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# Visual acuity

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**Important note: This is an archived metadata standard from the AIHW Knowledgebase. For current metadata standards and related information please access METeOR, the AIHW's Metadata Online Registry at <http://meteor.aihw.gov.au>**

## *Identifying and Definitional Attributes*

Data Dictionary: NHDD  
Knowledgebase ID: 000847                      Version number: 1  
Metadata type: DATA ELEMENT  
Registration Authority: NHIMG                      Admin status: SUPERSEDED  
   Effective date: 01-MAR-05  
Definition: The visual acuity test measures the smallest letters that a person can read on a standardised chart at a distance of 6 metres [20 feet] wearing glasses if needed.  
Context: Public health, health care and clinical settings.

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## *Relational and Representational Attributes*

Datatype: Numeric  
Representational form: CODE  
Representation layout: NN  
Minimum Size: 2  
Maximum Size: 2  
Data Domain: 01                      6/5  
   02                      6/6  
   03                      6/9  
   04                      6/12  
   05                      6/18  
   06                      6/24  
   07                      6/36  
   08                      6/60  
   09                      CF (count fingers)  
   10                      HM (hand movement)  
   11                      PL (perceive light)  
   12                      BL (blind)  
   13                      6/7.5  
   99                      Not stated/ inadequately described

Guide For Use: Test wearing distance glasses if prescribed.

Use pinhole if vision less than 6/6.

Record actual result for both right and left eyes (this is a repeating field):

-1st field: Right eye

-2nd field: Left eye.

Collection Methods: One of the most often utilised tests for visual acuity uses the Snellen chart.

-At a distance of 6 metres all subjects should be able to read the 6/6 line with each eye using the proper refractive correction.

-Both eyes are to be opened and then cover one eye with the ocular occluder.

-The observer has to read out the smallest line of letters that he/she can see from the chart.

-This is to be repeated with the other eye.

Eye examination should be performed by an ophthalmologist or a suitably trained clinician:

-within five years of diagnosis and then every 1-2 years for patients whose diabetes onset was at age under 30 years

-at diagnosis and then every 1-2 years for patients whose diabetes onset was at age 30 years or more.

Related metadata: relates to the data element Blindness - diabetes complication version 1

relates to the data element Cataract - history version 1

relates to the data element Ophthalmological assessment - outcome version 1

relates to the data element Ophthalmoscopy - performed version 1

relates to the data element Referred to ophthalmologist - diabetes mellitus version 1

relates to the data element Health professionals attended - diabetes mellitus version 1

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### *Administrative Attributes*

Source Document: National Diabetes Outcomes Quality Review Initiative (NDOQRIN) data dictionary.

Source Organisation: National Diabetes Data Working Group

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Comments: Patients with diabetes have an increased risk of developing several eye complications including retinopathy, cataract and glaucoma that can lead to loss of vision.

Regular eye checkups are important for patients suffering from diabetes mellitus. This helps to detect and treat abnormalities early

