

National Perinatal Data Collection, 2013: Quality Statement

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Identifying and definitional attributes

Metadata item type:	Data Quality Statement
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Data quality

Data quality statement summary: The National Perinatal Data Collection (NPDC) is a national population-based cross-sectional collection of data on pregnancy and childbirth. The data are based on births reported to the perinatal data collection in each state and territory in Australia. Midwives and other staff, using information obtained from mothers and from hospital or other records, complete notification forms for each birth. Selected information is compiled annually into this national data set by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW). Information is included in the NPDC for both live births and for stillbirths of at least 400 grams birthweight or at least 20 weeks gestation—except in Western Australia where the births included were at least 20 weeks gestation or (if gestation was unknown) the birthweight was at least 400 grams.

Institutional environment: Data in the NPDC include data collected as part of the Perinatal National Minimum Data Set (NMDS) and supplied to the AIHW by state and territory health authorities. States and territories supplied these data under the terms of the National Health Information Agreement:

National Health Information Agreement

<http://www.aihw.gov.au/WorkArea/DownloadAsset.aspx?id=6442475527>

Data specifications for the NPDC are documented in the AIHW's online metadata repository, METeOR, and the Maternity Information Matrix:

METeOR—AIHW online metadata repository

</content/index.phtml/itemId/181162>

Perinatal NMDS

</content/index.phtml/itemId/489433>

Maternity Information Matrix

<http://maternitymatrix.aihw.gov.au/>

The AIHW is Australia's national agency for health and welfare statistics and information. The role of the AIHW is to provide information on Australia's health and welfare, through statistics and data development that informs discussion and decisions on policy and services.

The AIHW works closely with all state, territory and Australian government health authorities in collecting, analysing and disseminating data. The AIHW is an independent statutory authority within the Health portfolio, and is responsible to the Minister for Health. The Institute is governed by a board, which is accountable to the Parliament of Australia through the minister.

Timeliness: NPDC data are collated annually for calendar years. Most jurisdictions need at least 12 months lead time to undertake data entry, validation and linking with hospitals data as required after the end of the data collection period. Data were requested to be submitted on 30 April 2015. No jurisdiction supplied completed data by this date. Final and useable data were received from all jurisdictions by 28 September 2015. Data are published in *Australia's mothers and babies* in December each year, about 2 years after the end of the data collection period. The National Health Information Standards and Statistics Committee agreed that jurisdictions would move to the provision of financial year data for the NPDC from July 2013.

Accessibility: A variety of products draw upon the NPDC. Products published by the AIHW that are based primarily on data from the NPDC include:

- [Australia's mothers and babies annual report](#)
- [Perinatal data portal](#)
- [National Core Maternity Indicators reports and data portal](#)
- [Indigenous mothers and their babies reports.](#)

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

Data for selected indicators are also published in AIHW and other products such as:

AIHW products

- [Australia's health](#)
- [Children's Headline Indicators](#)
- [National Youth Information Framework](#)
- [Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health performance framework](#)

Other products

- National Healthcare Agreement performance information
- National Indigenous Reform Agreement performance information
- Overcoming Indigenous disadvantage
- Report on Government Services.

The latest publication on the NPDC is *Australia's mothers and babies 2013: in brief*. This is the twenty-third annual report on pregnancy and childbirth in Australia, providing national information on women who gave birth and the characteristics and outcomes of their babies.

Interpretability: Supporting information on the use and quality of the NPDC is published annually in *Australia's mothers and babies* (Section 4 and Appendix D), and is available in hard copy or on the AIHW website. Comprehensive information on the quality of Perinatal NMDS elements is 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 data. Metadata information for the NPDC are published in the National Health Data Dictionary (NHDD) on METeOR and in the Maternity Information Matrix.

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 NPDC is to collect information at birth for monitoring pregnancy, childbirth and the neonatal period for both the mother and baby.

The NPDC is a specification for data collected on 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. It includes 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 and neonatal morbidity and fetal deaths.

A program of national perinatal data development has led to improvements in data provision and reporting. The program involves revision of existing Perinatal NMDS items, data development work on existing perinatal METeOR items and the development of new perinatal items. The scope of the NPDC has not changed. Many of the core data elements have also not changed since the start of the data collection in 1991. Definitions and data domains of some individual data elements have changed over time in response to data development; however, in many cases, data can be mapped to create a consistent time series.

New data elements introduced into the NPDC in the reference period may not be available for the entire period. Developments to the Perinatal NMDS are under way to include additional data elements. Indigenous status of the baby has been added to the NMDS, with data collection starting from 1 July 2012. The number of antenatal care visits, post-partum perineal status, type of analgesia administered and type of anaesthesia administered have been added to the NMDS for collection from 1 July 2013.

Collection of additional data items, such as for alcohol use in pregnancy, is under development. Due to the time delay between development, implementation and collection of data by the state and territory perinatal data collections and their inclusion in the NPDC, these items will not appear in published data until after 2013. Enhancement of perinatal data is a priority for the Council of Australian Governments.

Accuracy:

Inaccurate responses may occur in all data provided to the AIHW. The AIHW does not have direct access to perinatal records to determine the accuracy of the data provided. However, the AIHW does undertake validation on receipt of data. Data received from states and territories are checked for completeness, validity and logical errors. Potential errors are queried with jurisdictions, and corrections and resubmissions are made in response to these edit queries. The AIHW does not adjust data to account for possible data errors.

Errors may occur during the processing of data by the states and territories or at the AIHW. Processing errors before data supply may be found through the validation checks applied by the AIHW.

Before publication, data are referred back to jurisdictions for checking and review. The AIHW does not adjust the data to correct for missing values. Note that because of data editing and subsequent updates of state/territory databases, numbers reported may differ from those in reports published by the states and territories.

According to the NHDD, Indigenous status is a measure of whether a person identifies as being of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin. All states and territories have a data item to record Indigenous status of the mother on their perinatal form, although there are some differences among the jurisdictions. For 2013, data on the baby's Indigenous status were available from all states and territories. Neonatal deaths collected as part of the NPDC may be incomplete. In some jurisdictions, neonatal deaths for babies transferred to another hospital or readmitted to hospital, and those dying at home, may not be included. Neonatal deaths for the Northern Territory are considered to be incomplete for 2013 as data do not include deaths occurring outside the Northern Territory. Differences in mortality rates may be due to the small number of deaths, which result in statistical fluctuations, under-ascertainment, or actual differences in mortality experience.

Coherence:

NPDC data are reported and published annually by the AIHW. While definitions and data domains of some individual data elements have changed over time in response to data development, in many cases it is possible to map coding changes to make meaningful comparisons over time.

The other national data sources on perinatal data are the ABS and the AIHW's National Hospital Morbidity Database (NHMD). The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) compiles statistics and publishes reports on registrations of live births and perinatal deaths from data made available by the Registrars of Births, Deaths and Marriages in each state and territory. The ABS collection includes all live births that were not previously registered and stillbirths of at least 400 grams, or of at least 20 weeks gestation where birthweight is unknown. The NHMD is compiled from data supplied by the state and territory health authorities. It is a collection of electronic confidentialised summary records for separations (that is, episodes of admitted patient care) in public and private hospitals in Australia.

As these collections differ from the NPDC in scope, collection methodology, definitions and reference periods, comparisons between collections should be made with caution.

Data products

Implementation start date: 01/01/2013

Relational attributes

Related metadata references:

Supersedes [National Perinatal Data Collection, 2012: Quality Statement AIHW Data Quality Statements](#), Superseded 16/11/2015

Has been superseded by [National Perinatal Data Collection, 2014: Quality Statement AIHW Data Quality Statements](#), Superseded 26/10/2017