
Proficiency in spoken English

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: 002023 Version number: 2
Metadata type: DATA ELEMENT
Registration Authority: NCSIMG & NHIMG Admin status: SUPERSEDED
Effective date: 01-MAR-05
Definition: A person's self-assessed level of ability to speak English.
Context: This data element identifies those people who may suffer disadvantage in terms of their ability to access services due to lack of ability in the spoken English language. This information can be used to target the provision of services to people whose lack of ability in spoken English is potentially a barrier to gaining access to government programs and services.
In conjunction with 'Indigenous status', 'Main language other than English spoken at home' and 'Country of birth', this data element forms the minimum core set of cultural and language indicators recommended by the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

Relational and Representational Attributes

Datatype: Numeric
Representational form: CODE
Representation layout: N
Minimum Size: 1
Maximum Size: 1
Data Domain: 0 Not applicable (persons under 5 years of age or who speak only English)
 1 Very well
 2 Well
 3 Not well
 4 Not at all
 9 Not stated/ inadequately described

Guide For Use: Code 0, Not applicable, is to be used for people under 5 year of age and people who speak only English.

Code 9, Not stated/inadequately described, is not to be used on primary collection forms. It is primarily for use in administrative collections when transferring data from data sets where the item has not been collected.

Collection Methods: This data element is only intended to be collected if a person has a 'Main language other than English spoken at home'; and/or 'First Language spoken' is not English.

Recommended question:

How well do you speak English? (tick one)

1. Very well

2. Well

3. Not well

4. Not at all

Generally this would be a self-reported question, but in some circumstances (particularly where a person does not speak English well) assistance will be required in answering this question. It is important that the person's self-assessed proficiency in spoken English be recorded wherever possible. This data element does not purport to be a technical assessment of proficiency but is a self-assessment in the four broad categories outlined above.

This data element is not relevant to and should not be collected for persons under the age of five years.

While agencies are encouraged to use the recommended question described above, it is acknowledged that this is not always possible in practice. For example, where the data collection is a by-product of the provision of a health or community service, the information may be ascertained using different means. However, this standard should be used wherever practically possible.

Related metadata: supersedes the NHDD data element Proficiency in spoken English version 1

supersedes the NCSDD data element Proficiency in spoken English version 1

Administrative Attributes

Source Document: Australian Bureau of Statistics 1999. Standards for Statistics on Cultural and Language Diversity 1999. Cat. no. 1289.0. Canberra: ABS.

Reference through: <[http://](http://www.abs.gov.au/Ausstats/abs@.nsf/StatsLibrary)

www.abs.gov.au/Ausstats/abs@.nsf/StatsLibrary>.

Select Other ABS Statistical Standards, Standards for Social, Labour and Demographic Variables, Language Variables.

Source Organisation: Australian Bureau of Statistics

National Health Data Committee and National Community Services Data Committee

Comments: This metadata item is common to both the National Community Services Data Dictionary and the National Health Data Dictionary. The ABS advises that the most useful information provided by this data element is in the distinction between the two category groups of Very well/Well and Not well/Not at all.

Data Element Links

Information Model Entities linked to this Data Element

NCSIM Social-cultural characteristic

Data Agreements which include this Data Element
