

---

# Primary site of cancer

---

**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: 000776                      Version number: 1  
Metadata type: DATA ELEMENT  
Registration Authority: NHIMG                      Admin status: SUPERSEDED  
Effective date: 01-MAR-05  
Definition: The primary site is the site of origin of the tumour, as opposed to the secondary or metastatic sites. It is described by reporting the anatomical position (topography) of the tumour.  
Context: This information is collected for the purpose of:  
-classifying tumours into clinically-relevant groupings on the basis of both their site of origin and their histological type  
-monitoring the number of new cases of cancer for planning treatment services  
-epidemiological studies.

---

## *Relational and Representational Attributes*

Datatype: Alphanumeric  
Representational form: CODE  
Representation layout: ANNNN  
Minimum Size: 3  
Maximum Size: 5  
Data Domain: NOVAL      Cancer registries:  
The current version of International Classification of Diseases for Oncology (ICDO).  
Hospitals:  
The current edition of International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems, Tenth Revision, Australian Modification (ICD-10-AM).  
Guide For Use: Report the primary site of cancer, if known, for patients who have been diagnosed with a cancer. In ICD-10, primary site is identified using a single 4 digit code Cxx.x or Dxx.x. In ICDO,

primary site is identified using both the Cxx.x code identifying site and the behaviour code to identify whether the site is the primary site. The behaviour code numbers used in ICDO are listed below :

- 0 Benign
- 1 Uncertain whether benign or malignant
  - borderline malignancy
  - low malignant potential
- 2 Carcinoma in situ
  - intraepithelial
  - non-infiltrating
  - non-invasive
- 3 Malignant, primary site
- 6 Malignant, metastatic site
  - malignant, secondary site
- 9 Malignant, uncertain whether primary or metastatic site

Collection Methods: Cancer registries use Site codes from the current version of ICDO.

In a hospital setting, primary site of cancer should be recorded on the patient's medical record by the patient's attending clinician or medical practitioner, and coded by the hospital's medical records department.

Hospitals use Diagnosis codes from ICD-10-AM. Valid codes must start with C or D.

In hospital reporting, the diagnosis code for each separate primary site cancer will be reported as a Principal diagnosis or an Additional diagnosis as defined in the current edition of the Australian Coding Standards. In death reporting, the Australian Bureau of Statistics uses ICD-10.

Some ICD-10-AM diagnosis codes e.g. mesothelioma and Kaposi's sarcoma, are based on morphology and not site alone, and include tumours of these types even where the primary site is unknown.

Related metadata: is a qualifier of Laterality of primary cancer version 1

---

