

# Disability

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# Disability

## Identifying and definitional attributes

**Metadata item type:** Glossary Item

**METEOR identifier:** 327304

**Registration status:** [Children and Families](#), Superseded 03/11/2021  
[Community Services \(retired\)](#), Standard 01/03/2005  
[Disability](#), Standard 07/10/2014  
[Health](#), Superseded 29/06/2016  
[Housing assistance](#), Standard 01/03/2005

**Definition:** Disability is the umbrella term for any or all of: an impairment of body structure or function, a limitation in activities, or a restriction in participation.

Disability is a multi-dimensional and complex concept and is conceived as a dynamic interaction between health conditions and environmental and personal factors (WHO 2001:6).

## Collection and usage attributes

## Comments:

Many different 'definitions' of disability are used in Australia, both in administrative data collections and in Acts of Parliament. The consistent identification of disability in national data collections has been recommended in a number of reports, for instance to enable:

- the monitoring of access to generic services by people with disability
- the collection of more consistent data on disability support and related services, including data on service use by different groups
- population data and service data to be related, thereby improving the nation's analytical capacity in relation to the need for and supply of services
- improved understanding of the relationship between disability, health conditions and other health outcomes.

Defining disability makes it possible to determine the number of people who are accessing services, both disability specific and generic, and also those with a disability in the general population with unmet need. Better definition of disability will aid better targeting of resources to those in need.

Disability arises from the interaction between health conditions and environmental and personal factors. A health condition may be a disease (acute or chronic), disorder, injury or trauma. Environmental factors make up the physical, social and attitudinal environment in which people live and conduct their lives. Personal factors relate to the individual, such as age, sex and Indigenous status.

The concept 'Disability' can be described using a combination of related metadata items as building blocks.

The metadata items selected may vary depending on the definition of disability used. For example, in hospital rehabilitation, the focus may be on the impairment and **activity** dimensions and in community-based care the focus may be primarily on participation. Some applications may require a broad scope for inclusion (e.g. discrimination legislation). Data collections relating to services will select combinations of the data elements, which best reflect the eligibility criteria for the service.

This glossary item is based on the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF). The ICF was endorsed by the World Health Assembly in 2001 as a reference member of the WHO Family of International Classifications and of the Australian Family of Health and Related Classifications (endorsed by the National Health Information Management Group in 2002).

The ICF provides a framework for the description of human functioning and disability. The components of ICF are defined in relation to a health condition. A health condition is an 'umbrella term for disease (acute or chronic), disorder, injury or trauma' (WHO 2001). A health condition may be recorded, for example, as Episode of care principal diagnosis, code (ICD-10-AM 3rd Edn) ANN{.N[N]} and Episode of care additional diagnosis, code (ICD-10-AM 3rd Edn) ANN{.N[N]}.

## Source and reference attributes

### Origin:

World Health Organization (WHO) 2001. ICF: International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health. Geneva: WHO

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) 2003. ICF Australian User Guide Version 1.0. Canberra: AIHW

### Reference documents:

Further information on the ICF can be found in the ICF itself and the ICF Australian User Guide (AIHW 2003) and the following websites

- WHO ICF website  
<http://www.who.int/classifications/icf/en>
- Australian Collaborating Centre ICF website  
<http://www.aihw.gov.au/disability/icf/index.html>

## Relational attributes

**Related metadata references:**

Has been superseded by [Disability](#)  
[Australian Institute of Health and Welfare](#), Recorded 09/08/2023  
[Australian Teacher Workforce Data Oversight Board](#), Standard 30/08/2022  
[Children and Families](#), Standard 03/11/2021  
[Disability](#), Standard 28/09/2016  
[Health](#), Standard 29/06/2016

Has been superseded by [Disability \(Child protection\)](#)  
[Children and Families](#), Standard 03/11/2021

**Metadata items which use this glossary item:**

[Activities and participation code \(ICF 2001\) AN\[NNN\]](#)  
[Community Services \(retired\)](#), Standard 16/10/2006  
[Disability](#), Standard 13/08/2015  
[Health](#), Standard 29/11/2006

[Activities and participation code \(ICF 2001\) N\[NNN\]](#)  
[Community Services \(retired\)](#), Superseded 16/10/2006

[Activity difficulty level code \(ICF 2001\) N](#)  
[Community Services \(retired\)](#), Superseded 16/10/2006

[Activity difficulty level code \(ICF 2001\) N](#)  
[Community Services \(retired\)](#), Standard 16/10/2006  
[Disability](#), Standard 13/08/2015  
[Health](#), Standard 29/11/2006

[Activity need for assistance code N](#)  
[Community Services \(retired\)](#), Standard 16/10/2006  
[Disability](#), Standard 13/08/2015  
[Health](#), Standard 29/11/2006

[Activity need for assistance disability code N](#)  
[Community Services \(retired\)](#), Standard 13/03/2013  
[Disability](#), Superseded 15/12/2017

[Body function code \(ICF 2001\) AN\[NNNN\]](#)  
[Community Services \(retired\)](#), Standard 16/10/2006  
[Disability](#), Standard 13/08/2015  
[Health](#), Standard 29/11/2006

[Body functions code \(ICF 2001\) N\[NNNN\]](#)  
[Community Services \(retired\)](#), Superseded 16/10/2006

[Body structure code \(ICF 2001\) AN\[NNNN\]](#)  
[Community Services \(retired\)](#), Standard 16/10/2006  
[Disability](#), Standard 13/08/2015  
[Health](#), Standard 29/11/2006

[Body structures code \(ICF 2001\) N\[NNNN\]](#)  
[Community Services \(retired\)](#), Superseded 16/10/2006

[Community Housing DSS 2018-](#)  
[Housing assistance](#), Standard 10/05/2019

[Disability grouping code N\[N\]](#)  
[Community Services \(retired\)](#), Superseded 08/05/2006

[Disability status](#)  
[Children and Families](#), Standard 22/11/2016  
[Housing assistance](#), Standard 30/08/2017

[Dwelling—modification requirement status](#)  
[Housing assistance](#), Retired 10/02/2006

[Dwelling—modification status](#)  
[Housing assistance](#), Retired 10/02/2006

[Dwelling—modification status, code N](#)  
[Housing assistance](#), Retired 10/02/2006

[Environmental factor code \(ICF 2001\) AN\[NNN\]](#)  
[Community Services \(retired\)](#), Standard 16/10/2006  
[Disability](#), Standard 13/08/2015  
[Health](#), Standard 29/11/2006

[Environmental factors code \(ICF 2001\) N\[NNN\]](#)  
[Community Services \(retired\)](#), Superseded 16/10/2006

[Extent of environmental factors influence code \(ICF 2001\) \[X\]N](#)

[Community Services \(retired\)](#), Superseded 16/10/2006

[Extent of environmental factors influence code \(ICF 2001\) \[X\]N](#)

[Community Services \(retired\)](#), Standard 16/10/2006

[Disability](#), Standard 13/08/2015

[Health](#), Standard 29/11/2006

[Functioning and Disability DSS](#)

[Community Services \(retired\)](#), Standard 16/10/2006

[Disability](#), Standard 13/08/2015

[Health](#), Standard 29/11/2006

[Goal of care code NN](#)

[Health](#), Standard 01/03/2005

[Household in greatest need code N](#)

[Housing assistance](#), Standard 10/02/2006

[Household in greatest need code N](#)

[Housing assistance](#), Standard 30/08/2017

[Household—disability status](#)

[Housing assistance](#), Standard 30/08/2017

[Household—disability status](#)

[Housing assistance](#), Superseded 30/08/2017

[Household—disability status, yes/no code N](#)

[Housing assistance](#), Superseded 30/08/2017

[Household—disability status, yes/no code N](#)

[Housing assistance](#), Standard 30/08/2017

[Household—greatest need status](#)

[Housing assistance](#), Superseded 10/02/2006

[Impairment extent code \(ICF 2001\) N](#)

[Community Services \(retired\)](#), Superseded 16/10/2006

[Impairment extent code \(ICF 2001\) N](#)

[Community Services \(retired\)](#), Standard 16/10/2006

[Disability](#), Standard 13/08/2015

[Health](#), Standard 29/11/2006

[Impairment location code \(ICF 2001\) N](#)

[Community Services \(retired\)](#), Superseded 16/10/2006

[Impairment location code \(ICF 2001\) N](#)

[Community Services \(retired\)](#), Standard 16/10/2006

[Disability](#), Standard 13/08/2015

[Health](#), Standard 29/11/2006

[Impairment nature code \(ICF 2001\) N](#)

[Community Services \(retired\)](#), Superseded 16/10/2006

[Impairment nature code \(ICF 2001\) N](#)

[Community Services \(retired\)](#), Standard 16/10/2006

[Disability](#), Standard 13/08/2015

[Health](#), Standard 29/11/2006

[Low income household—special need status](#)

[Housing assistance](#), Retired 10/02/2006

[Mainstream community housing DSS 2013-18](#)

[Housing assistance](#), Superseded 10/05/2019

[National Bowel Cancer Screening Program NBEDS 2014-18](#)

[Health](#), Superseded 06/09/2018

[Participation extent code \(ICF 2001\) N](#)

[Community Services \(retired\)](#), Superseded 16/10/2006

[Participation extent code \(ICF 2001\) N](#)

[Community Services \(retired\)](#), Standard 16/10/2006

[Disability](#), Standard 13/08/2015

[Health](#), Standard 29/11/2006

[Participation satisfaction level code N](#)

[Community Services \(retired\)](#), Standard 16/10/2006

[Disability](#), Standard 13/08/2015

[Health](#), Standard 29/11/2006

[Person—disability group, child protection code N\[N\]](#)

[Community Services \(retired\)](#), Recorded 19/08/2011

[Person—disability status](#)

[Children and Families](#), Superseded 03/11/2021

[Health](#), Superseded 12/12/2018

[Housing assistance](#), Standard 29/08/2014

[Person—disability status, code N](#)

[Community Services \(retired\)](#), Recorded 17/10/2011

[Health](#), Superseded 12/12/2018

[Housing assistance](#), Superseded 30/08/2017

[Person—disability status, yes/no/not stated/inadequately described code N](#)

[Children and Families](#), Superseded 03/11/2021

[Housing assistance](#), Standard 30/08/2017

[Public Housing and State Owned and Managed Indigenous housing \(PH & SOMIH\)](#)

[DSS 2018-](#)

[Housing assistance](#), Standard 10/05/2019

[Public rental housing DSS 2013-14](#)

[Housing assistance](#), Superseded 30/08/2017

[Public rental housing DSS 2014-17](#)

[Housing assistance](#), Superseded 19/12/2017

[Public rental housing DSS 2017-18](#)

[Housing assistance](#), Superseded 10/05/2019

[State owned and managed Indigenous housing \(SOMIH\) DSS 2013-14](#)

[Housing assistance](#), Superseded 30/08/2017

[State owned and managed Indigenous housing \(SOMIH\) DSS 2014-17](#)

[Housing assistance](#), Standard 30/08/2017

[State owned and managed Indigenous housing \(SOMIH\) DSS 2017-18](#)

[Housing assistance](#), Superseded 05/05/2019