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# Principal procedure

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**Important note: This is an archived metadata standard from the AIHW Knowledgebase. For current metadata standards and related information please access METeOR, the AIHW's Metadata Online Registry at <http://meteor.aihw.gov.au>**

## *Identifying and Definitional Attributes*

Data Dictionary: NHDD  
Knowledgebase ID: 000137                      Version number: 2  
Metadata type: DATA ELEMENT  
Registration Authority: NHIMG                      Admin status: SUPERSEDED  
Effective date: 30-JUN-95

Definition: The procedure which consumed the greatest amount of hospital resources or, if this cannot be determined, that which was the definitive treatment for the principal diagnosis.

Procedures which should be coded:

- are surgical in nature;
- carry a procedural risk; or
- carry an anaesthetic risk; and
- require special facilities or equipment only available in an acute care setting (Eagar, Innes 1992a, 1992b, 1992c).

Context: Institutional health care: this item gives an indication of the extent to which specialised resources, for example, human resources, theatres and equipment, are used. It also provides an estimate of the numbers of major surgical operations performed and the extent to which particular procedures are used to resolve medical problems. It is required for classification of acute patients into Australian National Diagnosis Related Groups.

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## *Relational and Representational Attributes*

Datatype: Numeric  
Representational form: CODE  
Representation layout: ?  
Minimum Size: 4  
Maximum Size: 4  
Data Domain: NOVAL      ICD-9-CM  
Guide For Use: The classification is revised annually by the National Center for Health Statistics in the USA. New editions are published each

