

Person—variations of sex characteristics indicator, code N

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Person—variations of sex characteristics indicator, code N

Identifying and definitional attributes

Metadata item type:	Data Element
Short name:	Variations of sex characteristics of a person
METEOR identifier:	757702
Registration status:	Health , Qualified 03/06/2022
Definition:	An indicator of whether a person was born with variations of sex characteristics , as represented by a code.
Data Element Concept:	Person—variations of sex characteristics indicator
Value Domain:	Variations of sex characteristics code N

Value domain attributes

Representational attributes

Representation class:	Code	
Data type:	Number	
Format:	N	
Maximum character length:	1	
	Value	Meaning
Permissible values:	1	Yes
	2	No
	3	Don't know
	4	Prefer not to say
Supplementary values:	7	Not applicable
	9	Not stated/inadequately described

Collection and usage attributes

Guide for use:

This Value Domain is based on the ABS (Australian Bureau of Statistics) Standard for sex, gender, variations of sex characteristics and sexual orientation variables (ABS 2021). The values are defined as:

CODE 1 Yes

Persons who know they were born with a variation of sex characteristics.

CODE 2 No

Persons who know they were not born with a variation of sex characteristics.

CODE 3 Don't know

Persons who do not know if they were born with a variation of sex characteristics.

CODE 4 Prefer not to say

Persons who prefer not to respond on whether or not they were born with a variation of sex characteristics.

CODE 7 Not applicable

This supplementary value is for use in cases where the data is not self-reported. (Note the ABS uses the Code 0 for this value.)

CODE 9 Not stated/inadequately described

This supplementary value is used to code inadequately described responses and non-responses for variations of sex characteristics. It is not to be used on primary collection forms. It is primarily for use in administrative collections when transferring data from data sets where the item is not collected.

Alternative codes

The ABS Standard also allows for the following alternative codes, which can be mapped to the codes specified above:

CODE Y Yes

CODE N No

CODE U Don't know

CODE Z Prefer not to answer

Source and reference attributes

Submitting organisation: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare

Origin: ABS (Australian Bureau of Statistics) 2021. Standard for Sex, Gender, Variations of Sex Characteristics and Sexual Orientation Variables. Canberra: ABS. Viewed 23 Feb 2022, <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/standards/standard-sex-gender-variations-sex-characteristics-and-sexual-orientation-variables/latest-release>

Data element attributes

Collection and usage attributes

Guide for use:

The variations of sex characteristics refers to people with innate genetic, hormonal or physical sex characteristics that do not conform to medical norms for female or male bodies. It refers to a wide spectrum of variations to genitals, hormones, chromosomes and/or reproductive organs.

Collection methods:

This data element collects information on a person's self-reported awareness of having been born with variations of sex characteristics. A person should not be asked to respond on the variations of sex characteristics of others.

Many variations of sex characteristics are not evident at birth, and people may not be aware they were born with a variation of sex characteristics until puberty or later in life. It is also possible that a person may never know that they were born with a variation of sex characteristics.

Measuring intersex

Where a collection wishes to collect data on people born with variations of sex characteristics, this separate data element is necessary. It is not possible to generate reliable or consistent results in measuring this population using data collected in either [Person—sex, code X](#) or [Person—gender, code X](#), because some intersex people identify as male or female, and some do not.

Standard question module

The following standard question module is based on that recommended in the Australian Bureau of Statistics Standard for sex, gender, variations of sex characteristics and sexual orientation variables (ABS 2021):

Mandatory elements

The following elements must be included:

The words 'born with a variation of sex characteristics (sometimes called 'intersex' or 'DSD')' in the question to clearly articulate the concept being collected

Label the response options 'Yes', 'No', 'Don't know', and 'Prefer not to answer'

Only one response is permitted

If this question is interviewer administered, the question must always be asked as written and no assumptions made by the interviewer.

Recommended elements

The following element is recommended for inclusion:

Use inclusive language (e.g. 'they' or 'their' rather than 'he/she' or 'his/her').

Question structure

Were you born with a variation of sex characteristics (sometimes called 'intersex' or 'DSD')? Please [tick/mark/select] one box:

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Don't know
- ☐ Prefer not to answer

Source and reference attributes

Submitting organisation: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare

Origin: ABS (Australian Bureau of Statistics) 2021. Standard for sex, gender, variations of sex characteristics and sexual orientation variables. Canberra: ABS, viewed 6 October 2021 <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/standards/standard-sex-gender-variations-sex-characteristics-and-sexual-orientation-variables/latest-release>

AGD (Attorney-General's Department) 2015. Australian Government Guidelines on the Recognition of Sex and Gender, viewed 6 October 2021 <https://www.ag.gov.au/rights-and-protections/publications/australian-government-guidelines-recognition-sex-and-gender>

Relational attributes

Related metadata references:

See also [Person—gender, code X](#)
[Aged Care](#), Standard 30/06/2023
[Australian Institute of Health and Welfare](#), Qualified 17/01/2024
[Health](#), Standard 15/02/2022

See also [Person—sex, code X](#)
[Aged Care](#), Standard 30/06/2023
[Australian Institute of Health and Welfare](#), Recorded 09/08/2023
[Health](#), Standard 15/02/2022
[Indigenous](#), Standard 27/08/2023
[Youth Justice](#), Standard 15/02/2022

See also [Person—sexual orientation, code N\[N\]](#)
[Health](#), Qualified 03/06/2022