

National Disability Agreement: Proportion of people with disability accessing disability services, 2013 QS

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Identifying and definitional attributes

Metadata item type:	Data Quality Statement
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Data quality

Data quality statement summary:

1. Data collected in the Disability Services National Minimum Dataset (DS NMDS) and the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations' (DEEWR's) Disability Employment Services (DES) collection are generated by processes that deliver services to people. It is assumed that DS NMDS processes involve the determination of eligibility and the assessment of disability support needs following broadly consistent principles across jurisdictions, although it is known that differing assessment tools are in use across jurisdictions. This assumption is untested. DES eligibility criteria are determined by DEEWR, resulting in consistency of eligibility across all states/territories.
2. Data measuring the potential population is not explicitly available for the required time point and so has been estimated from several different sources under several key assumptions (note that the potential population definition has changed for this reporting cycle). The assumption of constant age-sex specific proportions of the potential population over time is contradicted by comparison of age-sex specific rates of severe/profound core activity limitation from The Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers (SDAC) 2003 and SDAC 2009, which indicate an overall slight decline in rates between these two time periods (note that the potential population has not been derived for SDAC 2003). A further assumption that national level age-sex specific proportions of the potential population from SDAC 2009 apply consistently across states and territories is untested.
3. There are issues with the consistency of the numerator and denominator for this performance indicator, as the numerator and denominator are drawn from differently defined populations and different data sources.
4. The quality of data about Indigenous status varies substantially between jurisdictions and data sources. Caution should be exercised when interpreting these data. It is recommended that these data be viewed in close conjunction with information about the data quality.
5. Data measuring the Indigenous potential population is not explicitly available for the required time point and so has been estimated from several different data sources under several key assumptions. Previous research has confirmed that Indigenous Australians experience severe or profound core activity limitation at more than twice the rate as non-Indigenous Australians but relative rates by age group and sex, across states and territories and remoteness areas, have not been fully investigated. In particular, caution should be exercised in comparing indicators for jurisdictions with very different remoteness area distributions of Indigenous population.
6. The use of 2006 Census data to adjust underlying age-sex specific potential population rates to account for the higher level of disability among Indigenous Australians involves mixing self-report data from a relatively simple instrument for measuring need for assistance with sample survey data collected by trained interviewers using a comprehensive survey instrument. The cultural appropriateness for Indigenous people of data collection instruments designed for the total population is not known; nor is it known how this, combined with different data collection methods, impacts on the accuracy of the estimated Indigenous potential population used in this indicator.

Institutional environment: AIHW

The AIHW is an Australian Government statutory authority accountable to Parliament and operates under the provisions of the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare Act 1987. The AIHW provides expert analysis of data on health, housing and community services. More information about the AIHW is available on [the AIHW website](#).

When errors are found in published data, those errors are corrected immediately in publications on the AIHW website, and where necessary, in on-line tables and online interactive data cubes. Corrections are documented on the AIHW website.

DS/CSTDA NMDS

DS/CSTDA NMDS data were provided by both non-government service providers and state/territory and Australian Government agencies. Service providers collated data in relation to each of their service type outlets providing services under the NDA, as well as the service users who accessed these outlets. A limited number of data items were provided by government agencies. Government agencies compiled, edited and verified the data, and supplied a final data set to the AIHW for further verification, national collation and analysis.

The set of privacy and data principles for the DS NMDS collection are outlined in the Data Guide, the most recent version of which is available on [the AIHW website](#).

All state and territory governments and the Australian Government are required to provide data annually for the DS NMDS, and are responsible for the quality and timeliness of the data.

ABS

For information on the institutional environment of the ABS, including the legislative obligations of the ABS, please see [ABS Institutional Environment](#).

DEEWR DES collection (from which DMS data is sourced)

The DEEWR DES collection provides monthly and annual numbers of people receiving Disability Management Services.

The DES collection is conducted in the course of operations by Employment Service Provider Agencies funded by DEEWR to provide employment services. These providers are required to use the DEEWR-built and supplied Employment Services System to monitor the provision of services, to manage client information and provides the administrative data source for DEEWR to report on, including DES collection information.

Data from several different sources, each referencing different time periods, are used to produce performance indicator d. Data used are from the CSTDA NMDS 2008–09, DS NMDS 2009–10, DS NMDS 2010–11, the DEEWR DES collection 2010–11, the 2009 SDAC, ERP June 2008 and June 2009, and Census 2006. This may reduce the overall accuracy of the estimates.

Timeliness:

Performance measures are provided for 2008–09, 2009–10 and 2010–11. The source data that becomes available at the latest date is the DS NMDS data. This is typically published 15 months after the end of the reference year, e.g. the 2010–11 report was released on 21 September 2012.

SDAC 2009 and Census 2006 data is used in estimating the potential population. These surveys will be updated in 2012 and 2011 respectively, with results to be made available in 12 to 18 months after the end of the reference year. Results for SDAC 2012 and Census 2011 had not been released at the time of preparation of the performance measures (SDAC 2012 is still being conducted).

Estimated Resident Population data are produced each quarter, with results published six months after the reference date.

Indigenous Population Projections are produced irregularly – the most recent release was in 2009. As these data are projections, there is no timeliness issue as information for the performance measure reference years has been available for some time prior to those reference years.

DEEWR DES information for a reference year is generally available four months after the end of that year.

Accessibility:

The AIHW provides a variety of products that draw upon the DS/CSTDA NMDS. Published products available on the AIHW website are:

- Disability support services (annual report): These reports are available for free download from the [AIHW website](#)
- Interactive disability data cubes: These contain subsets of national information from the 1999 NMDS onwards, which allow people to construct data tables online according to their needs
- Australia's Welfare (biennial report)
- Ad hoc data are available on request (charges apply to recover costs)
- METeOR – online metadata repository
- National Community Services Data Dictionary.

The ABS website provides information and data on the ERP, Census Need for Assistance and SDAC profound/ severe core-activity limitation. Detailed data extractions are available through the National Information Referral Service (cost-recovery applies).

DS/CSTDA NMDS data are used for service planning and monitoring in individual jurisdictions, and for reporting national performance indicators. Performance indicators formed part of the accountability measures under the third CSTDA, and were published annually as part of the FaHCSIA publication Commonwealth State/Territory Disability Agreement annual public report. The AIHW also released supporting web publications which included these indicator tables in more detail, and these are available on the AIHW website. A set of performance indicators relating to disability which use DS/CSTDA NMDS data is also published annually in the [Report on Government Services](#) produced by the Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision (SCRGSP).

Interpretability:

Information to assist in interpretation of the performance indicator is contained in the NDA performance indicator glossary, which accompanies these Data Quality Statements.

Supporting information on the quality and use of the DS/CSTDA NMDS are published annually in 'Disability support services' available in hard copy or on the AIHW website (<www.aihw.gov.au>). As well, the annual [DS/CSTDA NMDS Data Guide](#) and the data specifications in METeOR, AIHW's online metadata registry aid in interpretation of DS/CSTDA NMDS data.

Relevance:

Data from several different sources, each referencing different time periods, are used to produce performance indicator d. Data used are from the CSTDA NMDS 2008–09, DS NMDS 2009–10, DS NMDS 2010–11, the DEEWR DES collection 2010-11, the 2009 SDAC, ERP June 2008 and June 2009, and Census 2006. This may reduce the overall accuracy of the estimates.

SDAC 2009

Data from the SDAC 2009 does not cover very remote areas nor Indigenous communities, whereas the other data sources cover all geographical areas of Australia.

The use of SDAC 2009 age-sex specific rates of severe/profound core activity limitation to calculate 30 June 2008, 2009 and 2010 potential population assumes these rates to be consistent over time. A comparison of age-sex specific rates of severe/profound core activity limitation from SDAC 2003 and SDAC 2009 indicates that most age-sex specific rates have declined between these two time periods (note that the potential population has not been derived for SDAC 2003). Overall, the rate of severe/profound core activity limitation for people aged 0-64 years has declined from 3.9 per cent in 2003 to 3.6 per cent in 2009.

The use of national level SDAC 2009 age-sex specific potential population rates assumes these rates to be consistent across states and territories. This assumption is untested.

2006 Census of Population and Housing

Information from Census 2006 about people with need for assistance with core activities is based on the self-enumerated completion of four questions, whereas people are defined as having a severe/profound core activity limitation in SDAC 2009 on the basis of a comprehensive interviewer administered module of questions, and thus the two populations are different although they are conceptually related.

The use of Census 2006 data about country of birth and Remoteness Area distributions for people with need for assistance with core activities assumes these distributions to be consistent over time. This assumption is untested.

DS/CSTDA NMDS

DS/CSTDA NMDS data are generated by processes that deliver services to people. It is assumed that these processes involve the determination of eligibility and the assessment of disability support needs following broadly consistent principles across jurisdictions, although it is known that differing assessment tools are in use across jurisdictions. This assumption is untested.

The DS/CSTDA NMDS collects data about specialist disability support services according to nationally agreed data definitions. It includes data on all such services (including ESS data) except DMS data, which is collected from the DEEWR DES collection. The 2008–09 CSTDA NMDS includes services received, or purchased with, funding under the third CSTDA during the period 1 July 2008 to 31 December 2008, and/or provided under the NDA during the period 1 January 2009 to 30 June 2009. The 2009–10 and 2010–11 DS NMDS include services provided under the NDA during the period 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010 and 1 July 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Data collected in the DS/CSTDA NMDS include characteristics of specialist disability services provided during the reporting period, the people receiving services and the outlets providing services. Disaggregation by state and territory, Remoteness Area, demographic characteristics, support needs, broad service groups and service types are available.

The scope of services varied in terms of programs that were provided under the CSTDA/NDA across jurisdictions. In particular, the provision of specialist psychiatric disability and early childhood intervention services differed across states and territories. In Victoria, Queensland and Western Australia (in some cases), specialist psychiatric disability services were provided under the CSTDA/NDA. In all other jurisdictions specific mental health services were funded and provided under health, rather than disability, portfolios. To facilitate comparability of data, specialist psychiatric disability services in Victoria, Queensland and Western Australia are excluded from the NDA performance indicators. That is, the data excludes those who only receive specialist psychiatric disability services, but does not exclude those people with a psychiatric condition who receive other specialist disability services.

In addition, the predominant service models vary across jurisdictions, and this may affect comparability of data. For example, differences across the states and territories in the predominant model of accommodation support lead to differences in the number of people accessing those services. Caution is recommended in the use or interpretation of performance at the service type level. There is a risk when service type level data is interpreted in isolation as various service types are complementary and the emphasis on different services reflects jurisdictional policy directions. For more information, see [Disability support services 2010–11](#).

Counts of service users are estimates derived using a statistical linkage key. Invalid or incomplete linkage keys mean that it is not possible to fully eliminate multiple counting of service users. This is believed to lead to a slight overestimate of service user numbers. In 2010–11, the proportion of invalid linkage keys was 0.6 per cent, ranging from zero to 2.6 per cent of the total number of service user records in each jurisdiction. In 2009–10, the proportion of invalid linkage keys was 0.4 per cent, ranging from zero to 1.4 per cent of the total number of service user records in each jurisdiction. A small number of invalid linkage keys were recovered for the final data sets by comparison with records from current or previous years.

The process for collecting the statistical linkage key in Victoria leads to a relatively high number of invalid linkage keys and an associated high estimate of service users. In Victoria, the process for collecting service user information is an 'opt-in' approach. All other states and territories follow an 'opt-out' approach in which individuals may elect not to provide their information for the

NMDS, however, procedures for opting out of the data collection vary. This affects the comparability of counts of service users across jurisdictions.

DEEWR DES collection (source of DMS numerators)

DES eligibility criteria are determined by DEEWR, resulting in consistency of eligibility across all states and territories. Eligibility for DMS support is based on the presence of a disability or medical condition, which results in ongoing support in the workplace. It is not currently possible to distinguish between DMS users who do and who do not have a disability.

DMS services are funded as part of DEEWR's general funding allocation.

Data collected in the DES collection include state/territory where the service was provided, referrals/commencements/exits, job placement outcomes, Indigenous status, country of birth, age, sex, broad medical condition and allowance type, homeless/refugee/previous offender flags.

The scope of services provided under the DMS is not known to vary across jurisdictions.

Accuracy:

Potential sources of error in the DS/CSTDA NMDS are data items for which the response is not stated or not collected. If the characteristics of the people for whom the information is not available are different to those people for whom information is reported, there is potential for bias to be introduced into the data. Not stated/not collected rates vary substantially across jurisdictions and data items. The data item 'need for assistance in life area' has a particularly high not stated/not collected rate. For the 2009–10 data set the rate was 26.8 per cent overall, ranging from 3.1 per cent for Tasmania to 44.5 per cent for Northern Territory. For the 2008–09 data set the rate was 13.1 per cent overall, ranging from 0.0 per cent for Australian Government agencies to 42.2 per cent for Victoria.

The DS/CSTDA NMDS aims to provide complete national data on all services provided under the NDA/CSTDA, service type outlets and service users each year. The national response rate for service type outlets is based on the number of service type outlets that responded out of the total number of funded outlets in each jurisdiction (97 per cent in 2009–10 and 96 per cent in 2008–09). It is not possible to calculate a national response rate for service users, as some outlets do not report on all service users due to administrative or other error. In addition, some service types are not required to report service user information.

'Not stated/not collected' rates for individual data items varied substantially across items and jurisdictions. Further information about 'not stated/not collected' rates is available in the accompanying appendix tables.

The 2008–09 CSTDA NMDS data was initially confirmed by state/territory and Australian Government agencies in July 2010. Some coding errors were subsequently identified and, following National Disability Information Management Group (NDIMG) endorsement in March 2011, revisions were made to the data set. The revised data set was used to produce the 2008–09 performance indicators in this report. The 2009–10 DS NMDS data confirmed by state/territory and Australian Government agencies in March 2011 were used to produce 2009–10 performance indicators. Coding errors advised subsequently were reported in Disability Support Services 2009–10.

In response to concerns expressed by some jurisdictions, the NDIMG endorsed changes to the DS/CSTDA NMDS processing rules in 2010. These changes were to be effective for the 2008–09 NMDS and future collections, as well as retroactively to the 2007–08 data. The changes involve no longer attempting to match records with either missing sex or an estimated date of birth with existing records within the same year's data or previous years' DS/CSTDA NMDS data. The matching process provided a means by which these not stated or estimated values could be updated based on other records that, given their high match in other items, were assumed to represent the same service user. By no longer performing these functions these records now stand alone, thereby increasing slightly the number of unique service users within the DS/CSTDA NMDS.

Estimates from the SDAC 2009 are subject to sampling variability as the SDAC is a sample survey. A measure of the sampling variability, the relative standard error (RSE), is estimated below for the age-sex specific potential population rates.

Estimated RSE for age-sex potential population rates at national level (per cent)

	General potential population	General potential population	Respite care potential population	Respite care potential population	DES/Open Employment potential population	DES/Open Employment potential population
Age group (years)	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
0-9	7.0	8.3	8.6	14.8	na	na
10-14	8.5	15.3	14.2	21.7	na	na
15-24	11.3	12.8	15.5	17.3	8.8	7.7
25-34	10.5	10.8	17.1	17.5	6.7	5.7
35-44	12.1	11.5	21.3	19.1	5.0	4.7
45-49	15.8	14.4	27.6	24.1	6.6	6.1
50-54	19.1	15.5	25.5	24.3	6.8	6.0
55-64	4.3	10.8	15.2	16.9	3.5	3.2

na Not applicable.

Source: ABS (unpublished) Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers, 2009.

The quality of DMS data is enhanced using the Employment Services System, in three ways:

- The Employment Services System is used for all services provided by Employment Provider Agencies, not just DES users, which improves the quality of DMS data as missing or conflicting data can be resolved by comparison with data from other programs
- Information is linked with Centrelink data for the purposes of determining eligibility for payments, and this provides another opportunity to complete missing information and correct errors
- It is a condition of provision of services that a client provide complete and correct information.

As a result, information presented on DMS data has negligible missing values.

Information on users is derived from data on episodes of assistance over the course of the reference year. Individuals' multiple episodes are linked by means of a linkage key called the Job Seeker ID. When a potential user contacts a Provider Agency for assistance, information including name, address and date of birth is used to match them to previous episodes of assistance.

Potential sources of error in Census data include failure to return a Census form or failure to answer applicable questions. Data distributions calculated from Census 2006 data excluded people for whom data item information was not available. Should the characteristics of interest of the people excluded differ from those people included, there is potential for bias to be introduced into the data distributions. Quality statements about Census 2006 data items can be found on the [ABS website](#).

See also ABS data quality statements.

Coherence:

The DS/CSTDA NMDS consists of a set of nationally significant data items that are collected in all jurisdictions (state/territory and Australian Government) and an agreed method of collection and transmission. Data items and definitions have remained consistent each year since the launch of the redeveloped national collection in 2002.

Data items are largely based on national community services data standards to enable comparability between collections. Items are also designed to be comparable with other major collections such as the ABS Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers (SDAC) and international standards including the World Health Organization's International Classification of Functioning and Disability (ICF). More information about the design and comparability of CSTDA NMDS data items is given in the AIHW publication [Australia's national disability services data collection: Redeveloping the Commonwealth-state/territory disability agreement National Minimum Data Set](#).

From 1 October 2008, targeted support services previously delivered by the Australian Government and included in the service group 'employment services' were transferred to State/Territory governments and thus recorded as State/Territory delivered disability support services. Targeted support services delivered by the Australian Government are not included in the NDA performance indicators.

In 2008-09 the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) changed the coding procedures used for data about open employment service users for the 'need for help or supervision with activities or participation in life areas' data items. As a result of these changes caution should be used when comparing the 2008-09, 2009-10 and 2010-11 data in the 'need for assistance with life areas' tables for open employment users with data from previous years, as it is not possible to determine what quantum of change is due to change in characteristics of service users and what quantum of change is due to change in the coding procedures.

There are issues with the consistency of the numerator and denominator for this performance indicator, as the numerator and denominator are drawn from differently defined populations and different data sources. These issues reduce the consistency of the performance indicators and lead to quality issues such as cells greater than 100 per cent.

The denominator 'estimated potential population for specialist disability services' is defined in Appendix A. However, this does not match well with the numerator, which comprises people who used specialist disability services. People who used these services do not necessarily have the same health conditions or core activity limitations of those people included in the potential population. They may instead have a mild/moderate core activity limitation or limitations in other activities—for example, with working or education.

Data products

Implementation start date: 28/06/2010

Source and reference attributes

Submitting organisation: The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare

Steward: [Disability Policy and Research Working Group \(DPRWG\)](#)

Relational attributes

Related metadata references: Supersedes [National Disability Agreement: c\(1\)-Proportion of the potential population accessing disability services, 2011 QS](#)

[Community Services \(retired\)](#), Superseded 05/03/2012

Supersedes [National Disability Agreement: f-Number of Indigenous people with disability receiving disability services as a proportion of the Indigenous potential population requiring services, 2010 QS](#)

[Community Services \(retired\)](#), Superseded 15/12/2011

**Indicators linked to this
Data Quality statement:**

[National Disability Agreement: d\(1\)-Proportion of the potential population who used State/Territory delivered disability support services, 2013](#)

[Community Services \(retired\)](#), Standard 23/05/2013

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

[National Disability Agreement: d\(2\)-Proportion of people with a disability with an employment restriction who used Disability Employment Services \(Open Employment\), 2013](#)

[Community Services \(retired\)](#), Standard 23/05/2013

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

[National Disability Agreement: d\(3\)-Proportion of the potential population who used Australian Disability Enterprises \(Supported Employment\), 2013](#)

[Community Services \(retired\)](#), Standard 23/05/2013

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