

National Healthcare Agreement: PI 15-Effective management of diabetes, 2015 QS

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Identifying and definitional attributes

Metadata item type:	Data Quality Statement
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Data quality

Institutional environment: The 2011–12 National Health Measures Survey (NHMS), a component of the Australian Health Survey (AHS) was collected, processed, and published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS). 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: The NHMS was conducted for the first time in 2011–13. Results from the 2011–12 NHMS were released in August 2013. Results from the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Measures Survey (NATSIHMS) will be released in 2014.

Accessibility: See *Australian Health Survey: Biomedical Results for Chronic Disease* (Cat. no. 4364.0.55.005). Other information from this survey is also available on request.

Interpretability: Information to aid interpretation of the data is available from the *Australian Health Survey: Users' Guide* on the ABS website.

Many health-related issues, including diabetes, are closely associated with age. However, numbers across age ranges were too few to do any meaningful age standardisation at the State/Territory, Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) or Remoteness level for this indicator. Therefore the data presented are based on crude rates.

Relevance: For this measure, the fasting plasma glucose test is used in the determination of people with known diabetes and the glycated haemoglobin (HbA1c) test is used in the determination of effective management of diabetes.

The 2011–12 NHMS uses a combination of blood test results for fasting plasma glucose and self-reported information on diabetes diagnosis and medication use to measure prevalence of known diabetes.

A respondent to the survey is considered to have known diabetes if they had ever been told by a doctor or nurse that they have diabetes and:

- They were taking diabetes medication (either insulin or tablets); or
- Their blood test result for fasting plasma glucose was greater than or equal to 7.0 mmol/L.

Persons with known diabetes who have an HbA1c result of less than or equal to 7.0% are considered to be managing their diabetes effectively.

The estimates exclude persons who did not fast for 8 hours or more prior to their blood test. Excludes women with gestational diabetes.

Accuracy: The AHS was conducted in all States and Territories, excluding very remote areas. Non-private dwellings such as hotels, motels, hospitals, nursing homes and short-stay caravan parks were also not included in the survey. The exclusion of persons usually residing in very remote areas has a small impact on estimates, except for the Northern Territory, where such persons make up approximately 23 per cent of the population. The final response rate for the 'core' component of the AHS was 82 per cent.

All selected persons aged 5 years and over were invited to participate in the voluntary NHMS. Of all of those who took part in the AHS, 38 per cent went on to complete the biomedical component.

Analysis of the sample showed that the characteristics of persons who participated in the NHMS were similar with those for the AHS overall. The only significant difference was for smoking, where the NHMS sample had a lower rate of current smokers than the AHS sample (12.0% compared with 17.6%). For more information, see the Explanatory Notes in *Australian Health Survey: Biomedical Results for Chronic Disease* (Cat. no. 4364.0.55.005).

In order to get an accurate reading for the fasting plasma glucose test, participants were asked to fast for 8 hours before their test. The results presented for this indicator refer only to those people who did fast (approximately 79 per cent of adults who participated in the NHMS). Analysis of the characteristics of people who fasted compared with those who did not fast showed no difference between fasters and non-fasters.

As they are drawn from a sample survey, data for the indicator are subject to sampling error. Sampling error occurs because only a small proportion of the population is used to produce estimates that represent the whole population. Sampling error can be reliably estimated as it is calculated based on the scientific methods used to design surveys. Rates should be considered with reference to their Relative Standard Error (RSE). Estimates with RSEs between 25 per cent and 50 per cent should be used with caution. Estimates with RSEs greater than 50 per cent are generally considered too unreliable for general use.

This indicator produces high levels of sampling error for some State and Territories when split by sex. Estimates for males and females in Victoria have RSEs greater than 50 per cent and should be considered unreliable for general use. Likewise, estimates for males in the Northern Territory and females in the Australian Capital Territory also have RSEs greater than 50 per cent.

Data for several State and Territories also have RSEs greater than 25 per cent, including the total for Victoria, South Australia. The Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory and these estimates should be used with caution.

Coherence: The AHS collected a range of other health-related information that can be analysed in conjunction with diabetes management.

The 2009–10 Victorian Health Monitor (VHM) reported estimates of diabetes management based on the proportion of people with known diabetes meeting the HbA1c management target of less than or equal to 7.0 nmol/L. The VHM age-standardised rate (39 per cent) was similar to the NHMS rate for Victoria (36 per cent).

Relational attributes

Related metadata references: Supersedes [National Healthcare Agreement: PI 15-Effective management of diabetes, 2014 QS](#)
[Health](#), Superseded 14/01/2015

Indicators linked to this Data Quality statement: [National Healthcare Agreement: PI 15-Effective management of diabetes, 2015](#)
[Health](#), Superseded 08/07/2016