

National Indigenous Reform Agreement: PI 07— Proportion of babies born of low birthweight, 2015, Quality Statement

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Identifying and definitional attributes

Metadata item type:	Data Quality Statement
METEOR identifier:	593456
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Data quality

Data quality statement summary:

- The data used to calculate this indicator are from the National Perinatal Data Collection (NPDC), which is a national population-based cross-sectional data collection of pregnancy and childbirth.
- Data supplied for the NPDC consist of the Perinatal National Minimum Data Set (NMDS), as well as a series of additional data items. The Perinatal NMDS is an agreed set of standardised perinatal data elements for mandatory supply by states and territories to support national reporting.
- Birthweight is included in the Perinatal NMDS and data are virtually complete (over 99.9% of all babies have valid birthweights recorded).
- Since 2005, the NPDC has included information on the Indigenous status of the mother in accordance with the Perinatal NMDS.
- For 2011, data on the Indigenous status of the baby were available for 6 jurisdictions—New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, Tasmania, the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory. For 2012, data on the Indigenous status of the baby were supplied by all jurisdictions in accordance with the Perinatal NMDS.
- In 2012, 0.2% of mothers who gave birth and 0.8% of babies had missing information on Indigenous status.
- Remoteness data for 2012 are not directly comparable with remoteness data for previous years.

Institutional environment:

Data for this indicator were provided by the National Perinatal Epidemiology and Statistics Unit (NPESU) on behalf of the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW). The AIHW is a major national agency set up by the Australian Government under the *Australian Institute of Health and Welfare Act 1987* to provide reliable, regular and relevant information and statistics on Australia's health and welfare. It is an independent corporate Commonwealth entity established in 1987, governed by a management Board, and accountable to the Australian Parliament through the Health portfolio. For further information about the AIHW, see the AIHW website www.aihw.gov.au.

Data collected as part of the NPDC were supplied by state and territory health authorities to the AIHW. The state and territory health authorities receive these data from patient administrative and clinical records, with the information usually collected by midwives or other birth attendants. States and territories use these data for service planning, monitoring and internal and public reporting.

Timeliness:

For the current reporting cycle, NPDC data are provided for the calendar year 2012, and for the aggregate 3-year period 2010–2012. Data for 2007 to 2011 are available in previous NIRA reports.

The AIHW is working with jurisdictions on an ongoing basis to improve the capture, quality and timeliness of the data.

Accessibility:

The AIHW provides a variety of products that draw upon the NPDC. Published products available on the AIHW website include:

- [Australia's mothers and babies](#) reports—annual reports on pregnancy and childbirth in Australia, including information about Indigenous mothers and babies
- [Perinatal data portal \(SAS VA\)](#)—enables users to access and manipulate data from the National Perinatal Data Collection
- [National Core Maternity Indicators reports and data portal \(SAS VA\)](#)
- [The health and welfare of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples](#).

Ad-hoc data from the NPDC are also available on request (charges apply to recover costs).

Data for this indicator are published in a number of reports, including annually in the National Indigenous Reform Agreement information reports (which are available on the [Productivity Commission website](#)) and the [Australia's mothers and babies](#) reports, and biennially in the [Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Performance Framework](#) reports, and the [Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage](#) reports.

Interpretability:

Supporting information on the quality and use of the NPDC, including information on the quality of Indigenous status data and other data items used in the calculation of this indicator, are published annually in [Australia's mothers and babies](#), which is available on the [AIHW website](#). Comprehensive information on the quality of Perinatal NMDS data elements are published in [Perinatal National Minimum Data Set compliance evaluation: 2006 to 2009](#) (Donnolley & Li 2012). Readers are advised to read caveat information to ensure appropriate interpretation of the performance indicator.

Metadata information for this indicator are published in the AIHW's online metadata repository, [METeOR](#). Metadata information for the Perinatal NMDS are also published in METeOR and in the [National Health Data Dictionary](#).

Relevance:

The NPDC comprises data items as specified in the Perinatal NMDS, plus additional items collected by the states and territories. The purpose of the Perinatal NMDS is to collect information about births for monitoring pregnancy, childbirth and the neonatal period for both the mother and baby.

The Perinatal NMDS is a specification for data collected about all births in Australia in hospitals, birth centres and the community. It includes information for all live births and stillbirths of at least 400 grams birthweight or at least 20 weeks gestation, except in Western Australia where births are included if gestational age is at least 20 weeks, or if gestation is unknown, birthweight is at least 400 grams. The NMDS consists of data items relating to the mother—including demographic characteristics and factors relating to the pregnancy, labour and birth—and data items relating to the baby—including birth status, sex, gestational age at birth, birthweight, neonatal morbidity and fetal deaths.

The NPDC includes all relevant data elements for this indicator. Birthweight of the baby and Indigenous status of the mother are items in the Perinatal NMDS.

Consultation for a new data element to collect Indigenous status of the baby was completed in June 2010 and this data element was added to the Perinatal NMDS from July 2012.

For 2011, data on the Indigenous status of the baby were available for 6 jurisdictions—New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, Tasmania, the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory. For 2012, data on the Indigenous status of the baby were supplied by all jurisdictions in accordance with the Perinatal NMDS.

Before 2012, reporting of Indigenous status was based solely on maternal Indigenous status. Those data do not identify all Indigenous babies since babies born to non-Indigenous mothers and Indigenous fathers are excluded. Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) births registrations data indicate that in 2012, 72% of all Indigenous births (defined as births where either one or both parents were Indigenous) were to an Indigenous mother ([ABS Births, Australia 2012](#)).

While each jurisdiction has a unique form for collecting perinatal data on which the format of the Indigenous status question and recording categories vary slightly, all forms have included the NMDS item on Indigenous status of the mother from 2005 and Indigenous status of the baby from 2012.

The proportion of mothers who were Indigenous ranged from 3.5%–4.0% of all women who gave birth between 2002 and 2012. This varies by jurisdiction—for example, in 2012, the proportion of mothers who were Indigenous ranged from about 1% in Victoria to 36% in the Northern Territory.

Babies of mothers for whom Indigenous status was not stated have been excluded from rates but are included in totals for this indicator.

Data for this indicator exclude multiple births, stillbirths, births less than 20 weeks gestation and births with unknown birthweight.

Analysis by state/territory is based on the usual residence of the mother.

Analysis excludes babies born to mothers who are non-Australian residents, residents of external territories and where state/territory of usual residence was not stated.

Reporting by remoteness is in accordance with the Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS) for 2012 data and in accordance with the Australian Standard Geographical Classification (ASGC) for years prior to 2012.

Accuracy:

Upon receipt of the NPDC data from the states and territories, the NPESU checks it for completeness, validity and logical errors. Potential errors are queried with jurisdictions, and corrections and resubmissions are made in response to these edit queries.

Errors may occur during the processing of data by the states and territories or by the NPESU. Processing errors prior to data supply may be found through the validation checks applied by the NPESU. Prior to publication, the data are referred back to jurisdictions for review. The NPESU does not adjust the data to account for possible data errors or to correct for missing data.

Following the supply of data for this indicator, further minor updates may be made to the data held by the jurisdictions, but such changes are unlikely to produce any detectable change to the indicator. In addition, the 2012 data supplied by Victoria for this indicator were not final data.

The numbers reported for this indicator may differ from those in reports published by the states and territories for the following reasons:

- data editing and subsequent updates of state/territory databases after the supply of data to NPESU
- data are reported by state/territory of usual residence rather than state/territory of birth.

Data presented by Indigenous status are influenced by the quality and completeness of Indigenous identification of mothers and babies which may differ across jurisdictions. In 2012, 0.2% of mothers who gave birth and 0.8% of babies had missing information about their Indigenous status. Jurisdictional differences in the level of missing data for the mother's Indigenous status ranged from less than 0.1% to 1.8%. For baby's Indigenous status, the magnitude of missing data was less than 1% for all jurisdictions, except Tasmania where it was higher (23%). Jurisdictional comparisons with Tasmania should therefore not be made.

Three years of data (2010 to 2012) have been combined due to the volatility of the small numbers involved. However, single year data for 2012 are also reported to enable time series comparisons.

Coherence:

Changing levels of Indigenous identification over time and across jurisdictions affect the accuracy of compiling a consistent time series.

The NPDC has captured information on the Indigenous status of the mother in accordance with the Perinatal NMDS since 2005. Indigenous status of the baby was added to the Perinatal NMDS for collection from July 2012. Nationally standardised data about the Indigenous status of the baby were supplied by all jurisdictions to the NPDC for 2012 (for 2011, non-standardised data were available for 6 jurisdictions only). Thus, for this reporting cycle, 2012 data were available according to both the Indigenous status of the mother and Indigenous status of the baby.

In 2011, the ABS updated the standard geographical framework from the ASGC to the ASGS. NPDC data by remoteness for 2007 to 2011 are based on the ASGC, while data for 2012 onwards are based on the ASGS. The AIHW considers the change to be a break in series when applied to remoteness data supplied for this indicator; therefore, remoteness data for 2012 are not directly comparable with remoteness data for previous years.

Source and reference attributes

Reference documents:

Donnolley N & Li Z 2012. Perinatal National Minimum Data Set compliance evaluation 2006 to 2009. Perinatal statistics series no. 26. Cat. no. PER 54. Sydney: AIHW National Perinatal Epidemiology and Statistics Unit.

Relational attributes

Related metadata references:

Supersedes [National Indigenous Reform Agreement: PI 07-Proportion of babies born of low birth weight, 2014, QS](#)

[Indigenous](#), Superseded 17/02/2016

Has been superseded by [National Indigenous Reform Agreement: PI 07-Proportion of babies born of low birthweight, 2015-16; Quality Statement](#)

[Indigenous](#), Superseded 07/02/2018

Indicators linked to this Data Quality statement:

[National Indigenous Reform Agreement: PI 07-Proportion of babies born of low birth weight, 2015](#)

[Indigenous](#), Superseded 18/11/2015