply JJ NMDS data for 2008–09 and 2009–10).
- In Queensland, the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory, rates remained less than 1% over the 7 years.

Legal status

Figure 5.2 shows the rates of not stated Indigenous status among young people under community based supervision and in detention, by legal status, between 2003–04 and 2009–10.

Between 2003–04 and 2009–10:

- For young people under sentenced community-based supervision, rates fluctuated between 1.3% and 3.4%, being lowest in 2007–08 and highest in 2006–07.
- For young people under unsentenced community-based supervision, rates decreased between 2003–04 and 2006–07 (from 4.5% to 3.5%), and then increased to 4.7% in 2009–10.
- For young people in sentenced detention, there was a slight overall increase in rates from 1.5% in 2003–04 to 2.2% in 2009–10. For those in unsentenced detention, these rates remained relatively stable, between 0.7% and 1.4% over the 7 years.



Update on data collection and reporting practices

This section provides information on the current collection and reporting practices for the JJ NMDS regarding Indigenous status information, as well as staff training and support systems in place to facilitate the accuracy of data collection. It focuses on any inconsistencies between current practices of juvenile justice agencies and the national standard for collecting and recording Indigenous status.

The *National best practice guidelines for collecting Indigenous status in health data sets* were disseminated by the AIHW to members of the Juvenile Justice Research and Information Group (JJ RIG) in November 2011. Members of JJ RIG were asked to review the current practices for collecting information on the Indigenous status of children in the JJ NMDS and to document whether these are consistent with the best practice approaches in the guidelines. Members were also asked to provide details of any staff training and support systems in place to assist juvenile justice case workers to ask the standard question on Indigenous status. Findings from this exercise are outlined in the following sections.

Indigenous status question, response categories and recording practices

Table 5.6 shows whether jurisdictional practices for collecting and recording Indigenous status data are consistent with the national standard.

In this table, 'Input data' refers to whether the ABS standard Indigenous status question is asked of clients to establish their Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander or non-Indigenous status ('Are you [is the person] of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin?'); whether the standard response options are provided to clients to answer the question (No; Yes; Yes, Torres Strait Islander; Yes both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander); and whether information systems use the five national standard categories for recording Indigenous status (1. *Aboriginal but not Torres Strait Islander origin* 2. *Torres Strait Islander but not Aboriginal origin*. 3. *Both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin*. 4. *Neither Aboriginal nor Torres Strait Islander origin*. 9. *Not stated/inadequately described*). A column is also included to indicate whether local data management systems use additional categories for 9. *Not stated/inadequately described*, for the purposes of identifying records for follow-up (that is, to identify if the client declined to respond, and for situations where it was impossible for the question to be asked during the contact episode).

'Output data' refers to whether the jurisdiction's coding categories can be mapped to the five national standard recording categories for submission to the national collection (JJ NMDS).

- Victoria, Tasmania and the Northern Territory currently collect and record Indigenous status data in accordance with the national standard.
- Western Australia does not currently use the standard Indigenous status question, response options or coding categories. The Indigenous status question asked is 'Do you identify as Aboriginal?' with the response options of Yes or No. Indigenous status is recorded in data systems under a single category of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander instead of the three standard categories – Aboriginal but not Torres Strait Islander, Torres Strait Islander but not Aboriginal, and Neither Aboriginal nor Torres Strait Islander.
- Queensland and the Australian Capital Territory collect Indigenous status data using the standard question. Their information systems include additional recording categories for *Not stated/inadequately described*: Queensland includes 'Unspecified' and 'Unknown' and

ACT includes 'Unknown' as well as 'Not stated'. These are able to be mapped to the five national standard recording categories for reporting to the AIHW for the JJ NMDS.

Table 5.6: Jurisdictional practices in recording and reporting Indigenous status in the JJ NMDS, 2012

Jurisdiction	Input data				Output data	Comments
	Standard Indigenous status question	Standard response options	National standard recording categories	Additional recording categories for <i>Not stated/inadequately described</i>	Data mapped to national standard for submission to NMDS	
Vic	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	–
Qld	Y	..	N	Y	Y	The standard Indigenous status question is asked. All Youth Justice forms are based on the Indigenous status information recorded in the client's profile. The recording categories in Queensland's Information System are Aboriginal but not Torres Strait Islander, Torres Strait Islander but not Aboriginal, Both Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander, Neither Aboriginal nor Torres Strait Islander, Not specified, and Unknown. Data sent to AIHW are re-categorised to reflect the standard categories and codes.
WA	N	N	N	N	N	The standard Indigenous status question, response options and recording categories are not used. Instead, the Indigenous status question asked is 'Do you identify as Aboriginal?' with the response options of Yes or No. Indigenous status is recorded in data systems under a single category of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.
Tas	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	The standard ABS question is included in the Confirming Indigenous Status practice guide, which should be referenced by all Youth Justice Workers and data entry officers. In addition, the standard question and response categories are included on the community conference and Ashley Youth Detention Centre admission forms.
ACT	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	The current form used by Community Youth Justice case managers has recently been reviewed and amended to be in line with the national standard. For ACT detention data collected at the Bimberi Youth Justice Centre, young people are asked to identify their cultural status during the induction interview process. The options are: Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, Neither Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, Other (give details). The recording categories used by the Community Youth Justice data systems are:: Aboriginal but not Torres Strait Islander, Both, Not Indigenous, Not stated, Torres Strait Islander but not Aboriginal, Unknown.
NT	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	The community corrections intake form used in NT previously only had a single tick box for 'Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander' only. NT Correctional Services Centres has now amended the intake forms to collect the information to in line with the ABS standard. Indigenous status data in NT's Integrated Offender Management System is coded in line with the ABS standard.

.. Not applicable

Note: No information was provided by NSW or SA

Staff training and support systems for collecting Indigenous status data

Victoria

- Staff are trained to ask the standard Indigenous status question during 'Beginning Practice' (induction training in Victoria). There have also been practice instructions distributed to staff since 2007 to improve compliance with recording and reporting Indigenous status.

Queensland

- Systems training is provided to staff members, which focuses on how and where to capture the Indigenous status for young people. Details on how and where to enter the Indigenous status is also contained in the Integrated Client Management System – Youth Justice Participant Manual.
- Conferencing staff members also undertake practice training to ask the standard question on Indigenous status at the first pre-conference interview to validate information provided via the referral source. Some of these referrals are police referrals; therefore, information is initially provided by the police, captured in Queensland's information system, and validated by youth justice staff.

Western Australia

- Youth Justice Services in WA provide comprehensive Core Operational Training to juvenile justice workers, which is based on 'best practice'. The task of asking the question on Indigenous status is covered, and applied to a range of training modules. Juvenile justice officers are trained to ask the young person if they identify as an Indigenous person and not make assumptions based on appearance.
- Youth Justice Centres are staffed with Aboriginal Team Advisors and other Indigenous workers who provide support and advice to juvenile justice workers on matters related to working and engaging with Indigenous young people and their families.

Tasmania

- The Aboriginal Health Unit within the Department of Health and Human Services runs Aboriginal Cultural Competence Training, which includes how to ask the question and how to present the office or interview room to best facilitate disclosure of Indigenous status. This training is now a requirement of the draft Youth Justice Beginning Practice induction package, thus ensuring all youth justice workers are trained in how to ask the question.

Australian Capital Territory

- The collection of Indigenous status data is covered as part of each case manager's induction training. Staff also participate in Indigenous Cultural Awareness Training.
- Improvements to training packages will be made to standardise and formalise how staff are trained in asking the Indigenous Status question and to improve their understanding about why Indigenous status data are collected.

Northern Territory

- As part of staff induction, cultural awareness training is provided to all new officers in Correctional Services Centres and Juvenile Detention Centres, and all new probation and parole officers.

Activities to improve Indigenous status data quality

This section provides information on the progress made by jurisdictions to improve the quality of Indigenous data in the JJ NMDS since the 2007 data quality report. This information was provided by the Juvenile Justice Research and Information Group.

Jurisdictional activities

Victoria

- There have been efforts to improve the recording and reporting of Indigenous status in Victoria's Client Relationship Information System. While it is not a mandatory field in the system, managers and team leaders place high priority on ensuring this field is completed for every young person subject to youth justice supervision.

Queensland

- At the agency level, data relating to the identification of Indigenous persons have undergone weekly quality reporting and remediation from 2004 until August 2011.
- In August 2011, Queensland transitioned to a new information system for managing youth justice client data. Data quality management of these data from the new system is planned for the rest of the 2011–12 financial year. Indigenous status will be one of the focal points for ensuring data quality with specific data quality procedures are implemented in time to support the 2012 JJ NMDS.
- After initial data entry, data quality processes are implemented. This includes the cleaning of data already entered and/or missing by a corporate data management unit. When necessary, data quality errors may be referred back to youth justice workers for correction.
- At the jurisdictional level, caseworkers are advised of the need to ensure all personal information is gathered and completed as per the Integrated Client Management System – Youth Justice Participant Manual.

South Australia

- In 2009–10, South Australia implemented a new Connected Client Case Management System that was realigned to the national standard question and standard codes for recording Indigenous status. Before 2009–10 there were only two categories used in the data information system for reporting Indigenous status. South Australia will undertake data quality assurance processes to confirm the validity of Indigenous status data reported before and since the new system was implemented.

Western Australia

- The development of a new juvenile justice information management system is under way, with completion expected in 2012–2013. Although it is anticipated that Indigenous status data will initially be recorded similarly to current practices (only one single category for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander), the new system should provide

increased opportunity to introduce more disaggregated recording of this data at some stage in the future.

Tasmania

- A practice guide describing how to confirm the Indigenous status of young people known to youth justice was completed during 2011 and made available to youth justice workers in January 2012. The guide comprises detailed practice requirements and procedures, including how to ask the question based on the standard question and response categories, and links to more detail on the ABS website and considerations for good practice. The use of this practice guide is expected to improve the quality of Indigenous data reported by Tasmania in the JJ NMDS from 2012 onwards.

Australian Capital Territory

- The current form used by community youth justice case managers to collect information on young people under supervision has recently been reviewed and amended to be in line with the *National best practice guidelines for collecting Indigenous status data*.
- Custodial forms were reviewed and amended in line with the introduction of the *Children & Young People Act 2008* and the opening of Bimberi Youth Justice Centre.
- As part of legislation in the *Children and Young People Act (2008)*, the Notifiable Instrument, *Children and Young People (Admission and Classification) Policy and Procedures 2008* outlines that during the induction interview, the young detainee's cultural background, including whether the young detainee identifies as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, must be obtained. It also states that staff must never assume the nationality and/or cultural background of a young detainee based on their appearance or other reason. Staff must ask every young detainee about their nationality and/or cultural identity.
- As part of the Bimberi Integrated Management System now being developed, Bimberi forms are being reviewed and fields, including those related to cultural status, are being standardised.

Northern Territory

- Staff from the Northern Territory Correctional Services Centres and Juvenile Detention Centres enter an offender's Indigenous status directly into the Integrated Offender Management System. The previous intake form used in this system had only a single response option for the Indigenous status question ('Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander'). Northern Territory Correctional Services has now amended the intake forms to collect the information in line with the ABS standard.
- Probation and parole officers have access to information from the courts, the Integrated Justice Information System, Integrated Offender Management System and the NT Department of Justice records. As a quality assurance measure, if probation and parole officers detect incorrect information entered into the Integrated Offender Management System (from the Integrated Justice Information System) they amend the information accordingly.

Additional information related to data quality

In Tasmania, between 2008 and 2011 data entry officers were entering young people's Indigenous status as 'Non-Indigenous' when their Indigenous status was actually 'Not-stated/inadequately described', with the intention of the youth justice worker overwriting

this status if they later learnt that the young person identified as Indigenous. Although this practice has now been ceased, some uncertainty remains around the accuracy of Indigenous statuses recorded in Tasmania during this period.

Summary of findings

- Nationally, the proportion of records in the JJ NMDS with not stated Indigenous status has remained relatively stable between 2003–04 and 2009–10, ranging from 2.9% in 2007–08 to 4.3% in 2009–10. Rates of not stated Indigenous status were highest for young people under sentenced community-based supervision (4.7%) and lowest for those in sentenced detention (1%) in 2009–10.
- There continues to be great variation in the reporting of Indigenous status between jurisdictions. Queensland and the Australian Capital Territory had the lowest rates of not stated Indigenous status in 2009–10 at 0.4%, and New South Wales had the highest rates at 8.4%. Since 2003–04, rates of not stated Indigenous status have declined in some jurisdictions (for example, Western Australia and Tasmania), increased in others (for example, New South Wales), and remained relatively stable in others (for example, Queensland, the Australian Capital Territory, and the Northern Territory).
- Jurisdictions still vary in their use of the ABS standard for collecting and recording Indigenous status data. Western Australia does not use the standard Indigenous status question, and Indigenous status is recorded in data systems under a single category of 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander'. Queensland and the Australian Capital Territory include additional recording categories from the five standard categories in their client management systems to identify records for follow-up that are able to be re-categorised to reflect the national standard categories for submission to the JJ NMDS. A number of jurisdictions have recently taken steps to improve their data collection forms and information systems to be more in line with the national standard.

Recommendations for improvements to Indigenous status data quality

Recommendation 1

Jurisdictions that do not currently collect and record Indigenous status data in accordance with the national standard to consider making changes to client forms and information systems to be consistent with best practice as outlined in the *National best practice guidelines for collecting Indigenous status in health data sets* (see Appendix A).

Recommendation 2

Jurisdictions that do not currently provide staff training to juvenile justice workers on how to ask the question on Indigenous status, and its importance, to consider implementing such training.

Recommendation 3

Training materials should include a rationale for the collection of Indigenous status data, and reference the *National best practice guidelines for collecting Indigenous status in health data sets* (AIHW 2010).

6 Home and Community Care Minimum Data Set

Background

The Home and Community Care (HACC) Program provides funding for services supporting people who live at home with decreased capacity for independent living, or who are at risk of premature or inappropriate admission to long-term residential care. The program is an initiative jointly funded by the Australian Government (contributing about 60% of program funds) and state and territory governments. While the Australian Government's role is to provide national leadership for policy development and to improve the program's effectiveness and efficiency, state and territory governments have been responsible for the administration of the program and service provision within their jurisdiction.

Data for version 1 of the HACC Minimum Data Set (MDS) (v1.0) have been collected quarterly since July 2001. Version 2 of the HACC MDS (v2.0) was implemented from 1 January 2006. HACC MDS data are collected on individual clients by HACC-funded service providers, either electronically or via paper forms in a quarterly collection cycle. The submission of HACC MDS information is on the basis of informed client consent. With respect to Indigenous status data, the difference between v1.0 and v2.0 of the HACC MDS is a coding change (to be consistent with the ABS standard), as well as the collection of the Indigenous status of the carer. In this chapter, Indigenous status data quality is analysed for clients and carers.

A number of data quality issues should be taken into consideration when interpreting the data in this chapter. For example, participation rates – both of individual clients and of agencies – affect the coverage of the HACC MDS. In terms of individual clients, they can choose not to provide their data for MDS reporting, only services to individuals (that is, not groups) are recorded, and some clients may be assisted anonymously (for example, by telephone where identification is not required). In terms of agency participation rates, all agencies are required to report HACC MDS data, however, this is not achieved in practice. Agency participation rates vary between jurisdictions and the actual levels of service provision may be understated.

HACC MDS v2.0 – which collects carer demographics – was first collected in 2005–06. During 2005–06 and 2006–07, HACC data could be submitted in either v1.0 or v2.0 MDS format. Data submitted in v1.0 format was then converted to v2.0. Consequently, carer demographic data in 2005–06 and 2006–07 is incomplete, and it is not possible to distinguish between data that is missing because the records were submitted in v1.0 and those that were submitted in v2.0 without carer demographics. Consequently, carer data are reported in this chapter only from 2007–08 onwards. Also, the large proportion of missing information on carer availability in HACC may mean that the number of HACC carers of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin is underestimated. Improvement in the collection of data on carers may improve the count of Indigenous carers.

The 2007 data quality report reported HACC client data for 2002 and 2004 that used v1.0 of the HACC MDS. This chapter presents client data for 2005–06 (the first year for which HACC MDS v2.0 was used), and 2010–11 (the latest year for which data are available). Carer data is reported for 2007–08 to 2010–11 (data before 2007–08 is considered incomplete). It should be

noted that the data in this chapter will not necessarily match that in the publically available Report on Government Services (RoGS) produced by the Productivity Commission and other reports. Historically, there have been slight differences in the data reported by the Department of Health and Ageing and the AIHW. These differences can be attributed, in part, to slightly different aggregation rules, and to the fact that AIHW data are based on state/territory of the client, whereas RoGS data are generally based on state/territory of the service provider.

Update on analysis results by Indigenous status

This section presents analyses of Indigenous status data in the HACC MDS for clients (by jurisdiction and assistance type) in 2005–06 and 2010–11, and carers (by jurisdiction) in 2007–08 and 2010–11. Also, HACC usage rates by age group and jurisdiction are presented for the Indigenous population.

State and territory

When interpreting the data in this section, it should be taken into consideration that business processes differ between jurisdictions, which can affect the MDS. These variations in state and territory service and data provision are the result of several factors, including program funding levels, jurisdictional differences in HACC MDS reporting, and local business rules for data acceptance in state data repositories and the Australian Government's data warehouse. In particular, Victoria differs to other jurisdictions in the types of services included in the MDS; data on transport, home modification, other food services, or formal linen services are not available. Also, the ways in which jurisdictions define what constitutes an agency can differ, and thus affect the scope of the collection (DoHA 2010).

Client data

Tables 6.1 and 6.2 present the number and proportion of HACC clients by Indigenous status for each state and territory in 2005–06 and 2010–11 respectively.

In 2005–06:

- Nationally, 2.1% of HACC clients identified as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin. This proportion was highest in the Northern Territory (37.1%) and lowest in the Australian Capital Territory (0.9%).
- 16.2% of HACC clients had not stated Indigenous status. This rate was reasonably high in all jurisdictions, ranging from 11.2% in Victoria and Tasmania to 24.2% in South Australia.
- A high proportion of clients recorded as having state of residence information not stated or as residing in external territories (labelled as 'Other' in the tables 6.1 and 6.2) also had a high proportion of not stated Indigenous status information (28.8%).

Table 6.1: Number and proportion of HACC clients, by Indigenous status, by state and territory of client, HACC MDS, 2005–06^(a), linked client data

Indigenous status	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Other ^(b)	Australia
Number										
Indigenous	4,764	2,177	3,140	2,321	1,202	435	147	1,782	201	16,169
Non-Indigenous	161,880	192,828	114,621	58,598	62,404	23,831	12,790	2,242	5,971	635,165
Missing/not stated	26,738	24,677	37,168	8,477	20,256	3,051	2,597	777	2,491	126,232
Total	193,382	219,682	154,929	69,396	83,862	27,317	15,534	4,801	8,663	777,566
Per cent										
Indigenous	2.5	1.0	2.0	3.3	1.4	1.6	0.9	37.1	2.3	2.1
Non-Indigenous	83.7	87.8	74.0	84.4	74.4	87.2	82.3	46.7	68.9	81.7
Missing/not stated	13.8	11.2	24.0	12.2	24.2	11.2	16.7	16.2	28.8	16.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) The HACC MDS dataset supplied for 2005–06 includes an additional 95 records to those included in the HACC MDS annual statistical bulletin, after records for clients who did not receive any services have been removed.

(b) 'Other' covers records where the client's state is recorded as 9, the code for external territories. However, additional data in the records indicates that, for a large proportion of these, the code 9 has been used to represent 'Not stated'. No attempt has been made to impute the state from postcode or locality data included in records.

Note: Client tables include carers who have received HACC assistance in their role as a carer.

Source: AIHW analysis of HACC MDS data (unpublished)

In 2010–11:

- Nationally, 2.6% of HACC clients identified as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin. This proportion was highest in the Northern Territory (41%) and lowest in Victoria (0.9%).
- 6.9% of HACC clients had not stated Indigenous status, ranging from 4.8% in New South Wales to 9.6% in South Australia and the Northern Territory.
- A high proportion of clients recorded as having state of residence information not stated or as residing in external territories (labelled as 'Other') also had a high proportion of not stated Indigenous status information (61.3%). However, it should be noted that the number of clients in the 'Other' jurisdiction category was fairly small (137).

Table 6.2: Number and proportion of HACC clients, by Indigenous status, by state and territory of client, HACC MDS, 2010–11, linked client data

Indigenous status	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Other ^(a)	Australia
Number										
Indigenous	9,564	2,554	5,152	2,472	2,142	485	169	1,646	4	24,188
Non-Indigenous	245,964	248,175	158,584	62,703	86,580	25,485	11,829	1,980	49	841,349
Missing/not stated	13,010	22,552	12,574	3,434	9,426	2,077	1,008	385	84	64,550
Total	268,538	273,281	176,310	68,609	98,148	28,047	13,006	4,011	137	930,087
Per cent										
Indigenous	3.6	0.9	2.9	3.6	2.2	1.7	1.3	41.0	2.9	2.6
Non-Indigenous	91.6	90.8	89.9	91.4	88.2	90.9	91.0	49.4	35.8	90.5
Missing/not stated	4.8	8.3	7.1	5.0	9.6	7.4	7.8	9.6	61.3	6.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) 'Other' covers records where the client's state is recorded as 9, the code for external territories. However, additional data in the records indicates that, for a large proportion of these, the code 9 has been used to represent 'Not stated'. No attempt has been made to impute the state from postcode or locality data included in records.

Note: Client tables include carers who have received HACC assistance in their role as a carer.

Source: AIHW analysis of HACC MDS data (unpublished)

Carer data

Table 6.3 presents numbers and proportions of HACC carers in 2007–08 and 2010–11 by Indigenous status for each state and territory.

Table 6.3: Number and proportion of HACC carers^(a), by Indigenous status, by carer state and territory, HACC MDS, 2007–08 and 2010–11, linked client data

Indigenous status	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Other ^(b)	Australia
2007–08										
Number										
Indigenous	629	236	1,339	663	458	84	23	572	11	4,015
Non-Indigenous	19,360	37,400	42,679	15,751	13,860	4,150	1,097	773	1,449	136,519
Missing/not stated	37,266	21,600	2,478	2,471	5,312	1,930	1,535	44	28,596	101,232
Total	57,255	59,236	46,496	18,885	19,630	6,164	2,655	1,389	30,056	241,766
Per cent										
Indigenous	1.1	0.4	2.9	3.5	2.3	1.4	0.9	41.2	0.0	1.7
Non-Indigenous	33.8	63.1	91.8	83.4	70.6	67.3	41.3	55.7	4.8	56.5
Missing/not stated	65.1	36.5	5.3	13.1	27.1	31.3	57.8	3.2	95.1	41.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(continued)

Table 6.3 (continued): Number and proportion of HACC carers^(a), by Indigenous status, by carer state and territory, HACC MDS, 2007–08 and 2010–11, linked client data

Indigenous status	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Other ^(b)	Australia
2010–11										
	Number									
Indigenous	1,122	292	2,199	689	484	87	43	675	11	5,602
Non-Indigenous	39,204	39,729	51,923	15,981	16,167	4,511	1,559	1,118	551	170,743
Missing/not stated	14,111	19,207	1,566	3,461	5,555	991	1,361	77	15,991	62,320
Total	54,437	59,228	55,688	20,131	22,206	5,589	2,963	1,870	16,553	238,665
	Per cent									
Indigenous	2.1	0.5	3.9	3.4	2.2	1.6	1.5	36.1	0.1	2.3
Non-Indigenous	72.0	67.1	93.2	79.4	72.8	80.7	52.6	59.8	3.3	71.5
Missing/not stated	25.9	32.4	2.8	17.2	25.0	17.7	45.9	4.1	96.6	26.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) Includes only those records where it is known that the client had a carer.

(b) 'Other' covers records where the client's state is recorded as 9, the code for external territories. However, additional data in the records indicates that, for a large proportion of these, the code 9 has been used to represent 'Not stated'. No attempt has been made to impute the state from postcode or locality data included in records.

Source: AIHW analysis of HACC MDS data (unpublished)

In 2007–08:

- Nationally, 1.7% of HACC carers identified as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin. This proportion was highest in the Northern Territory (41.2%) and lowest in Victoria (0.4%).
- Nationally, 41.9% of HACC carers had not stated Indigenous status, ranging from 3.2% in the Northern Territory to 65.1% in New South Wales.
- A high proportion of clients recorded as having state of residence information not stated or as residing in external territories (labelled as 'Other' in the table above) also had a high proportion of not stated Indigenous status information (95.1%).

In 2010–11:

- Nationally, 2.3% of HACC carers identified as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin. This was highest in the Northern Territory (36.1%) and lowest in Victoria (0.5%).
- 26.1% of HACC carers had not stated Indigenous status, ranging from 2.8% in Queensland to 45.9% in the Australian Capital Territory.
- A high proportion of carers recorded as having state of residence information not stated or as residing in external territories (labelled as 'Other') also had a high proportion of not stated Indigenous status information (96.6%).

Assistance type

Table 6.4 presents client data by type of assistance provided for 2005–06 and 2010–11.

Table 6.4: Number and proportion of HACC clients, by Indigenous status, by type of assistance provided, HACC MDS, 2005–06 and 2010–11, linked client data^(a)

Assistance type	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	Not stated	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	Not stated	Total
	Number			Per cent			
2005–06							
Domestic assistance	5,113	193,209	21,967	2.3	87.7	10.0	100.0
Centre meals	2,140	37,689	4,667	4.8	84.7	10.5	100.0
Personal care	1,955	55,727	7,841	3.0	85.0	12.0	100.0
Nursing care at home	2,265	124,043	13,945	1.6	88.4	9.9	100.0
Home maintenance	3,070	99,622	11,884	2.7	86.9	10.4	100.0
Allied health care at a centre	1,254	83,480	12,106	1.3	86.2	12.5	100.0
Respite care ^(b)	664	16,625	18,254	1.9	46.8	51.4	100.0
Centre day care	3,927	68,710	10,226	4.7	82.9	12.3	100.0
Transport	6,005	104,271	15,366	4.8	83.0	12.2	100.0
Linen services	102	1,172	217	6.8	78.6	14.6	100.0
Counselling/support, information and advocacy (Client)	145	2,132	638	5.0	73.1	21.9	100.0
Counselling/support, information and advocacy (Carer) ^(b)	2,174	38,873	18,456	3.7	65.3	31.0	100.0
Social support	4,412	68,947	14,651	5.0	78.3	16.6	100.0
Nursing care at a centre	1,035	33,376	5,069	2.6	84.5	12.8	100.0
Allied health care at home	882	53,046	5,834	1.5	88.8	9.8	100.0
Home modification	197	21,162	2,640	0.8	88.2	11.0	100.0
Other food services	440	2,511	732	11.9	68.2	19.9	100.0
Delivered meals	3,880	72,211	22,965	3.9	72.9	23.2	100.0
2010–11							
Domestic assistance	6,983	265,791	9,410	2.5	94.2	3.3	100.0
Centre meals	2,334	37,568	1,720	5.6	90.3	4.1	100.0
Personal care	2,681	79,581	5,109	3.1	91.1	5.8	100.0
Nursing care at home	3,350	167,105	9,011	1.9	93.1	5.0	100.0
Home maintenance	4,569	142,519	5,258	3.0	93.5	3.5	100.0
Allied health care at a centre	2,456	120,703	8,567	1.9	91.6	6.5	100.0

(continued)

Table 6.4 (continued): Number and proportion of HACC clients, by Indigenous status, by type of assistance provided, HACC MDS, 2005–06 and 2010–11, linked client data^(a)

Assistance type	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	Not stated	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	Not stated	Total
	Number			Per cent			
2010–11							
Respite care ^(b)	852	29,344	1,317	2.7	93.1	4.2	100.0
Centre day care	5,061	86,775	4,849	5.2	89.8	5.0	100.0
Transport	8,145	137,685	6,007	5.4	90.7	4.0	100.0
Linen services	49	1,208	43	3.8	92.9	3.3	100.0
Counselling/support, information and advocacy (Client)	2,888	57,623	4,740	4.4	88.3	7.3	100.0
Counselling/support, information and advocacy (Carer) ^(b)	943	20,277	3,611	3.8	81.7	14.5	100.0
Social support	6,168	111,023	6,389	5.0	89.8	5.2	100.0
Nursing care at a centre	1,558	49,005	2,474	2.9	92.4	4.7	100.0
Allied health care at home	1,887	90,686	3,926	2.0	94.0	4.1	100.0
Home modification	310	34,538	1,419	0.9	95.2	3.9	100.0
Other food services	442	4,686	1,321	6.9	72.7	20.5	100.0
Delivered meals	4,237	82,300	11,762	4.3	83.7	12.0	100.0

(a) The HACC MDS data set supplied for 2005–06 includes an additional 95 records to those included in the HACC MDS annual statistical bulletin, after records for clients who did not receive any services have been removed.

(b) In HACC, respite care and carer counselling are considered to be services service provided to the carers. However, this table shows the care recipient's recorded Indigenous status. In addition, in 2005–06 and 2006–07 records received in MDS version 1 format were converted to MDS version 2. An assumption appears to have been made that all counselling services in version 1 were carer counselling. If the amount of missing 'SLK-Missing' (a field also not included in MDS v1) is an indication of the proportion of records submitted in MDS v1, then 90% of records in 2005–06 and 13% in 2006–07 were submitted in MDS v1.

Note: Client tables include carers who have received HACC assistance in their role as a carer. The client details for carer counselling and for respite care may be either the carer's details or the care recipient to whom they provide care.

Source: AIHW analysis of HACC MDS data (unpublished)

In 2005–06:

- Other food services (11.9%), linen services (6.8%), social support (5%), and counselling/support information and advocacy for clients (5%) were the assistance types with the highest proportions of clients who identified as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin.
- Rates of not stated Indigenous status varied by assistance type, being lowest for allied health care at home (9.8%), nursing care at home (9.9%), and domestic assistance (10%), and highest for respite care (51.4%), counselling/support, and information and advocacy for carers (31%).

In 2010–11:

- Other food services (6.9%), centre meals (5.6%) and transport (5.4%) were the assistance types with the highest proportions of clients who identified as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin.
- Rates of not stated Indigenous status were highest for assistance provided for Other food services (20.5%), counselling/support, information and advocacy for carers (14.5%), and delivered meals (12%).
- Domestic assistance (3.3%), linen services (3.3%), and home maintenance (3.5%) had the lowest rates of not stated Indigenous status.

Usage rates by age group and jurisdiction

In the 2007 data quality report, it was shown that in the July–September quarter of 2002, and for 2002–03 and 2003–04, the Indigenous specific usage rates of HACC services clients aged 75 and over was more than 1,000 per 1,000 Indigenous population for some jurisdictions. Such a rate is illogical and suggested that there may have been issues with over-counting Indigenous clients in the HACC data collection (AIHW 2007). There are a number of factors that may contribute to over-counting, including repeat HACC clients providing different names or birth date information to different HACC agencies, resulting in individuals being counted more than once; service users being more likely to identify as Indigenous in the HACC MDS compared with the 2006 ABS Census; and the over-estimation of the age of HACC service users resulting in higher age-specific usage rates among older clients (ABS & AIHW 2008).

This section presents data on Indigenous specific HACC services usage rates by age group and jurisdiction for 2010–11 (Table 6.5), to evaluate whether the issue of over-counting Indigenous clients still exists (based on rates per 1,000 being greater than 1,000).

In 2010–11:

- Nationally, the usage rate of HACC services among the Indigenous population was 42.9 per 1,000 Indigenous population.
- The usage rate for clients aged 75 and over in South Australia was greater than 1,000 per 1,000 Indigenous population (1,312 per 1,000). This suggests there may still be an issue with over-counting Indigenous clients for this age group. However, it may also reflect issues with the accuracy of Indigenous population estimates in the older age groups for jurisdictions with small numbers. It should be noted that this rate for South Australia was based on relatively small numbers, and that rates for the Australian Capital Territory and Tasmania were not able to be calculated for age groups over 65 due to Indigenous population projections not being available.

Table 6.5: HACC usage per 1,000 Indigenous population, by 5-year age group, by state and territory of client^(a), linked client data, 2010–11

Age group	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas ^(b)	ACT ^(b)	NT	Australia
0–49	21.6	30.0	8.8	9.6	23.3	7.8	14.3	6.6	14.5
50–54	119.0	189.5	69.6	69.2	153.0	50.3	100.0	50.4	94.1
55–59	174.8	220.9	98.3	126.7	218.9	40.8	145.6	95.5	137.8
60–64	254.2	337.5	157.6	204.5	346.6	75.6	285.7	167.6	215.2
65–69	386.7	381.6	272.6	307.5	536.3	–	–	215.7	317.8
70–74	637.3	621.8	554.8	430.9	862.1	–	–	441.7	552.2
75+	843.8	583.9	811.7	493.0	1311.5	–	–	340.1	704.4
65+	592.6	506.5	505.8	395.8	867.1	342.6	488.9	314.6	511.7
50+	283.9	313.9	201.3	188.3	393.6	123.2	207.6	147.9	230.3
Total^(c)	57.9	69.5	32.1	32.4	70.5	24.1	35.9	24.0	42.9

n.a. not available

(a) Clients includes carers who are receiving services in their own right if their details are recorded in the client linkage key.

(b) Indigenous projected population data were not available for Tasmania and the ACT for age groups 65–69, 70–74 and 75+.

(c) Total includes clients with missing age.

Notes

1. Usage rates calculated using ABS Series B projected Indigenous population from the 2006 Census as at 30 June 2010

2. Age is calculated at 30 June.

Source: AIHW analysis of HACC MDS data (unpublished)

Changes in rates of not stated Indigenous status

This section presents changes over time in the rate of missing/not stated and not collected Indigenous status, both nationally and jurisdictionally, for clients and carers.

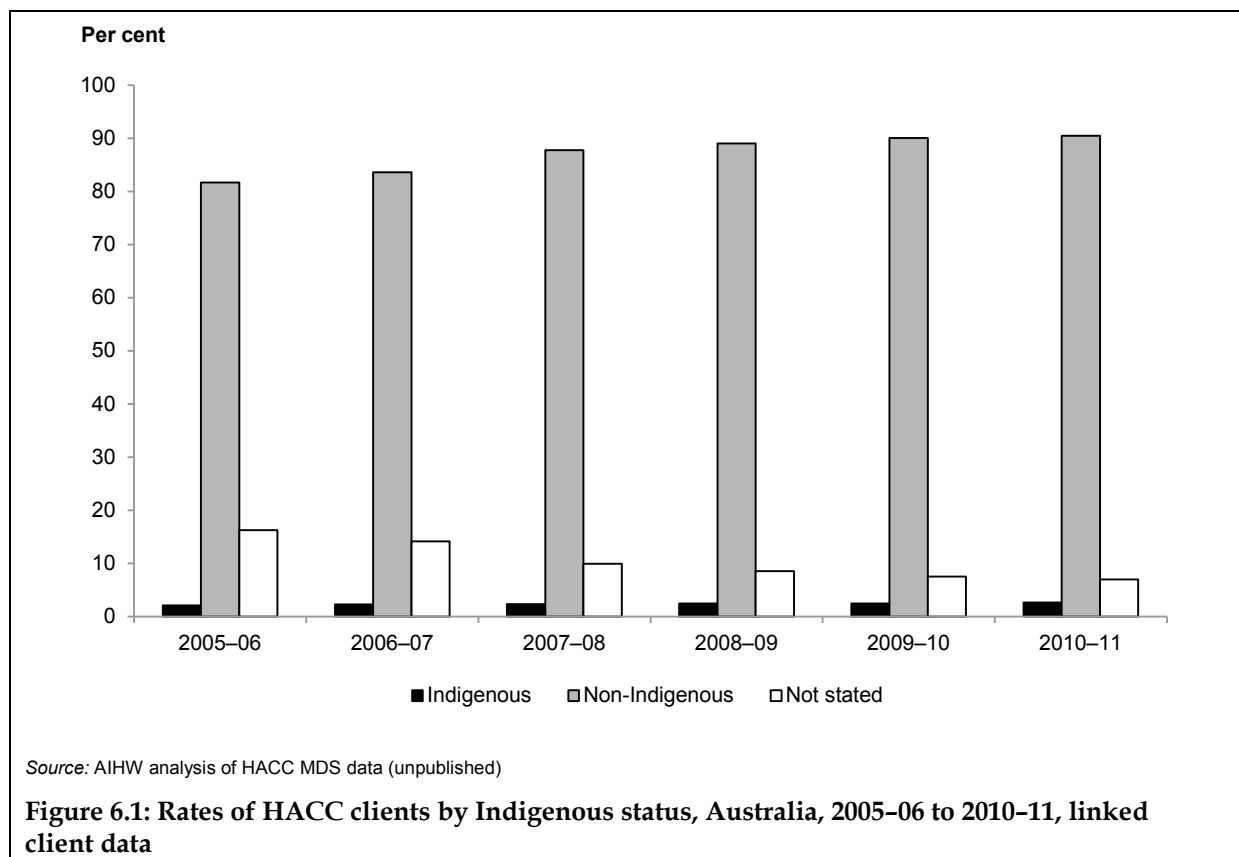
National

Client data

Figure 6.1 shows changes in the national rates of HACC clients who identified as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin, non-Indigenous, or with not stated Indigenous status between 2005–06 and 2010–11.

Between 2005–06 and 2010–11:

- The proportion of HACC clients with not stated Indigenous status progressively decreased by more than 9 percentage points over the 6 years, from 16.2% in to 6.9%. This decrease was particularly notable between 2006–07 (when the rate was 14.1%) and 2007–08 (9.9%).
- This decrease in rates of not stated Indigenous status was reflected in a slight increase in the proportion of clients identifying as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander over the period (2.1% to 2.6%), and a more notable increase in the proportion of non-Indigenous clients (from 81.7% to 90.5%)

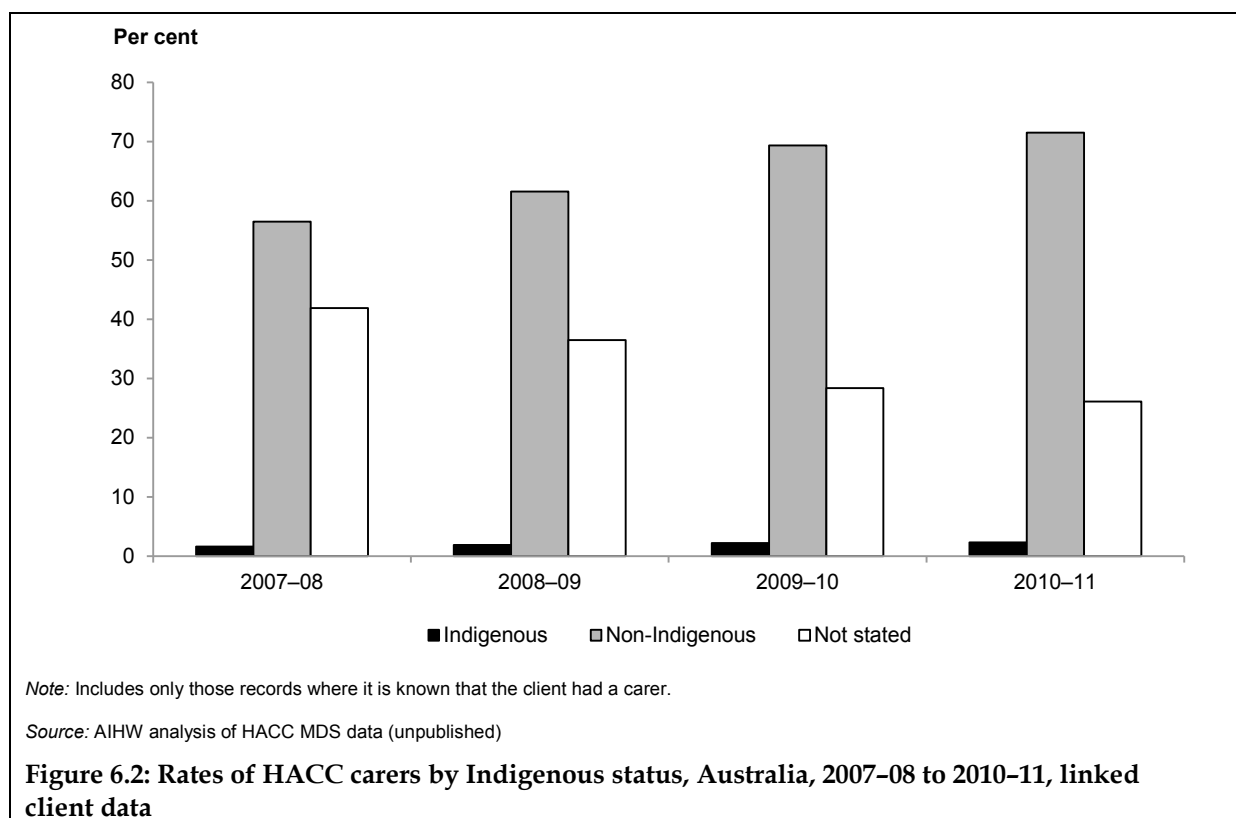


Carer data

Figure 6.2 shows changes in the national rates of HACC carers with not stated Indigenous status between 2007-08 and 2010-11.

Between 2007-08 and 2010-11:

- The proportion of HACC carers with not stated Indigenous status progressively decreased by almost 16 percentage points over the 4 years, from 41.9% to 26.1%.
- This decrease in not stated rates was reflected in a slight increase in the proportion of clients identifying as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander over the period (1.7% to 2.3%), and a more notable increase in the proportion of non-Indigenous clients (from 56.5% to 71.5%)



State/territory

Client data

Table 6.6 shows changes in the rates of HACC clients with not stated Indigenous status between 2005-06 and 2010-11 for each state and territory.

Between 2005-06 and 2010-11:

- In all jurisdictions, there was an overall decrease in the proportion of HACC clients with not stated Indigenous status. Decreases were particularly notable in Queensland (24.0% to 7.1%), New South Wales (13.8% to 4.8%), and South Australia (24.2% to 9.6%).
- In the Northern Territory, there was a fluctuation in the rate of not stated Indigenous status, decreasing between 2005-06 and 2007-08 (from 16.2% to 4.8%), and increasing to 9.1% in 2010-11.

Table 6.6: Number and proportion of HACC clients with not stated Indigenous status, by state and territory (of client), HACC MDS, 2005–06 to 2010–11, linked client data^{(a)(b)}

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Other ^(c)	Aust
Number										
2005–06	26,738	24,677	37,168	8,477	20,256	3,051	2,597	777	2,491	126,232
2006–07	28,342	26,239	27,755	4,726	18,979	2,718	2,341	428	1,689	113,217
2007–08	18,249	27,075	18,874	2,831	10,715	2,468	1,434	176	423	82,245
2008–09	15,611	25,120	16,888	2,971	8,629	2,307	1,516	224	356	73,622
2009–10	13,626	23,924	13,773	3,907	7,828	2,244	1,468	220	168	67,158
2010–11	13,010	22,552	12,574	3,434	9,426	2,077	1,008	385	84	64,550
Per cent										
2005–06	13.8	11.2	24.0	12.2	24.2	11.2	16.7	16.2	28.8	16.2
2006–07	13.8	11.6	17.5	7.3	20.9	9.4	14.5	9.8	30.6	14.1
2007–08	8.2	10.5	11.9	4.4	12.1	10.1	13.9	4.8	33.0	9.9
2008–09	6.7	9.5	10.3	4.5	9.3	8.7	13.4	6.2	27.5	8.5
2009–10	5.6	8.8	8.1	5.9	8.2	8.2	11.3	6.1	58.5	7.5
2010–11	4.8	8.3	7.1	5.0	9.6	7.4	7.8	9.6	61.3	6.9

(a) The HACC MDS data set supplied for 2005–06 includes an additional 95 records to those included in the HACC MDS annual statistical bulletin, after records for clients who did not receive any services have been removed.

(b) The HACC MDS data set supplied for 2006–07 includes an additional 366 records to those included in the HACC MDS annual statistical bulletin, after records for clients who did not receive any services have been removed.

(c) 'Other' covers records where the client's state is recorded as 9, the code for external territories. However, additional data in the records indicates that, for a large proportion of these, the code 9 has been used to represent 'Not stated'. No attempt has been made to impute the state from postcode or locality data included in records.

Note: Client tables include carers who have received HACC assistance in their role as a carer. The client details for carer counselling and for respite care may be either the carer's details or the care recipient to whom they provide care.

Source: AIHW analysis of HACC MDS data (unpublished)

Carer data

Table 6.7 shows changes in the rates of HACC carers with not stated Indigenous status between 2007–08 and 2010–11 for each state and territory.

Between 2007–08 and 2010–11:

- In New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory, although the rates decreased between 2007–08 and 2010–11, they still remained relatively high in 2010–11 (ranging from 17.7% in Tasmania to 45.9% in the Australian Capital Territory).
- Improvements to rates were particularly notable in New South Wales (decreasing by almost 40 percentage points, from 65.1% to 25.9%) and Tasmania (from 31.3% to 17.7%).
- In Western Australia, rates increased from 13.1% in 2007–08 to 17.2% in 2010–11.
- Queensland and the Northern Territory had relatively low rates of carers with not stated Indigenous status. In Queensland, it decreased from 5.3% in 2007–08 to 2.8% in 2010–11. In the Northern Territory, it was 3.1% in 2007–08 and remained at 4.1% between 2008–09 and 2010–11.

Table 6.7: Number and proportion of HACC carers with not stated Indigenous status, by state and territory of residence, HACC MDS, 2007–08 to 2010–11, linked client data^(a)

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Other ^(b)	Australia
Number										
2007–08	37,266	21,600	2,478	2,471	5,312	1,930	1,535	44	28,596	101,232
2008–09	37,547	21,867	2,599	2,785	6,468	1,650	1,365	64	15,052	89,397
2009–10	17,070	20,806	2,138	3,327	6,378	1,392	1,311	57	15,224	67,703
2010–11	14,111	19,207	1,566	3,461	5,555	991	1,361	77	15,991	62,320
Per cent										
2007–08	65.1	36.5	5.3	13.1	27.1	31.3	57.8	3.2	95.1	41.9
2008–09	62.8	33.1	5.0	14.2	31.2	25.9	49.3	4.1	93.5	36.5
2009–10	31.5	32.9	3.9	16.8	31.1	22.7	46.8	4.1	95.6	28.4
2010–11	25.9	32.4	2.8	17.2	25.0	17.7	45.9	4.1	96.6	26.1

(a) Includes only those records where it is known that the client had a carer.

(b) 'Other' covers records where the client's state is recorded as 9, the code for external territories. However, additional data in the records indicates that, for a large proportion of these, the code 9 has been used to represent 'Not stated'. No attempt has been made to impute the state from postcode or locality data included in records.

Source: AIHW analysis of HACC MDS data (unpublished)

Update on data collection and reporting practices

This section provides information on the current collection and reporting practices for the HACC MDS regarding Indigenous status information, as well as staff training and support systems in place to facilitate the accuracy of data collection.

It focuses on any inconsistencies between current practices of aged care agencies and the national standard for collecting and recording Indigenous status. The national standard is documented in the *National best practice guidelines for collecting Indigenous status in health data sets*. The guidelines were disseminated by the AIHW to members of the Aged Care Information Working Group in April 2012.

Information included in this section was provided by the Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing.

Indigenous status question, response categories and recording practices

From 1 January 2006, v2.0 of the HACC MDS was implemented. For Indigenous status data, the change from v1.0 to v2.0 meant a change to the coding categories to record Indigenous status to be consistent with the ABS standard coding, and the inclusion of the collection of data on the Indigenous status of the carer (where a carer exists).

The HACC MDS v2.0 Data Dictionary is used for reporting in the HACC MDS collection. This includes the ABS standard Indigenous status question, response options, and coding categories as recommended in the guidelines. It stipulates that 'responses to the Indigenous status question should not be based on the perceptions of anyone other than the client or their advocate', and that 'non-Indigenous should not be taken as default in the presence of no other evidence'. The Data Dictionary also stipulates that the Indigenous status data item

should be collected for both care recipients and their carer, if applicable, at the beginning of each HACC service episode.

It is understood that individual agencies collect and record Indigenous status information as stipulated in the Data Dictionary.

Staff training and support systems for collecting Indigenous status data

The HACC MDS v2.0 user guide is designed to assist agencies providing HACC assistance to accurately report the required information about clients, carers, and the services provided, at the end of each reporting period. The user guide references the HACC Data Dictionary and includes the information shown in Box 6.1 regarding the Indigenous status data item.

Some HACC agencies use a free data collection tool provided by the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing (DoHA) – the National Electronic Form – to collect HACC MDS data. This form uses the standard five categories for recording Indigenous status information in client management systems. The proportion of HACC agencies that use the National Electronic Form is unknown, however, DoHA believes it is less than 15%.

A number of training tools are available to HACC agencies, including Developing an Action Plan to assist HACC-funded agencies implement the HACC MDS data collection process, and training for agency workers, who are provided with an orientation workbook with exercises on how to collect HACC MDS data, including Indigenous status. This orientation workbook also provides references the HACC MDS v2.0 user guide.

Activities to improve Indigenous status data quality

A number of data quality improvement activities have been undertaken for the HACC MDS, both nationally and jurisdictionally. This information was provided by the Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing.

National activities

In the 2007 data quality report, it was noted that HACC Officials (a national group consisting of senior officials responsible for HACC from each state and territory and the Australian Government) had committed to improving the quality and completeness of Indigenous identification in the HACC MDS. Since then, there have been a number of strategies implemented to help improve Indigenous status data quality. For example:

- In 2008, DoHA introduced quarterly extract summaries, which contain details of the quarterly data submitted for each jurisdiction. These summaries are provided to each jurisdiction, and include data quality indicators for each HACC agency, reporting the number of records with unknown, invalid, or null responses for key demographics, including Indigenous status. Agencies that have more than 10% of records with unknown, invalid, or null Indigenous status are included in a data quality summary. Although it is up to state and territory governments to liaise with HACC agencies to improve data quality, it is intended that the data quality summaries will enable jurisdictions to target and engage with agencies to improve data quality.

Box 6.1: Home and Community Care Program MDS user guide version 2.0 (Update 2.01) – Collection of Indigenous status data

Indigenous status

Definition: **Indigenous status** states whether or not a person identifies themselves as of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin.

Reporting this element								
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is important to record <i>Indigenous status</i> for all clients. The most straight forward way to collect this information is to ask the client: "Are you of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin?" The simplest way to record their response is to use a tick box approach. This would look like: <table border="0"> <tr> <td>No</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td rowspan="3">A tick can be placed against two boxes to show that the client is of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Yes, Aboriginal</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Yes, Torres Strait Islander</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </table> The response to this question needs to be translated manually or through a computer system to the codes below: 		No	<input type="checkbox"/>	A tick can be placed against two boxes to show that the client is of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin.	Yes, Aboriginal	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes, Torres Strait Islander	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>	A tick can be placed against two boxes to show that the client is of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin.						
Yes, Aboriginal	<input type="checkbox"/>							
Yes, Torres Strait Islander	<input type="checkbox"/>							
Code	Description							
1	Aboriginal but not Torres Strait Islander origin (Box 2 above)							
2	Torres Strait Islander but not Aboriginal origin (Box 3 above)							
3	Both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin (Box 2 and 3 above)							
4	Neither Aboriginal nor Torres Strait Islander origin (Box 1 above)							
9	Not stated/inadequately described: Only use this code if it is not possible to find out information about Indigenous status from the client or to make an informed judgement about it.							

- Key performance indicators were introduced for the HACC program in 2008. One of the Key performance indicators was introduced to measure the extent to which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people access HACC services, by reporting the ratio between the proportion of Indigenous HACC clients and the proportion of people within the target population.
- In 2011, changes were made to the data load process for HACC MDS data. These affected the way that multiple records for individual clients (in cases where a client receives more than one type of assistance, or received assistance from more than one agency) were aggregated into a single, annual client record. These changes contributed to a reduction in the proportion of HACC clients with unknown Indigenous status.
- The Department of Health and Ageing recently undertook a review of the HACC MDS Business Rules, which provided recommendations on improvements to the HACC MDS to HACC Officials. Among these recommendations was a proposal to develop an in-house data collection tool, allowing greater flexibility of data validation rules, as well as further improvements to the data aggregation processes.

Additional information related to data quality

The recording of data may be affected if there are multiple client records for an individual, which occurs when a client receives multiple types of assistance from an agency. For each HACC client record, demographic data (for example, country of birth, Indigenous status) are reported, and it is possible for demographic data to differ between records. The method used to collapse multiple records for an individual client has been to use demographic information from the client's most recent assessment. Demographic data may be lost if an earlier assessment contained more accurate client information than the latest record.

National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander HACC Reference Group

The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander HACC Reference Group was formed in 1997 to provide input into national HACC issues and policy and planning processes, and to ensure that the HACC Program effectively meets the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (DoHA 2010). The Reference Group reports to HACC Officials, and its objectives are to:

- provide leadership to the national HACC Program on matters of interest to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- advise the national HACC Program on strategies to improve its services
- provide advice on policy and planning processes, implementation and service delivery issues
- promote debate and discussion on the needs, interests and aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people within the national HACC Program
- provide advice to other key agencies in order to enhance a cross portfolio/agency approach to the issues related to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the HACC target group.

Summary of findings

- The proportion HACC clients with not stated Indigenous status decreased by more than 9 percentage points between 2005–06 and 2010–11, from 16.2% to 6.9%.
- For all jurisdictions, there was an overall decrease the proportion of HACC clients with not stated Indigenous status. For a number of jurisdictions, these rates more than halved between 2005–06 and 2010–11, including Queensland, New South Wales, and South Australia.
- Among HACC carers, rates of not stated Indigenous status decreased by almost 16 percentage points between 2007–08 and 2010–11, from 41.9% to 26.1%. However, there was wide variation in these rates between jurisdictions in 2010–11, ranging from 2.8% in Queensland to 45.9% in the Australian Capital Territory.
- The HACC MDS v2.0 Data Dictionary includes the ABS standard Indigenous status question, response options and coding categories.
- Individual agencies are provided with a HACC User Guide to assist them in collecting and recording client information. This guide provides instructions for the Indigenous status data item that are consistent with the national standard. It is understood that agencies follow the HACC user guide and data dictionary.

- A number of strategies have been implemented to help improve Indigenous status data quality (and general HACC MDS data quality), including the introduction of quarterly extract summaries by DoHA in 2008, which include data quality indicators for each HACC agency and identify agencies with more than 10% not stated Indigenous status for jurisdictions to follow-up.

Recommendations for improvements to Indigenous status data quality

Recommendation 1

HACC MDS User Guide to include a reference to the AIHW's *National best practice guidelines for collecting Indigenous status information in health data sets*.

Recommendation 2

All training materials for agencies collecting HACC data to include a rationale for the collection of Indigenous status, and to reference the guidelines.

Recommendation 3

DoHA to consider revising the method used to collapse multiple records for an individual client regarding their Indigenous status information, to retain if recorded as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander on any record, rather than using information from the most recent assessment as is current practice.

7 Community and residential aged care programs

Background

The 2007 data quality report provided information on the quality of Indigenous status data collected for the Residential Aged Care Services (RACS) and Community Aged Care Packages (CACP) programs. This chapter presents information on these, and on the quality of Indigenous status data in three smaller community aged care programs: Extended Aged Care at Home (EACH), Extended Aged Care at Home Dementia (EACHD), and the Transition Care Program (TCP).

Data are also presented for complete assessments processed under the Aged Care Assessment Program (ACAP). Before an individual is eligible to access Australian Government-subsidised residential aged care or subsidised community aged care, an approval must be obtained from an Aged Care Assessment Team (ACAT). The teams also make recommendations on the preferred setting for receiving care; that is, in the person's home or in a residential care facility with either a low or high level of care. ACATs can also recommend that the person remain in the community under the Home and Community Care Program, or with no aged care support needed. CACPs target those with low-care needs, while EACH packages have been designed to cater for older Australians whose need is determined to be high care. EACHD packages are specifically designed to provide care for high-care clients with dementia-related behaviours.

ACAP MDS assessment data are submitted electronically to DoHA's Ageing and Aged Care data warehouse and a copy of the paper form is held by the person who is assessed. When a client is approved for subsidised aged care by an ACAT, the client's demographic data from the assessment are included in the data held in the Ageing and Aged Care data warehouse. The warehouse holds data for residential and community aged care programs administered by DoHA, including data on service providers, services, places, people, assessments, outputs, funding, quality, and compliance. The data is provided to DoHA by service providers, Aged Care Assessment Teams, Medicare Australia, and the Aged Care Accreditation Agency. The data on RACS, CACP, EACH, EACHD, and TCP in this chapter are sourced from this warehouse.

This chapter presents data for all recipients of the aged care program ('Total recipients' data), followed by data on recipients newly admitted to residential aged care or an aged care program ('New admissions' data). Total recipients data includes data on all recipients of the aged care program at the end of the financial year (that is, as at 30 June). New admissions data refers to data collected on recipients who were newly admitted into the aged care program during the financial year. In general, aged care programs (with the exception of TCP) hold data on many of the same people over multiple years. Consequently, the way in which information was initially entered into a database is carried over to subsequent reporting periods. Although the analysis of total recipients data allows an understanding of overall data quality among all people in an aged care program, new admissions data allows a clearer representation of changes in the recording of Indigenous status data over time (between discrete financial years) – the latter of which is of particular interest for the purposes of this report.

Data are not available for the 386 flexible residential aged care and 259 flexible community aged care places operating under the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Aged Care Strategy. However, given the nature of the program, the intended care recipients are Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people. Also, Indigenous status data are not available for the 2,794 operational flexible residential places and 422 operational flexible community care places provided by Multi-Purpose Services (AIHW unpublished data, 2012).

It is important to note that the unavailability of data on Indigenous status for flexible residential and community care recipients may contribute to the underestimation of the number and proportion of Indigenous recipients in the aged care programs analysed in this chapter.

The 2007 data quality report presented data for 2001–02 to 2004–05. This chapter presents data from 2004–05 onwards. It should be noted that the data in this chapter may differ to that in the 2007 report, as data in the warehouse is ‘refreshed’ periodically and minor differences will occur depending on the version used for reporting. Also, the data in this chapter will not necessarily match that in the publically available RoGS produced by the Productivity Commission. Historically, there have been slight differences in the data reported by DoHA and the AIHW. These differences can be attributed to the fact that AIHW data are based on a separate extract of the Ageing and Aged Care data warehouse. The department reports on stocktake data and other data that has been extracted earlier to meet reporting deadlines for RoGS and the Report of the Operation of the Aged Care Act.

Aged Care Assessment Program

Tables 7.1 and 7.2 present data on aged care assessments completed under the ACAP by Indigenous status for each state and territory. These data were sourced from DoHA’s National Data Repository Annual Report (2004–05 to 2007–08), or provided by DoHA (2008–09 to 2009–10) from the ACAP MDS.

Completed assessments include those both where ACAT delegates did and did not approve clients to access Australian Government-subsidised aged care services that require ACAT approval. The data here comes from the ACAP MDS version 2, which came into effect in 2003. Version 2 includes a separate data item on Indigenous status, which is a great improvement from version 1 that included Indigenous status as part of the ‘Country of Birth’ data item.

Between 2004–05 and 2009–10:

- Nationally, there was a gradual decrease in the proportion of aged care assessments completed under the ACAP with not stated Indigenous status, from 3.4% in 2004–05 to 0.8% in 2009–10. Improvements to these rates were observed in most jurisdictions over this period.
- In Victoria and Western Australia, rates of not stated Indigenous status decreased from almost 2% in 2004–05 to almost 0% in 2009–10.
- In Tasmania, rates remained close to 0% over this period.
- Rates in the Australian Capital Territory decreased from 5.2% in 2004–05 to 0.0% in 2009–10.
- In New South Wales, the rate decreased from 5.3% in 2004–05 to 1.6% in 2009–10.
- In Queensland, the rate decreased from 5.6% in 2005–06 to 0.9% in 2009–10.

- In South Australia, the rate decreased from 3.7% in 2004–05 to 0.9% in 2009–10.
- In the Northern Territory, the rate remained below 2% over this period, however, no trend was observed for data quality improvements. For example, the rate halved from 1.9% in 2004–05 to 1.0% in 2007–08, but increased to 1.8% in 2009–10.

These data should be interpreted with caution, as Indigenous clients are under-represented in referrals for ACAP assessments in all states and territories. According to the ACAP National Data Repository Minimum Data Set annual report for 2007–2008 (NDR 2009), the representation of Indigenous people among referrals to the ACAP was only 46% of what could be expected from their proportion of the target population.

Table 7.1: Number and proportion of aged care assessments completed under the ACAP, by Indigenous status, by state and territory, 2009–10

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Australia
Number									
Indigenous	677	252	472	565	143	35	19	350	2,513
Non-Indigenous	58,895	49,406	28,357	18,882	16,243	4,957	2,193	592	179,525
Not stated	990	118	267	0	147	2	0	17	1,541
Total	60,562	49,776	29,096	19,447	16,533	4,994	2,212	959	183,579
Per cent									
Indigenous	1.1	0.5	1.6	2.9	0.9	0.7	0.9	36.5	1.4
Non-Indigenous	97.2	99.3	97.5	97.1	98.2	99.3	99.1	61.7	97.8
Not stated	1.6	0.2	0.9	0.0	0.9	0.0	0.0	1.8	0.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: DoHA (unpublished), DoHA Ageing and Aged Care data warehouse

Table 7.2: Proportion of aged care assessments completed under the ACAP with not stated Indigenous status, by state and territory, 2004–05 to 2009–10 (per cent)

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Australia
2004–05	5.3	1.8	n.a.	1.6	3.7	0.1	5.2	1.9	3.4
2005–06	3.4	1.5	5.6	0.2	3.3	0.2	8.4	1.0	2.8
2006–07	3.1	0.7	2.9	0.2	2.9	0.1	0.9	1.5	2.0
2007–08	3.0	0.4	1.5	0.0	1.9	0.1	1.5	1.0	1.6
2008–09^(a)	2.2	0.3	1.2	0.0	1.3	0.0	0.0	1.3	1.2
2009–10	1.6	0.2	0.9	0.0	0.9	0.0	0.0	1.8	0.8

(a) 2008–09 data is different from figures in the 2012 RoGS report, as the data presented here are updated.

n.a. not available

Source: 2004–05 to 2007–08—National Data Repository Annual Report 2007–2008 (NDR 2009), Table 5.17; 2008–09 and 2009–10—DoHA (unpublished), DoHA Ageing and Aged Care data warehouse

Residential Aged Care Services

The Australian Government funds aged care facilities to provide residential aged care to older Australians whose care needs are such that they can no longer remain in their own homes. Facilities provide suitable accommodation and related services (such as laundry, meals, and cleaning) as well as personal care services (such as assistance with activities of daily living, and nursing services for residents receiving a high level of residential care). The residential aged care program is provided on a permanent or respite basis. Data in this chapter are for people receiving permanent residential aged care.

Update on analysis results by Indigenous status

This section presents relevant data on new admissions to permanent residential aged care for 2004–05 from the 2007 data quality report. It also presents data on total recipients at 30 June 2005 and 30 June 2010, and data on residents newly admitted to residential aged care in 2009–10.

Total recipients

Table 7.3 presents the number and proportion of permanent aged care residents by Indigenous status as at 30 June 2005 and 30 June 2010, for each state and territory.

At 30 June 2005:

- Of the approximately 149,000 permanent aged care residents in Australia, 0.6% identified as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin. For most states and territories this proportion was also very small (less than 1%), except in the Northern Territory (36.6%) and Western Australia (1.7%).
- Nationally, the rate of not stated Indigenous status was 5.2%, ranging from 1.6% in Tasmania to 8.1% in Queensland.

At 30 June 2010:

- Of the approximately 163,000 permanent aged care residents in Australia, 0.7% identified as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin. For most states and territories this proportion was very small (less than 1%), except in the Northern Territory (37.6%) and Western Australia (2%).
- Nationally, the rate of not stated Indigenous status was 1.3%, ranging from 0.3% in Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory to 2.1% in Queensland.

Table 7.3: Number and proportion of permanent residential aged care residents, by Indigenous status, by state and territory (of recipient), Australia, as at 30 June, 2005 and 2010

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Australia
30 June 2005									
	Number								
Indigenous	157	40	247	221	34	10	2	141	852
Non-Indigenous	47,928	36,550	24,574	12,075	13,713	3,925	1,434	222	140,421
Missing/not stated	3,124	1,063	2,180	402	900	65	41	22	7,797
Total	51,209	37,653	27,001	12,698	14,647	4,000	1,477	385	149,070
	Per cent								
Indigenous	0.3	0.1	0.9	1.7	0.2	0.3	0.1	36.6	0.6
Non-Indigenous	93.6	97.1	91.0	95.1	93.6	98.1	97.1	57.7	94.2
Missing/not stated	6.1	2.8	8.1	3.2	6.1	1.6	2.8	5.7	5.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
30 June 2010									
	Number								
Indigenous	220	76	275	267	48	26	7	155	1,074
Non-Indigenous	54,556	41,756	28,532	13,258	15,156	4,157	1,747	252	159,414
Missing/not stated	873	263	618	104	211	11	6	5	2,091
Total	55,649	42,095	29,425	13,629	15,415	4,194	1,760	412	162,579
	Per cent								
Indigenous	0.4	0.2	0.9	2.0	0.3	0.6	0.4	37.6	0.7
Non-Indigenous	98.0	99.2	97.0	97.3	98.3	99.1	99.3	61.2	98.1
Missing/not stated	1.6	0.6	2.1	0.8	1.4	0.3	0.3	1.2	1.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: AIHW analysis of data from DoHA's Ageing and Aged Care data warehouse

Table 7.4 presents the rates of permanent aged care residents with not stated Indigenous status as at 30 June 2010 by sex, age, and remoteness.

As at 30 June 2010:

- The proportion of permanent residential aged care residents who identified as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin was slightly higher for males (0.9%) than females (0.6%), higher for residents aged 0–64 (4.4%) than older age groups, and much higher in *Remote* (20%) and *Very remote* areas (62.5%) than in *Major cities, Inner regional and Outer regional* areas (0.3% to 2%).
- Rates of not stated Indigenous status were similar for males and females (about 1%); slightly higher among residents aged 0–64 (3.2%) and 65–69 (2.6%) than older age groups

(between 1% and 1.5%), and highest for residents in *Major cities* 1.5% compared with other remoteness categories (*Inner regional*, *Outer regional*, *Remote* and *Very remote*), for which rates were about 1%.

Table 7.4: Number and proportion of permanent residential aged care residents, by Indigenous status, by age, sex and remoteness, Australia, 30 June 2010

	Indigenous		Non-Indigenous		Not stated	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
Sex						
Male	436	0.9	46,955	97.9	575	1.2
Female	638	0.6	112,459	98.1	1,516	1.3
Age						
0–64	283	4.4	5,988	92.4	210	3.2
65–69	110	2.1	5,022	95.3	139	2.6
70–74	138	1.5	8,860	97.0	138	1.5
75+	543	0.4	139,544	98.5	1,604	1.1
Remoteness						
Major cities	290	0.3	109,812	98.2	1,682	1.5
Inner regional	177	0.5	36,373	98.7	313	0.8
Outer regional	260	2.0	12,400	97.3	87	0.7
Remote	185	20.0	735	79.4	6	0.6
Very remote	162	62.5	94	36.3	3	1.2

Source: AIHW analysis of data from DoHA's Ageing and Aged Care data warehouse

New admissions

This section presents data on the Indigenous status of newly admitted permanent aged care residents.

Table 7.5 presents data by state and territory for 2004–05 and 2009–10.

In 2004–05:

- Of the approximately 52,000 newly admitted permanent aged care residents in Australia, 0.6% identified as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin. This proportion was very small (less than 1%) in most jurisdictions, except the Northern Territory (29.7%) and Western Australia (1.7%).
- Nationally, the rate of not stated Indigenous status was 1.9%. This was highest in Queensland (10.2%), while all other jurisdictions had very low rates (between 0.0% and 0.2%).

In 2009–10:

- Of the approximately 57,000 newly admitted permanent aged care residents in Australia, 0.7% identified as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin. This proportion was less than 1% in most jurisdictions, except the Northern Territory (34.5%) and Western Australia (1.6%).
- There were only 2 newly admitted permanent aged care residents with not stated Indigenous status in Australia. Therefore, the rate of not stated Indigenous status was 0.0% nationally, as well as for each state and territory.

Table 7.5: Number and proportion of new admissions of permanent residential aged care residents, by Indigenous status, by state and territory, Australia, 2004–05 and 2009–10

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Australia
2004–05									
	Number								
Indigenous	50	12	94	77	17	4	0	33	287
Non-Indigenous	18,125	12,699	8,174	4,506	5,009	1,353	467	78	50,411
Missing/not stated	34	12	937	2	4	1	0	0	990
Total	18,209	12,723	9,205	4,585	5,030	1,358	467	111	51,688
	Per cent								
Indigenous	0.3	0.1	1.0	1.7	0.3	0.3	0.0	29.7	0.6
Non-Indigenous	99.5	99.8	88.8	98.3	99.6	99.6	100.0	70.3	97.5
Missing/not stated	0.2	0.1	10.2	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	1.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
2009–10									
	Number								
Indigenous	111	33	97	76	24	10	8	48	407
Non-Indigenous	19,642	14,493	10,291	4,809	5,138	1,642	646	91	56,752
Missing/not stated	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2
Total	19,754	14,526	10,388	4,886	5,162	1,652	654	139	57,161
	Per cent								
Indigenous	0.6	0.2	0.9	1.6	0.5	0.6	1.2	34.5	0.7
Non-Indigenous	99.4	99.8	99.1	98.4	99.5	99.4	98.8	65.5	99.3
Missing/not stated	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: AIHW analysis of data from DoHA's Ageing and Aged Care data warehouse

Table 7.6 presents rates of newly admitted permanent aged care residents by Indigenous status in 2009–10, by sex, age group, and remoteness.

In 2009–10:

- The proportion of permanent residential aged care residents who identified as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin was slightly higher for males (0.9%) than females (0.6%), higher for residents aged 0–64 years (5.5%) than older age groups, and much higher in *Remote* (17.6%) and *Very remote* areas (44.3%) than for *Major cities*, *Inner regional* and *Outer regional* areas (0.3% to 2.1%).
- Rates of not stated Indigenous status were 0% (or rounded to 0%) for all characteristics examined in Table 7.6.

Table 7.6: Number and proportion of new admissions to permanent residential aged care, by Indigenous status, by sex, age and remoteness, Australia, 2009–10

	Indigenous		Non-Indigenous		Not stated	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
Sex						
Male	189	0.9	21,650	99.1	0	0.0
Female	218	0.6	35,102	99.4	2	0.0
Age						
0–64	113	5.5	1,948	94.5	0	0.0
65–69	35	1.8	1,861	98.2	0	0.0
70–74	56	1.5	3,655	98.5	0	0.0
75+	203	0.4	49,288	99.6	2	0.0
Remoteness						
Major cities	134	0.3	38,865	99.7	0	0.0
Inner regional	88	0.7	13,240	99.3	2	0.0
Outer regional	92	2.1	4,345	97.9	0	0.0
Remote	54	17.6	253	82.4	0	0.0
Very remote	39	44.3	49	55.7	0	0.0

Source: AIHW analysis of data from DoHA's Ageing and Aged Care data warehouse

Community Aged Care Packages

The CACP program, solely funded by the Australian Government, provides low-care community care packages designed to meet the daily care needs of frail older people, allowing them to stay in their own homes and community without having to enter low-level residential care. Data on CACP recipients have been collected since the program began in 1992.

Update on analysis results by Indigenous status

This section presents CACP data by Indigenous status, firstly for total recipients in the program, followed by data on new admissions of CACP recipients.

Total recipients

Table 7.7 presents data on CACP recipients by Indigenous status as at 30 June 2005 and 30 June 2010, for each state and territory.

Table 7.7: Number and proportion of CACP recipients, by Indigenous status, by state and territory, Australia, as at 30 June, 2005 and 2010

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Australia
30 June 2005									
	Number								
Indigenous	326	131	180	166	66	23	20	325	1,237
Non-Indigenous	9,746	7,337	4,219	2,196	2,648	811	386	187	27,530
Not stated	46	68	13	2	2	0	0	0	131
Total	10,118	7,536	4,412	2,364	2,716	834	406	512	28,898
	Per cent								
Indigenous	3.2	1.7	4.1	7.0	2.4	2.8	4.9	63.5	4.3
Non-Indigenous	96.3	97.4	95.6	92.9	97.5	97.2	95.1	36.5	95.3
Not stated	0.5	0.9	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
30 June 2010									
	Number								
Indigenous	376	208	262	201	68	23	30	356	1,524
Non-Indigenous	13,456	10,197	6,232	3,413	3,445	1,059	534	244	38,580
Not stated	8	23	1	0	1	0	0	0	33
Total	13,840	10,428	6,495	3,614	3,514	1,082	564	600	40,137
	Per cent								
Indigenous	2.7	2.0	4.0	5.6	1.9	2.1	5.3	59.3	3.8
Non-Indigenous	97.2	97.8	96.0	94.4	98.0	97.9	94.7	40.7	96.1
Not stated	0.1	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: AIHW analysis of data from DoHA's Ageing and Aged Care data warehouse

At 30 June 2005:

- Nationally, 4.3% of CACP recipients identified as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin. This ranged from 1.7% in Victoria to 7.0% in Western Australia and 63.5% in the Northern Territory.
- In Australia, the proportion of CACP recipients with not stated Indigenous status was 0.5%, ranging from 0.0% for a number of jurisdictions (Tasmania, Australian Capital Territory, and the Northern Territory) to 0.9% in Victoria.

At 30 June 2010:

- Nationally, 3.8% of CACP recipients identified as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin. This ranged from 1.9% in South Australia to 5.6% in Western Australian and 59.3% in the Northern Territory.
- In Australia, the proportion of CACP recipients with not stated Indigenous status was 0.1%, and close to 0% for all jurisdictions.

Table 7.8 presents data on CACP recipients by Indigenous status as at 30 June 2010, by age, sex and remoteness.

Table 7.8: Number and proportion of CACP recipients, by Indigenous status, by age, sex and remoteness, Australia, 30 June 2010

	Indigenous		Non-Indigenous		Not stated	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
Sex						
Male	519	4.4	11,357	95.6	5	0.0
Female	1,005	3.6	27,223	96.3	28	0.1
Age						
0–64	566	33.4	1,123	66.3	5	0.3
65–69	270	12.5	1,882	87.5	0	0.0
70–74	233	6.5	3,372	93.5	1	0.0
75+	455	1.4	32,203	98.5	27	0.1
Remoteness						
Major cities	284	1.1	25,412	98.8	32	0.1
Inner regional	344	4.1	8,097	95.9	4	0.0
Outer regional	273	9.1	2,717	90.8	3	0.1
Remote	184	37.1	312	62.9	0	0.0
Very remote	320	77.3	94	22.7	0	0.0

Source: AIHW analysis of data from DoHA's Ageing and Aged Care data warehouse

- The proportion of CACP recipients who identified as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin was slightly higher for males (4.4%) than females (3.6%); higher for recipients aged 0–64 (33.4%), followed by age 65–69 (12.5%); and was much higher for recipients in *Remote* (37.1%) and *Very remote* areas (77.3%) than in *Major cities* (1.1%) and *Inner regional* areas (4.1%).
- Rates of not stated Indigenous status were close to 0% for all characteristics examined in Table 7.8.

New admissions

Table 7.9 presents the rates of newly admitted CACP recipients by Indigenous status in 2004–05 and 2009–10, for each state and territory.

In 2004–05:

- Nationally, 2.5% of newly admitted CACP recipients identified as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin. This ranged from 0.9% in Victoria to 4.3% in Western Australia and 50.8% in the Northern Territory.
- There was only 1 newly admitted CACP recipient with not stated Indigenous status in Australia (0.0%).

In 2009–10:

- Nationally, 2.4% of newly admitted CACP recipients identified as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin. This ranged from 1% in South Australia to 3.6% in Western Australia and 41.2% in the Northern Territory.
- There were no newly admitted CACP recipients with not stated Indigenous status in Australia.

Table 7.9: Number and proportion of new admissions of CACP recipients, by Indigenous status, by state and territory, 2004–05 and 2009–10

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Australia
2004–05									
	Number								
Indigenous	74	30	61	57	17	5	6	94	344
Non-Indigenous	4,893	3,343	2,279	1,264	1,172	333	243	91	13,618
Not stated	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Total	4,967	3,374	2,340	1,321	1,189	338	249	185	13,963
	Per cent								
Indigenous	1.5	0.9	2.6	4.3	1.4	1.5	2.4	50.8	2.5
Non-Indigenous	98.5	99.1	97.4	95.7	98.6	98.5	97.6	49.2	97.5
Not stated	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
2009–10									
	Number								
Indigenous	94	75	97	90	16	8	8	96	484
Non-Indigenous	6,715	4,423	3,869	2,420	1,613	497	368	137	20,042
Not stated	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	6,809	4,498	3,966	2,510	1,629	505	376	233	20,526
	Per cent								
Indigenous	1.4	1.7	2.4	3.6	1.0	1.6	2.1	41.2	2.4
Non-Indigenous	98.6	98.3	97.6	96.4	99.0	98.4	97.9	58.8	97.6
Not stated	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: AIHW analysis of data from DoHA's Ageing and Aged Care data warehouse

Extended aged care at home and transition care programs

EACH and EACHD are similar to community aged care programs funded solely by the Australian Government, while TCP is a short-term care program jointly funded by the Australian Government, and states and territories. Due to small numbers, data are presented only at the national level. Also, as the years of data available differ between the aged care programs, only the latest year of data is presented (2009–10) (EACH was introduced in 2002, EACHD in 2006, and TCP in 2005–06).

EACH and EACHD packages have been designed to cater for those older Australians whose need is determined to be high care. EACHD packages are specifically designed to provide care for high-care clients with dementia-related behaviours. Types of care available include domestic assistance, transport, social support, personal care, respite care, and counselling. One of the main differences between EACH/EACHD and CACP is access to nursing care and allied health care for EACH/EACHD recipients.

TCP provides short-term care to older Australians directly after discharge from hospital. The package of services includes low-intensity therapy and either nursing support or personal care. TCP can be provided in a person's home or in a home-like residential setting. An initial ACAT assessment given in hospital is required for access to TCP, and care can last for up to 12 weeks; however, a further ACAT assessment can lengthen this by 6 weeks.

Total recipients

Table 7.10 presents national data on EACH, EACHD, and TCP recipients by Indigenous status as at 30 June 2010.

Table 7.10: Number and proportion of EACH, EACHD, and TCP recipients, by Indigenous status, Australia, 30 June 2010

	Number			Per cent		
	EACH	EACHD	TCP	EACH	EACHD	TCP
Indigenous	97	26	18	1.8	1.1	0.8
Non-Indigenous	5,155	2,271	2,251	98.1	98.9	99.2
Not stated	2	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total	5,254	2,297	2,269	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: AIHW analysis of data from DoHA's Ageing and Aged Care data warehouse

As at 30 June 2010:

- The proportion of EACH, EACHD, and TCP recipients who identified as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin was 1.8%, 1.1% and 0.8%, respectively.
- There were only 2 EACH recipients with not stated Indigenous status, and no EACHD or TCP recipients with not stated Indigenous status.

New admissions

Table 7.11 presents national data on new admissions of EACH, EACHD, and TCP recipients by Indigenous status in 2009–10.

In 2009–10:

- The proportion of newly admitted EACH, EACHD, and TCP recipients who identified as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin was 2%, 1% and 0.8%, respectively.
- There were no newly admitted EACH, EACHD, or TCP recipients with not stated Indigenous status.

Table 7.11: Number and proportion of new admissions of EACH, EACHD, and TCP recipients, by Indigenous status, Australia, 2009–10

	Number			Per cent		
	EACH	EACHD	TCP	EACH	EACHD	TCP
Indigenous	77	20	106	2.0	1.0	0.8
Non-Indigenous	3,847	1,999	13,207	98.0	99.0	99.2
Not stated	0	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total	3,924	2,019	13,313	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: AIHW analysis of data from DoHA's Ageing and Aged Care data warehouse

Changes in rates of not stated Indigenous status—RACS, CACP, EACH, EACHD, and TCP

This section presents changes over time in the rates of not stated Indigenous status for the RACS, CACP, EACH, EACHD, and TCP programs. National changes over time are presented for all programs. Time series analyses are also provided by jurisdiction for RACS and CACP.

National

Total recipients

As shown in Table 7.12, between 2004 and 2010:

- The proportion of permanent aged care residents with not stated Indigenous status steadily decreased from 6.5% at 30 June 2004 to 1.3% in 2010.
- The proportion of CACP recipients with not stated Indigenous status remained low, and decreased from 0.8% in 2004 to 0.1% in 2008.
- The proportion of EACH recipients with not stated Indigenous status was almost 0% from 2006 to 2010.
- Among EACHD and TCP recipients, there were no cases with not stated Indigenous status between 2006 and 2010.

Table 7.12: Number and proportion recipients with not stated Indigenous status in RACS, CACP, EACH, EACHD, and TCP programs, Australia, as at 30 June, 2004 to 2010

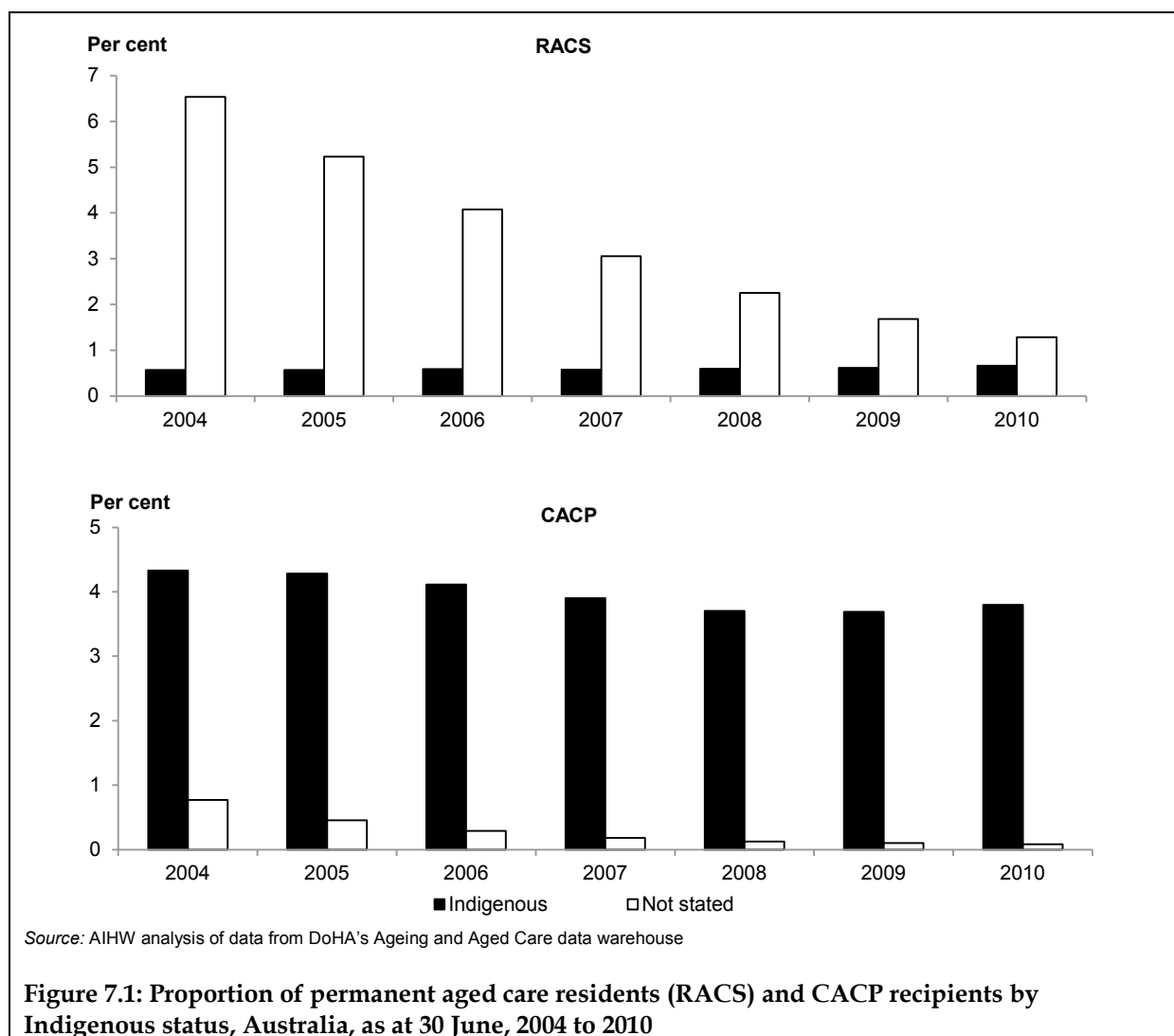
	RACS	CACP	EACH	EACHD	TCP
Number					
2004	9,472	213	13	n.a.	n.a.
2005	7,797	131	7	n.a.	n.a.
2006	6,183	92	2	0	0
2007	4,684	64	2	0	0
2008	3,534	47	2	0	0
2009	2,677	39	2	0	0
2010	2,091	33	2	0	0
Per cent					
2004	6.5	0.8	1.8	n.a.	n.a.
2005	5.2	0.5	0.6	n.a.	n.a.
2006	4.1	0.3	0.1	0.0	0.0
2007	3.1	0.2	0.1	0.0	0.0
2008	2.2	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0
2009	1.7	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
2010	1.3	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0

n.a. not available

Source: AIHW analysis of data from DoHA's Ageing and Aged Care data warehouse

Figure 7.1 shows the proportion of permanent aged care residents and CACP recipients who identified as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin, or with not stated Indigenous status between 2004 and 2010.

- For residential aged care, while there was a progressive decrease in the rates of not stated Indigenous status during this 7-year period, the proportion of permanent aged care residents who identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander remained relatively constant at about 0.6%.
- For CACP, while there was a slight decrease in the rates of not stated Indigenous status during the 7 years, there was also a slight decrease in the proportion of Indigenous CACP recipients (from 4.3% in 2004 to 3.8% in 2010).



New admissions

As shown in Table 7.13, between 2004–05 and 2009–10:

- The proportion of newly admitted permanent aged care residents with not stated Indigenous status decreased from 1.9% in 2004–05 to 0.0% in 2006–07 (after which the rate remained at 0.0% to 2009–10).
- For CACP, EACH, EACHD, and TCP programs, the proportion of newly admitted clients with not stated Indigenous status remained at 0.0% between 2005–06 and 2009–10.

Table 7.13: Number and proportion of newly admitted recipients with not stated Indigenous status in RACS, CACP, EACH, EACHD, and TCP programs (per cent), Australia, 2004–05 to 2009–10

	RACS	CACP	EACH	EACH-D	TCP
Number					
2004-05	990	1	5	n.a.	n.a.
2005-06	465	1	0	0	0
2006-07	12	4	0	0	0
2007-08	1	3	0	0	0
2008-09	4	2	0	0	0
2009-10	2	0	0	0	0
Per cent					
2004-05	1.9	0.0	0.5	n.a.	n.a.
2005-06	0.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
2006-07	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
2007-08	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
2008-09	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
2009-10	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

n.a. not available

Source: AIHW analysis of data from DoHA's Ageing and Aged Care data warehouse

State/territory

Total recipients

As shown in Table 7.14, between 2004 and 2010:

- In the RACS program, for all jurisdictions, there was a progressive decrease in rates of not stated Indigenous status. This was particularly notable for New South Wales (from 8.4% in 2004 to 1.6% in 2010), Queensland (from 7.6% to 2.1%), South Australia (8.3% to 1.4%), and the Northern Territory (7.2% to 1.2%).
- In the CACP program, in New South Wales and Victoria, rates of not stated Indigenous status were slightly higher than other jurisdictions between 2004 and 2006 (for example, in 2004, the rate was 0.8% in NSW and 1.5% in Victoria). For all other jurisdictions, these rates remained close to 0% over the 7 years.

Table 7.14: Proportion of recipients with not stated Indigenous status in RACS and CACP programs (per cent), by state and territory, as at 30 June, 2004 to 2010

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Australia
RACS	Per cent								
2004	8.4	3.8	7.6	4.4	8.3	2.3	3.7	7.2	6.5
2005	6.1	2.8	8.1	3.2	6.1	1.6	2.8	5.7	5.2
2006	4.6	2.1	7.0	2.4	4.6	1.2	2.1	4.1	4.1
2007	3.5	1.5	5.3	1.6	3.4	0.7	1.4	3.4	3.1
2008	2.6	1.1	3.9	1.1	2.6	0.6	0.9	2.4	2.2
2009	2.0	0.8	2.8	0.9	1.9	0.4	0.6	1.8	1.7
2010	1.6	0.6	2.1	0.8	1.4	0.3	0.3	1.2	1.3
CACP	Per cent								
2004	0.8	1.5	0.5	0.2	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.8
2005	0.5	0.9	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.5
2006	0.3	0.5	0.2	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.3
2007	0.2	0.4	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2
2008	0.1	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1
2009	0.1	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1
2010	0.1	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1

Source: AIHW analysis of DoHA's Ageing and Aged Care data warehouse

New admissions

Between 2004–05 and 2009–10:

- In the RACS program, for all jurisdictions except Queensland, rates of not stated Indigenous status among newly admitted permanent aged care residents were close to 0% over the 6 years. In Queensland, the rate was 10.2% in 2004–05 and 4.9% in 2005–06; from 2006–07 onwards, these rates dropped to around 0%.
- Rates of not stated Indigenous status among newly admitted CACP recipients remained around 0% for all jurisdictions over the 6 years.

The discrepancy between rates of not stated Indigenous status between total recipients data and new admissions data (where there have been almost no recipients with not stated Indigenous status) is indicative of improvements in the recording of Indigenous status in recent years.

Update on data collection and reporting practices

This section provides information on the current collection and reporting practices in residential aged care programs and aged care packages in the community, as well as activities undertaken to improve Indigenous status data quality. It focuses on any inconsistencies between current practices of aged care services, and the ABS national standard for collecting and recording Indigenous status.

The *National best practice guidelines for collecting Indigenous status in health data sets* were disseminated by the AIHW to members of the Aged Care Information Management Working Group (which includes representatives from the aged care divisions/program areas within DoHA who are responsible for the aged care data sets, those responsible for development and implementation of policies and practices, and Information Technology representatives in April 2012.

The information presented was provided by DoHA.

Indigenous status question, response categories and recording practices

The Aged Care Client Record form is used by ACATs to collect client information, including Indigenous status data. Data from the forms are recorded in the Ageing and Aged Care data warehouse and certain data items on this form make up the ACAP MDS. Data items on the form are collected in accordance with the ACAP Data Dictionary.

The form includes the standard ABS Indigenous status question and response options, and the ACAP Data Dictionary (DoHA 2011) includes the standard Indigenous status coding categories. The data dictionary stipulates that the reporting requirement for the Indigenous status data item is 'conditional'. The 'reporting requirement' field specifies whether the collection of a data item is 'mandatory', 'conditional' or 'optional'. Although not defined in the data dictionary, 'conditional' means that the collection of the data is dependent upon the person being referred to an aged care program. This means that the collection of Indigenous status does not become mandatory until *after* the person has received a referral, and this data is collected upon registration to an aged care program.

The data dictionary states that 'Not stated/inadequately described' should only be used when the person has not provided this information upon request and/or the ACAT is unable to make an informed judgment or the assessment is 'In-progress'. The dictionary states that this coding option of 'Not stated/inadequately described' is provided for Aged Care Assessment Program Minimum Data Set version 2 reporting purposes and should not be included on primary data collection tools (for example, client information forms). The dictionary also stipulates that responses to the Indigenous status question should not be based on the perceptions of anyone other than the client or their advocate, and that non-Indigenous status should not be taken as default in the presence of no other evidence.

Activities to improve Indigenous status data quality

This section provides information on activities and practices undertaken to improve the quality of Indigenous data in community and residential aged care programs since the 2007 data quality report. Information was provided by DoHA.

National Indigenous data quality improvement activities

The 2007 report provided information on a number of changes that had been made to the ACAP form in 2002–03 that resulted in improved processes of assessment data and a decline in the rate of not stated Indigenous status responses between 2003 and 2005.

Since the 2007 report, DoHA has undertaken a number of activities to improve the quality of data collected on aged care programs in Australia. Although these activities have not specifically targeted Indigenous status data, general data quality – including Indigenous status data – has improved as a result of DoHA's efforts.

The activities include the introduction of the Ageing and Aged Care data warehouse, where the quality of ACAP MDS data is controlled by DoHA, ensuring an improvement in the quality of all data. The Electronic Aged Care Client Record process was also implemented in 2008, and complements the data warehouse. These processes have improved the level of accuracy on data entry.

Improvements to overall data quality have been achieved by including key performance indicators related to data quality in the National Partnership Agreements with states and territories. There are also two activities that are important to note, which are expected to lead to improvements in the quality of Indigenous status data across the aged care programs:

- DoHA produces a newsletter called *ACAT CHAT*, which is designed to keep Aged Care Assessment Teams up to date on current issues and informed about new policy and program initiatives. In February 2012, an article on the *National best practice guidelines for collecting Indigenous status in health data sets* appeared in the newsletter, which outlined the purpose of the guidelines and provided a link to the document online.
- The Aged Care Working Group (ACWG) has proposed that a consistent methodology be used in reporting Indigenous status across the aged care sector, to deal with 'not stated' Indigenous status data. The proposed method, based on a paper developed by DoHA (DoHA 2012), is to exclude 'not stated' Indigenous status responses from analyses of Indigenous and non-Indigenous data, but to include 'not stated' responses when analysing the totals (rather than pro-rating or distributing 'not stated' responses to Indigenous and non-Indigenous data, or combining 'non-Indigenous' and 'not stated' Indigenous status into an 'Other' category). The use of a consistent methodology will allow greater comparability of data and more consistency of time series reporting for data on Indigenous Australians.

Additional information related to data quality

In the ACAP National Data Repository Minimum Data Set annual report for 2007–2008 (NDR 2009), it was reported that, in Australia, Indigenous clients were under-represented in referrals for ACAP assessments in all states and territories; the representation of Indigenous people among referrals to the ACAP was only 46% of what could be expected from their proportion of the target population.

It was also noted in this report that the relatively high rate of ACAP assessments among Indigenous people in Western Australia could be attributed to three factors: the development of close relationships between Aged Care Assessment Teams with communities and community workers in areas with high proportions of Indigenous clients, frequent reassessments of Indigenous clients due to chronic diseases and premature ageing among Indigenous Australians, and the potential over-reliance of Indigenous clients on ACATs to

provide assessments due to the lack of services in remote areas. The low rates of assessment of Indigenous clients in other jurisdictions has been attributed to a preference for Indigenous-specific services and poor identification of Indigenous clients in the ACAP MDS (which was particularly the case for MDS version 1, for which Indigenous status was poorly recorded) (NDR 2009).

Summary of findings

- Rates of not stated Indigenous status are typically very low for the community and residential aged care programs. The national proportion of recipients with not stated Indigenous status as at 30 June 2010 was 1.3% in the RACS program, and about 0% for CACP, EACH, EACHD, and TCP programs.
- For the RACS program, there was a substantial decrease in the proportion of permanent aged care residents with not stated Indigenous status in all jurisdictions between 30 June 2004 and 30 June 2010. Nationally, the not stated rate declined from 6.5% in 2004 to 1.3% in 2010. The greatest declines were evident for New South Wales and South Australia (declines of about 7 percentage points). For the CACP program, these rates remained close to 0% in all jurisdictions over the 7 years.
- For new client admissions data, there was a marked decrease in the number and proportion of permanent aged care residents with not stated Indigenous status from almost 1,000 (1.9%) in 2004–05 to close to zero in 2009–10.
- There were no apparent trends associated with age, sex or remoteness for data reported in 2010 (rates were close to 0% for all programs).
- The ACAP Data Dictionary outlines the Indigenous status question, response options and recording categories consistent with the national standard. It does not mandate the collection of Indigenous status until after the person has received a referral to an aged care program.
- Since the 2007 data quality report there have been efforts to improve the consistency with which 'not stated' Indigenous status data is analysed and reported across the aged care sector. DoHA has undertaken a number of activities to improve the quality of data collected on aged care programs in Australia, which has resulted in enhanced Indigenous status data quality. In addition, an article on the *National best practice guidelines for collecting Indigenous status information in health data sets* was included in the ACAT CHAT newsletter distributed to Aged Care Assessment Teams.

Recommendations for improvements to Indigenous status data quality

Recommendation 1

ACAT Data Dictionary to be amended to:

- a. stipulate that the Indigenous status data item is mandatory to complete (noting that clients have the right to refuse to answer the question) and provide a definition of what is currently meant by 'conditional' in the reporting requirement field for Indigenous status (that is, that the collection of the data is dependent upon the person being referred to an aged care program and its collection does not become mandatory until after the person has received a referral, and this data is collected upon registration to an aged care program)
- b. reference the *National best practice guidelines for collecting Indigenous status information in health data sets*
- c. modify the wording used which specifies when the coding category 'Not stated/ inadequately described' can be used to be more consistent with the guidelines. This would involve removing the current wording in the dictionary that states that this category can be used 'when the ACAT is unable to make an informed judgement' and replacing with 'where the question was not able to be asked prior to completion of assistance because the client was unable to communicate or a person who knows the client was not available'.

Recommendation 2

All training materials to include a rationale for the collection of Indigenous status and to reference the *National best practice guidelines for collecting Indigenous status information in health data sets*.

Recommendation 3

A consistent methodology should be used for dealing with 'not stated' Indigenous status data in reporting across the aged care sector (to exclude 'not stated' Indigenous status responses from analyses of Indigenous and non-Indigenous data, but to include 'not stated' responses when analysing the totals).

Recommendation 4

Efforts should be concentrated on the small number of agency outlets that have very high rates of not stated Indigenous status and account for the majority of missing data (these are likely to be those with low proportions of Indigenous residents).

Recommendation 5

Investigate the feasibility of collecting client information on recipients of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Flexible Aged Care Program and Multi-Purpose Services for future inclusion in the Ageing and Aged Care data warehouse.

Appendix A: National standard for Indigenous status

This appendix contains the national standard for Indigenous status as outlined in the National best practice guidelines for collecting Indigenous status in health data sets.

The guidelines contain the recommended ABS question for the collection of Indigenous status, the ABS standard response options with an optional fourth response category, and the ABS recommended national categories for recording Indigenous status as set out in the National Health Data Dictionary, the National Community Services Data Dictionary, and in the AIHW's Metadata Online Registry, METeOR. The guidelines also contain information on identifying records for follow-up, and permit and encourage local data management systems to use additional recording categories for '9 Not stated/inadequately described' for the purposes of workflow management and follow-up, which must be mapped to the correct national category before the data are provided to the state/territory or national data custodian.

Asking the question

The standard Indigenous status question

The following question should be asked of all clients to establish their Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander or non-Indigenous status:

'Are you [is the person] of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin?'

The standard response options

Three standard response options should be provided to clients to answer the question (either verbally or on a written form):

- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes, Aboriginal
- ☐ Yes, Torres Strait Islander

For clients of both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin, both 'Yes' boxes should be marked.

Alternatively, a fourth response category may also be included if this better suits the data collection practices of the agency or establishment concerned:

- ☐ Yes, both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

If the question has not been completed on a returned form, this should be followed up and confirmed with the client.

How to ask the question

Staff responsible for registering a client should ask the Indigenous status question when the client is first registered with the service. The question should be asked of *all* clients irrespective of appearance, country of birth or whether the staff know of the client or their family background.

The question should be placed within the context of other questions related to cultural background, such as country of birth and main language spoken. If a form is used, a preamble may be included to introduce questions related to cultural background and identity, however, this is not a requirement. Should service providers feel a preamble is necessary, the following statement is suggested:

'The following information will assist in the planning and provision of appropriate and improved health care and services.'

Clients may be asked the question directly, or asked to complete a form with the question included, and the client should answer this question themselves. There are some situations, such as in the case of birth and death registrations, when the client will be unable to answer the question. In these instances it is acceptable for certain others – such as a close friend, relative or member of the household – to be asked the question and to answer the question on the client's behalf if they feel confident to provide accurate information. In instances when a client may be temporarily unable to answer the question, it is also acceptable for certain others who know the client well to respond on their behalf; however, this response should be verified with the client wherever possible.

Recording responses

How to record responses

Information systems should record Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander or non-Indigenous status information using the national categories for recording Indigenous status as set out in the *National Health Data Dictionary*. These categories are:

1. Aboriginal but not Torres Strait Islander origin
2. Torres Strait Islander but not Aboriginal origin
3. Both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin
4. Neither Aboriginal nor Torres Strait Islander origin
9. Not stated/inadequately described

Responses should be coded as follows:

Response	Coding category
'Yes, Aboriginal' is ticked but 'Yes, Torres Strait Islander' is not ticked	1
'Yes, Torres Strait Islander' is ticked but 'Yes, Aboriginal' is not ticked	2
'Yes, Aboriginal' is ticked and 'Yes, Torres Strait Islander' is also ticked	3
'No' is ticked	4
'No' is ticked and either or both 'Yes, Aboriginal', and 'Yes, Torres Strait Islander' are ticked	9
Client is capable of responding but declines to respond following prompting/follow-up	9
Where it is impossible for the question to be asked during the contact episode	9
Response to the question has been left blank or is incomplete	9

Mandatory completion

A response to the Indigenous status item should be a mandatory requirement when registering or entering client details in electronic data recording systems. Staff registering or entering details of a client should not be able to complete the registration until a response for the Indigenous status item has been completed.

Identifying records for follow-up

Local data management systems should be able to identify those records that are coded as 9 (Not stated/inadequately described), because of situations where it was impossible for the question to be asked during the contact episode and other situations where the response was left blank or incomplete. These records require follow-up and therefore should be distinguished from records that were coded as 9 because the client had declined to respond.

While additional categories could be used in local systems for the purposes of workflow management and follow-up, finalised records must be mapped to the correct national category before the data are provided to the state, territory or national data custodian.

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This report examines the identification of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients in a number of Australian Institute of Health and Welfare community services data collections, by analysing where Indigenous status is missing/not stated.

It makes a number of recommendations, including that data collection manuals and training materials reflect the National best practice guidelines for collecting Indigenous status in health data sets. Where necessary, jurisdictions should consider modifying client forms and client information management systems to ensure consistency with these guidelines.