

National Healthcare Agreement: P20-Potentially avoidable deaths, 2010 QS

Identifying and definitional attributes

Metadata item type:	Quality Statement
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Relational attributes

Indicators linked to this Quality statement:	National Healthcare Agreement: P20-Potentially avoidable deaths, 2010 Health , Superseded 08/06/2011
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Data quality

Institutional environment: The Causes of Death collection is published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) with data sourced from deaths registrations administered by the various state and territory Registrars of Births, Deaths and Marriages. It is a legal requirement of each state and territory that all deaths are registered.

The ABS operates within a framework of the *Census and Statistics Act 1905* and the *Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975*. These ensure the independence and impartiality from political influence of the ABS, and the confidentiality of respondents. For more information on the institutional environment of the ABS, including the legislative obligations of the ABS, financing and governance arrangements, and mechanisms for scrutiny of ABS operations, please see ABS Institutional Environment.

Timeliness: Causes of Death data is published on an annual basis.

Preliminary Estimated Resident Population (ERP) data is compiled and published quarterly and is generally made available five to six months after the end of each reference quarter. Every year, the 30 June ERP is further disaggregated by sex and single year of age, and is made available five to six months after end of the reference quarter. Commencing with data for September quarter 2006, revised estimates are released annually and made available 21 months after the end of the reference period for the previous financial year, once more accurate births, deaths and net overseas migration data becomes available. In the case of births and deaths, the revised data is compiled on a date of occurrence basis. In the case of net overseas migration, final data is based on actual traveller behaviour.

Final estimates are made available every five years after a census and revisions are made to the previous intercensal period. ERP data is not changed once it has been finalised. Releasing preliminary, revised and final ERP involves a balance between timeliness and accuracy.

Non-Indigenous estimates are available for census years only.

Accessibility: Causes of Death data are available in a variety of formats on the ABS website under the 3303.0 product family. ERP data is available in a variety of formats on the ABS website under the 3101.0 and 3201.0 product families. Further information on deaths and mortality may be available on request. The ABS observes strict confidentiality protocols as required by *the Census and Statistics Act (1905)*. This may restrict access to data at a very detailed level which is sought by some users.

Interpretability: Data for this indicator have been age-standardised, using the indirect method, to account for differences between the age structures of the Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations. Indirect age-standardisation to the 2001 total Australian population was used. Age-standardised results provide a measure of relative difference only between populations.

Information on how to interpret and use the data appropriately is available from Explanatory Notes in *Causes of Death, Australia* (3303.0).

Relevance: The ABS cause of death collection includes all deaths that occurred and were registered in Australia, including deaths of persons whose usual residence is overseas. Deaths of Australian residents that occurred outside Australia may be registered by individual Registrars, but are not included in ABS deaths or causes of death statistics.

Data in the Causes of Death collection include demographic items, as well as Causes of Death information, which is coded according to the International Classification of Diseases (ICD). ICD is the international standard classification for epidemiological purposes and is designed to promote international comparability in the collection, processing, classification, and presentation of cause of death statistics. The classification is used to classify diseases and causes of disease or injury as recorded on many types of medical records as well as death records. The ICD has been revised periodically to incorporate changes in the medical field. The 10th revision of ICD (ICD-10) has been used since 1997.

Accuracy:

Information on causes of death is obtained from a complete enumeration of deaths registered during a specified period and are not subject to sampling error. However, deaths data sources are subject to nonsampling error which can arise from inaccuracies in collecting, recording and processing the data. Although it is considered likely that most deaths of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (Indigenous) Australians are registered, a proportion of these deaths are not registered as Indigenous. Information about the deceased is supplied by a relative or other person acquainted with the deceased, or by an official of the institution where the death occurred and may differ from the self-identified Indigenous origin of the deceased. Forms are often not subject to the same best practice design principles as statistical questionnaires, and respondent and/or interviewer understanding is rarely tested. Over-precise analysis of Indigenous deaths and mortality should be avoided.

All ERP data sources are subject to non-sampling error. Non-sampling error can arise from inaccuracies in collecting, recording and processing the data. In the case of Census and PES data every effort is made to minimise reporting error by the careful design of questionnaires, intensive training and supervision of interviewers, and efficient data processing procedures. The ABS does not have control over any non sampling error associated with births, deaths and migration data.

Another dimension of non-sampling error in ERP is the fact that the measures of components of population growth become more accurate as more time elapses after the reference period. As discussed under Timeliness, the trade-off between timeliness and accuracy means that a user can access more accurate data by using the revised or final ERP data. While the vast majority of births and deaths are registered promptly, a small proportion of registrations are delayed for months or even years. As a result, preliminary quarterly estimates can be an underestimate of the true number of births and deaths occurring in a reference period. Revised figures for a reference period incorporate births and deaths registrations that were received after the preliminary data collection phase as well as the estimated number of registrations that have still not been received for that reference period. For more information see the *Demography Working Paper 1998/2 - Quarterly birth and death estimates, 1998* (cat. no. 3114.0) and *Australian Demographic Statistics* (cat. no. 3101.0).

Causes of death data for 2007 is subject to revision. All coroner certified deaths registered after 1 January 2007 will be subject to a revision process. This is a change from previous years where all ABS processing of causes of death data for a particular reference period was finalised approximately 13 months after the end of the reference period. Where insufficient information was available to code a cause of death (for example, a coroner certified death was yet to be finalised by the Coroner), less specific ICD codes were assigned as required by the ICD coding rules. The revision process will enable the use of additional information relating to coroner certified deaths as it becomes available over time. This will result in increased specificity of the assigned ICD-10 codes. Causes of death data for 2007 coroner certified deaths will be updated as more information becomes available to the ABS. Revised data for 2007 will be published both on a year registration basis and a year of occurrence basis in the 2008 Causes of death publication, due to be released in March 2010, and again in the publication relating to the 2009 collection due for release in 2011. Revisions will only impact on coroner certified deaths, as further information becomes available to the ABS about the causes of these deaths. See *Causes of Death, 2007*, 3303.0.

Non-Indigenous estimates are available for census years only. In the intervening years, Indigenous population figures are derived from assumptions about past and future levels of fertility, mortality and migration. In the absence of non-Indigenous population figures for these years, it is possible to derive denominators for calculating non-Indigenous rates by subtracting the Indigenous population from the total population. Such figures have a degree of uncertainty and should be used with caution, particularly as the time from the base year of the projection series increases.

Coherence:

The methods used to construct the indicator are consistent and comparable with other collections and with international practice.

Source and reference attributes

Submitting organisation: Australian Bureau of Statistics

Relational attributes

Related metadata references: Has been superseded by [National Healthcare Agreement: PI 20-Potentially avoidable deaths, 2011 QS](#)

- [Health](#), Superseded 04/12/2012