

Data standards

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Enquiries or comments on the METEOR metadata or download should be directed to the METEOR team at meteor@aihw.gov.au.

Data standards

Metadata is information about how data are defined, structured and represented. It makes data files meaningful by describing the information that has been captured in data, and how it is measured and represented.

The metadata endorsed for use across Australia are referred to as data standards. These standards improve the quality, relevance, consistency and availability of national information about the health and welfare of Australians. They describe the expected meaning and recommended representation of data for use within a defined context.

Consistent content and standard definitions for the collection of health and welfare information means that users can then understand and compare the data, regardless of how these data are collected or stored across different organisations and jurisdictions.

Data standards also help reduce the duplication of data. They provide a common and consistent platform for organisations to work from, and simplify the data development process by reusing standards that already exist. This makes the adoption and implementation of the standards easier across all jurisdictions, both locally and nationally.

These standards are critical for the development and implementation of policies for improving health and welfare outcomes for all Australians.

METEOR is based on the international information modelling standard [ISO/IEC 11179](#)

Approval process

In Australia, expert groups, registrars, data and information committees, and registration authorities work through the METEOR approval process to endorse metadata items, which then become metadata standards. This process ensures that the metadata are constructed correctly, are reusable and accurately describe the underlying data.

Expert groups

Expert groups are nationally-recognised subject matter experts, such as a national committee of diabetes care specialists. These groups do the initial development of national metadata standards for their particular subject area. They have a private workspace within METEOR to create draft items. Once the expert group has agreed upon the item, it is submitted to the registrar for consideration.

Registrars

A registrar takes proposed metadata items through the endorsement process. They act on behalf of a registration authority (see below). A registrar will undertake a quality assurance review of the item, discussing any concerns with the expert group. Once any concerns have been resolved, the registrar then submits the item to the relevant national data or information committee.

Data and information committees

The data or information committee reviews the candidate item. If it is accepted, the committee then sends it on to the relevant registration authority for endorsement.

Registration authorities

[Registration authorities](#) are official departments and organisations that endorse the data standards which apply to their sector.

The registration authorities of the relevant sector look over the recommendations made by the data or information committee, discuss any issues, and make the item standard once any concerns have been dealt with. This standard item is then made publicly available for use in a broad range of settings.

Each sector has its own approval processes and registration authorities.

Metadata quality assurance

Metadata needs to be reviewed for quality assurance before it is endorsed as a standard by a registration authority.

The AIHW offers a metadata support service for metadata developed or revised by a registration authority. This service ensures that your metadata is constructed correctly, is reusable and accurately describes the underlying data. [Contact us to find out how we can help you.](#)

