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# Given name(s)

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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: Int. NCSDD & NHDD  
Knowledgebase ID: 002008                      Version number: 2  
Metadata type: DATA ELEMENT  
Registration Authority: NCSIMG & NHIMG                      Admin status: SUPERSEDED  
Effective date: 01-MAR-05  
Definition: The person's identifying name(s) within the family group or by which the person is socially identified.  
Context: Administrative purposes and individual identification.

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## *Relational and Representational Attributes*

Datatype: Alphanumeric  
Representational form: TEXT  
Representation layout: AN(40)  
Minimum Size: 0  
Maximum Size: 40  
Data Domain: NOVAL      Text  
Guide For Use: The agency or establishment should record the client's full given name(s) on their information systems.  
NCSDD specific:  
In instances where there is uncertainty about which name to record for a person living in a remote Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander community, Centrelink follows the practice of recording the Indigenous person's name as it is first provided to Centrelink. Or, where proof of identity is required, as the name is recorded on a majority of the higher point scoring documents that are produced as proof of identity.  
NHDD specific  
Health care establishments may record given names (first and other given names) in one field or several fields. This data element definition applies regardless of the format of data recording.  
A full history of names is to be retained.

Collection Methods: This data element should be recorded for all clients.

Given name(s) should be recorded in the format preferred by the person. The format should be the same as that written by the person on a (pre) registration form or in the same format as that printed on an identification card, such as Medicare card, to ensure consistent collection of name data.

It is acknowledged that some people use more than one given name (e.g. formal name, birth name, nick name or shortened name, or tribal name) depending on the circumstances. A person is able to change his or her name by usage in all States and Territories of Australia with the exception of Western Australia, where a person may only change his or her name under the Change of Name Act. A person should generally be registered using their preferred name as it is more likely to be used in common usage and on subsequent visits to the agency or establishment. The person's preferred name may in fact be their legal (or Medicare card) name. The Name Type data element (see Comments) can be used to distinguish between the different types of names that may be used by the person.

The following format may assist with data collection:

What is the given name you would like to be known by?

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Are you known by any other given names that you would like recorded?

If so, what are they

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Please indicate the 'type' of given name that is to be recorded:

(a) Medicare card name (if different to preferred name).

(b) Alias (any other name that you are known by).

Whenever a person informs the agency or establishment of a change of given name (e.g. prefers to be known by their middle name), the former name should be recorded according to the appropriate name type. Do not delete or overwrite a previous given name e.g. 'Mary Georgina Smith' informs the hospital that she prefers to be known as 'Georgina'. Record 'Georgina' as her preferred 'Given Name' and record 'Mary' as the Medicare card 'Given Name'.

e.g. The agency or establishment is informed that 'Baby of Louise Jones' has been named 'Mary Jones'. Retain 'Baby of Louise' as the newborn name and also record 'Mary' as the preferred 'Given Name'.

Registering an unidentified health care client:

If the person is a health care client and her/his given name is not known record unknown in the 'Given Name' field and use alias name type. When the person's name becomes known, add the

actual name as preferred Name Type (or other as appropriate). Do not delete or overwrite the alias name of unknown.

Use of first initial:

If the person's given name is not known, but the first letter (initial) of the given name is known, record the first letter in the preferred 'Given Name' field. Do not record a full stop following the initial.

Persons with only one name:

Some people do not have a family name and a given name: they have only one name by which they are known. If the person has only one name, record it in the 'Family Name' field and leave the 'Given Name' blank.

Multiple given names (middle, second, third etc names):

All of the person's given names should be recorded in the 'Given Name' field, leaving a space between each name.

Record complete information:

If the person has many given names and all of them cannot fit in the field, record as many names in full as possible, in preference to recording initials.

Shortened or alternate first given name:

If the person uses a shortened version or an alternate version of their first given name, record their preferred name, the actual name as their Medicare card name and any alternative versions as alias names as appropriate.

e.g. The person's given name is Jennifer but she prefers to be called Jenny. Record 'Jenny' as the preferred 'Given Name' and 'Jennifer' as her Medicare card name.

e.g. The person's given name is 'Giovanni' but he prefers to be called 'John'. Record 'John' as the preferred 'Given Name' and 'Giovanni' as the Medicare card name.

Punctuation:

If special characters form part of the given names they shall be included, e.g. hyphenated names shall be entered with the hyphen.

- hyphen, eg. Anne-Maree, Mary-Jane

Do not leave a space before or after the hyphen, i.e. between last letter of 'Anne' and the hyphen, nor a space between the hyphen and the first letter of 'Maree'.

- spaces, e.g. Jean Claude

If the person has recorded their given name as more than one word, displaying spaces in between the words, record their given names in data collection systems in the same way.

e.g. Oscar Peter, Wendy Hilda

Leave a single space between the person's first name and each of their middle names.

Registering an unnamed newborn baby:

An unnamed (newborn) baby is to be registered using the mother's

given name in conjunction with the prefix 'Baby of' . For example, if the baby's mother's given name is Fiona, then record 'Baby of Fiona' in the preferred 'Given Name' field for the baby. This name is recorded under the newborn Name Type. If a name is subsequently given, record the new name as the preferred given name and retain the newborn name.

Registering unnamed multiple births:

An unnamed (newborn) baby from a multiple birth should use their mother's given name plus a reference to the multiple birth. For example, if the baby's mother's given name is 'Fiona' and a set of twins is to be registered, then record 'Twin 1 of Fiona' in the Given Name field for the first born baby, and 'Twin 2 of Fiona' in the 'Given Name' field of the second born baby. Arabic numbers (1, 2, 3 ... ) are used, not Roman Numerals (I, II, III .....).

In the case of triplets or other multiple births the same logic applies. The following terms should be use for recording multiple births:

- Twin: use Twin i.e. Twin 1 of Fiona
- Triplet: use Trip i.e. Trip 1 of Fiona
- Quadruplet: use Quad i.e. Quad 1 of Fiona
- Quintuplet: use Quin i.e. Quin 1 of Fiona
- Sextuplet: use Sext i.e. Sext 1 of Fiona
- Septuplet: use Sept i.e. Sept 1 of Fiona.

These names should be recorded under the newborn Name Type. When the babies are named, the actual names should be recorded as the preferred name. The newborn name is retained.

Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander names not for continued use:

For cultural reasons, an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander may advise an agency or establishment that they are no longer using the given name that they had previously registered and are now using an alternative current name. Record their current name as the preferred 'Given Name' and record their previous used given name as an alias name.

Ethnic Names:

The Centrelink Naming Systems for Ethnic Groups publication provides the correct coding for ethnic names. Refer to Ethnic Names Condensed Guide for summary information.

Misspelled given names:

If the person's given name has been misspelled in error, update the Given Name field with the correct spelling and record the misspelled given name as an Alias Name. Recording misspelled names is important for filing documents that may be issued with previous versions of the client's name. Discretion should be used regarding the degree of recording that is maintained.

Often people use a variety of names, including legal names,

married/maiden names, nicknames, assumed names, traditional names, etc. Even small differences in recording - such as the difference between Thomas and Tom - can make Record linkage impossible. To minimise discrepancies in the recording and reporting of name information, agencies or establishments should ask the person for their full (formal) Given name and Family name. These may be different from the name that the person may prefer the agency or establishment workers to use in personal dealings. Agencies or establishments may choose to separately record the preferred name that the person wishes to be used by agency or establishment workers. In some cultures it is traditional to state the family name first. To overcome discrepancies in recording/reporting that may arise as a result of this practice, agencies or establishments should always ask the person to specify their first given name and their family or surname separately. These should then be recorded as Given name and Family name as appropriate, regardless of the order in which they may be traditionally given.

Related metadata: supersedes the NCSDD data element Given name version 1  
relates to the NCSDD data concept Record linkage version 2  
supersedes the NHDD data element Given name(s) version 1  
relates to the NCSDD data concept Family version 2

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### *Administrative Attributes*

Source Document: Commonwealth Department of Health and Family Services 1998.  
Home and Community Care Data Dictionary Version 1.0.  
Canberra: DHFS.  
Standards Australia 2002. Australian Standard AS5017-2002  
Health Care Client Identification. Sydney: Standards Australia.

Source Organisation: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare  
Standards Australia  
National Health Data Committee and National Community  
Services Data Committee

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Comments: This metadata item is common to both the National Community Services Data Dictionary and the National Health Data Dictionary. NCSDD specific  
Selected letters of the Given name in combination with selected letters of the Family name, Date of birth and Sex may be used for Record linkage for statistical purposes only (see data concept Record linkage).  
Name type is a metadata item in Australian Standard AS5017-2002 Health care client identification (Standards Australia 2002) and in the National Health Data Dictionary, Version 12 (NHDC 2003). In

both cases the Data domain refers to Code A Alias name; Code M Medicare card name; Code N Newborn name; and Code P Preferred name. A name type data element is being considered for inclusion in a future version of the National Community Services Data Dictionary.

### *Data Element Links*

#### *Information Model Entities linked to this Data Element*

NCSIM    Other person characteristic

#### *Data Agreements which include this Data Element*

DSS - Health care client identification                          From 02-Sep-03 to

DSS - Cancer (clinical)    From 04-Jun-04 to

