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# Proficiency in spoken English

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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: 000643                      Version number: 1  
Metadata type: DATA ELEMENT  
Registration Authority: NHIMG                      Admin status: SUPERSEDED  
Effective date: 01-SEP-03  
Definition: A person's self stated proficiency in spoken English.  
Context: This data element is important in identifying those people most likely to suffer disadvantage in terms of their ability to access services due to language and/or cultural difficulties.  
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 (ABS).

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## *Relational and Representational Attributes*

Datatype: Numeric  
Representational form: CODE  
Representation layout: N  
Minimum Size: 1  
Maximum Size: 1  
Data Domain: 0                      Not applicable (person under 5 years of age)  
1                      Very well  
2                      Well  
3                      Not well  
4                      Not at all  
5                      Not stated/ inadequately described  
Guide For Use: This item is only used in conjunction with 'Main language other than English spoken at home'. The question should only be asked if a YES answer is given to the question "Do you speak a language other than English at home?"

Code 9 should only be used for past collections where this item

was not collected or if the person does not respond to the question. It should not be a response included on the collection form.

Collection Methods: Suggested question:

How well do you (does the person) speak English?

Very well? \_\_\_\_

Well? \_\_\_\_

Not well? \_\_\_\_

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 5.

Related metadata: relates to the data element Main language other than English spoken at home version 1  
relates to the data element Country of birth version 3  
has been superseded by Int. NCSDD & NHDD Proficiency in spoken English version 2

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## *Administrative Attributes*

Source Document: Standards for Statistics on Cultural and Language Diversity, ABS 1999, Cat No. 1289.0

Source Organisation: Australian Bureau of Statistics

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Comments: 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*

NHIM Social characteristic

*Data Agreements which include this Data Element*

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