National health data dictionary

Version 7.0

The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare is an independent health and welfare statistics and information agency in the Commonwealth Health and Family Services portfolio. The Institute's mission is to inform community discussion and decision making through national leadership in the development and provision of authoritative and timely information on the health and welfare of Australians.

National health data dictionary

Version 7.0

National Health Data Committee

1998

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare Canberra

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Foreword

The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) is pleased to produce this seventh version of the *National health data dictionary*, which is a vital tool for use in ensuring the quality of Australian health data.

This edition includes a significant change in presentation, with data elements now presented according to their relationship to entities in the National Health Information Model. The data continues to be presented according to ISO/IEC International Standard 11179 *Specification and Standardization of Data Elements* – the standard for defining data elements issued by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) and the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC), as these appear to have been accepted positively by users.

The dictionary was first made available in electronic form from July 1997 via the National Health Information Knowledgebase at the Institute's Internet home page (http://www.aihw.gov.au). The Knowledgebase has been updated to incorporate the seventh version of the dictionary. It is expected that the Knowledgebase will become the standard form of release for the dictionary and, as Internet access becomes more common, the requirement for this publication in hard copy will diminish. A downloadable copy of the dictionary is available from the Internet through the Institute's home page.

All Australian health departments, the Australian Bureau of Statistics, the AIHW, key non-government agencies, representatives of private hospitals and the private health insurance industry cooperate to produce in the dictionary a set of core definitions and data items for use in all Australian health data collections. Use of the dictionary will help ensure that data is collected uniformly from all services and jurisdictions throughout Australia and thereby improve the quality of information for community discussion and public policy debate on health issues in Australia.

Thanks are due to Joe Christensen, Jonette McDonnell, Trish Ryan, Laura Reece, Bernie Crowe and Alannah Smith of the Institute staff who have prepared the material for this seventh edition, and to all members of the National Health Data Committee who have overseen its preparation.

I urge all collectors of health-related data in Australia to use the dictionary and so improve comparability and quality of Australian health data. Dictionary content has been expanding beyond institutional health care, and many of the new data elements relate to other sectors of health care.

The National Health Data Committee, and the Institute, continue to welcome comment on the dictionary. Readers are encouraged to complete and return the feedback sheet included at the back of the dictionary. In addition, should readers have any views on future improvements to the dictionary, please contact the Institute so that the issues can be addressed.

Richard Madden Director Australian Institute of Health and Welfare

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Introduction

The *National health data dictionary* was first published as the *National Minimum Data Set – Institutional Health Care* in September 1989. In March 1993 the *National health data dictionary – Institutional Health Care (Version 2.0)* was published. Since the signing of the National Health Information Agreement in June 1993 there have been many changes in the development and management of national health information resulting in the expansion of both the scope and content of the five subsequent versions of the *National health data dictionary*.

The National Health Data Committee (NHDC) is responsible for coordinating the development and revision of the *National health data dictionary* (see Appendix A for a list of current NHDC members). The NHDC deliberates on all data elements proposed for national collection in the health field or submitted for inclusion in the *National health data dictionary*. The National Health Information Management Group (NHIMG), which is charged with overseeing the National Health Information Work Program, endorses all data definitions included in the *National health data dictionary*.

The National Health Information Work Program incorporates health information development and review activities for agreed national priority areas that have a national focus or national implications. The activities range from developmental work on standard hospital charts of accounts, health outcome measures and new collections such as community mental health care, to improved definitions and enhancement of existing collections such as vital statistics and hospital morbidity data. One or more signatories to the agreement have accepted the role of Responsible Agency for each project listed in the work program. Many projects listed on the National Health Information Work Program contribute to the *National health data dictionary*. More information about the National Health Information Work Program is available on the National Health Information Knowledgebase (NHIK).

The range and relevance of the data definitions included in the *National health data dictionary* are dependent, to a significant extent, on the material submitted to the NHDC by the many and varied expert working groups that are actively developing data in the health field. The NHDC is required to ensure that all data submitted for consideration has undergone sufficient national consultation with recognised experts and stakeholders in the relevant field. The NHDC also has responsibility for ensuring that data definitions are documented to metadata standards compatible with existing, established standards. The NHDC does not normally undertake data development work directly. Rather, it provides a channel through which standards emerging from nationally focused data development work are documented and endorsed by the National Health Information Management Group for implementation in national data collections and made more widely available to stakeholders in the national health information arena.

The National Health Information Knowledgebase

The National Health Information Knowledgebase, or NHIK, is an electronic repository and information management environment for health metadata (data about data) and data standards. The Knowledgebase is an Internet application, accessible through any browser compatible with HTML version 3.2 or later. It has been written using Oracle's Webserver technology.

The Knowledgebase has been designed and created by the AIHW on behalf of the National Health Information Management Group. The initial release integrates and presents:

- the National Health Information Model
- the National health data dictionary
- a national directory of data collections
- the National Health Information Work Program.

The Knowledgebase implements internationally recognised metadata descriptors for data elements (ISO/IEC International Standard 11179 – *Specification and Standardization of Data Elements*) and facilitates the communication, development and exchange of metadata. A more detailed explanation of the metadata format used on the Knowledgebase and also in this publication is provided at Appendix B.

The integrating features of the Knowledgebase enable information managers and policy developers to query and view industry-level metadata in ways not possible with traditional paper-based records, repositories, dictionaries or manuals. For example, this assists with the identification of duplication, gaps and redundancies in metadata and/or development effort, and promotes general improvement in information management across an industry. It is envisaged that, over time, access to the *National health data dictionary* will be primarily electronic, via the Knowledgebase.

The Internet address for the National Health Information Knowledgebase is http://www.aihw.gov.au

Objectives of the National health data dictionary

The objectives of the *National health data dictionary* are to:

- establish a core set of uniform definitions relating to the full range of health services and a range of population parameters (including health status and determinants)
- promote uniformity, availability, reliability, validity, consistency and completeness in the data
- accord with nationally and internationally agreed protocols and standards, wherever possible
- promote the national standard definitions by being readily available to all individuals and organisations involved in the generation, use and/or development of health and health services information.

Version 7.0 of the National health data dictionary

This version of the dictionary contains 230 data definitions, including a number of new and revised data definitions that have been agreed by the members of the NHDC, and endorsed by the National Health Information Management Group. They will be effective from 1 July 1998. A full alphabetical listing of all data elements and data element concepts included in this version of the dictionary is provided at the front of this publication.

Definitions that have been superseded since Version 6.0 have not been retained in this publication, with the exception of those data elements that include the ICD-9-CM classification. Although the use of ICD-10-AM is now accepted as the national standard, the timetable for the implementation of ICD-10-AM varies across States and Territories. Consequently, the superseded data elements using ICD-9-CM remain acceptable data standards until 30 June 1999 and have been included in Version 7.0.

Data elements that have been superseded or rendered obsolete by new or revised data elements in Version 7.0 are available on the National Health Information Knowledgebase.

Several Version 6.0 data elements related to nursing homes have been excluded from Version 7.0 as they have become obsolete. These data elements are based on the now outdated NH5 form and Resident Classification Instrument and no longer represent national data collection standards in the nursing home sector. Replacements for these data elements will be considered as part of a broader review of the impact of recent structural reforms in residential aged care on the dictionary.

Format

As in Version 6.0, data definitions are presented in a format based on ISO/IEC International Standard 11179 *Specification and Standardization of Data Elements* – the international standard for defining data elements issued by the ISO and the IEC. This format is explained in detail in Appendix B.

Version 7.0, however, differs from previous versions of the dictionary in that all data elements and data element concepts are organised and presented according to a preliminary mapping of data elements according to their relationship to entities in the National Health Information Model. The mapping of data elements to the Model will be progressively refined following consultation with stakeholders in the national health information field. This initiative in Version 7.0 is designed to enhance the integration of the model with the data elements – thus providing a more complete framework for understanding and implementing existing definitions and for identifying areas for further data development activity. A copy of the full Model is included following this introductory section to Version 7.0.

In addition, a header page that displays the segment of the model to which the data elements relate introduces groups of data elements/concepts associated with an entity in the model. In a few cases, a data element concept has been deemed to relate to more than one entity in the model. In such cases, the data element concept definition has been included in each entity group to which it relates. To assist with understanding the relationship between the data elements/concepts and their

associated model entities, definitions of all entities in the National Health Information Model are provided at Appendix C.

With the move to using the Model as the organising principle for Version 7.0, the use of 'P', 'A' 'E' or 'S' numbers for each data element has been discontinued. Although the data definitions are no longer categorised according to whether they relate to Patient level ('P'), Establishment level ('E'), Activity level ('A') or System level ('S') data, the data definitions included in Version 7.0 still encompass this range of data. Each data element and data element concept has been mapped to that entity in the National Health Information Model to which it primarily relates. However, to assist with mapping the data elements in Version 7.0 to Version 6.0, Appendix H contains a list of all Version 7.0 data elements that were included in Version 6.0 according to their previous 'P', 'A', 'E' or 'S' numbers.

For example, the data element 'Separations' which was previously listed as 'A1' is now mapped to the sub-entity 'Performance Indicator' in the entity 'Health and Welfare Policy/Plan Element', which is, in turn, located within the super-entity 'Business Statement'. Thus, the data element 'Separations' is now grouped with those other data elements that are primarily used as performance indicators, such as, 'Patient days', 'Total waiting time (throughput data)' and 'Health outcome indicator'.

Readers of the dictionary are invited to comment on the mapping of the data elements to the Model, and on any other aspect of the dictionary, by completing and returning the feedback sheet included at the back of the dictionary.

The mapping of data elements to the Model provides a more structured view of the data contained in the *National health data dictionary* than is possible through the use of the previous categories – Patient, Activity, Establishment and System. However, to assist with understanding the history and uses of data elements that provide information about the activities and resource use of health care establishments and the system as a whole, the following information provided in Version 6.0 of the *National health data dictionary* has been updated and included in Version 7.0 as follows.

- **Appendix D Staffing categories** provides expanded information about the staffing categories used in the data elements 'Full-time equivalent staff' and 'Salaries and wages'.
- **Appendix E Establishment activity definitions** provides information about the definition of 'establishment' in the *National health data dictionary* and activity data related to acute hospitals and public psychiatric and alcohol and drug hospital activity.
- **Appendix F Establishment resource use definitions** provides information about data definitions related to the use of resources in health services.
- Appendix G System-level resource data definitions provides information about data definitions related to the entire institutional sector, such as public hospitals, or domiciliary nursing services, at the State, Territory or Commonwealth level (whichever is the highest level of overall administration of the system), including a glossary of terms that support the definitions of capital expenditure.

Further information

Further information about the *National health data dictionary*, the National Health Information Work Program, the National Health Information Model and National Minimum Data Sets and data collections is available on the National Health Information Knowledgebase on the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) home page – http://www.aihw.gov.au – or by contacting the Secretariat, National Health Data Committee at the AIHW on (02) 6244 1109, fax (02) 6244 1255.

National Health Information Model Version 2.0 DRAFT

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