

National Healthcare Agreement: P18-Life expectancy, 2010 QS

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Identifying and definitional attributes

Metadata item type:	Data Quality Statement
METEOR identifier:	407875
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Data quality

Institutional environment: For information on the institutional environment of the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), including the legislative obligations of the ABS, financing and governance arrangements, and mechanisms for scrutiny of ABS operations, please see ABS Institutional Environment.

Death statistics are sourced from death registrations systems administered by the various state and territory Registrars of Births Deaths and Marriages. It is a legal requirement of each state and territory that all deaths are registered. Information about the deceased is supplied by a relative or other person acquainted with the deceased, or by an official of the institution where the death occurred. As part of the registration process, information on the cause of death is either supplied by the medical practitioner certifying the death on a Medical Certificate of Cause of Death, or supplied as a result of a coronial investigation.

Timeliness: Estimates of Indigenous and non-Indigenous life expectancy at birth are available every five years, with 2005–2007 estimates released in May 2009. The most recent estimates used a different methodology and therefore are not comparable with previous estimates. Life expectancy estimates for 2010–2012 are expected to be produced using a similar methodology to that used for the 2005–2007 estimates.

Accessibility: ABS life expectancy estimates are published on the ABS website www.abs.gov.au (see *Life Tables, Australia, 2005-2007*).

Indigenous life expectancy estimates are also published on the ABS website, (see *Experimental Life Tables for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, Australia, 2005-07*).

Relevance: Life tables based on assumed improvements in mortality are produced by the ABS using assumptions on future life expectancy at birth, based on recent trends in life expectancy.

Experimental life tables for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians from which life expectancy at birth estimates were sourced were produced to enable the construction of ABS experimental estimates and projections of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population of Australia for the period 1991 to 2021.

Estimates of life expectancy at birth for Indigenous Australians are commonly used as a measure for assessing Indigenous population health and disadvantage.

Accuracy: Compilation of life tables requires complete and accurate data on deaths that occur in a period, and reliable estimates of the population exposed to the risk of dying during that period. These data are required by age and sex so as to calculate age-sex specific death rates.

In the case of life tables for the Indigenous population, registrations of Indigenous deaths and Indigenous population estimates present particular methodological challenges. For example, there are a number of factors which may contribute to under-identification of Indigenous deaths in death registrations records. In addition, there are quality issues associated with Indigenous population estimates, such as undercount of the Indigenous population in the Census, and non-response to the Indigenous status question on the Census form. Due to the inherent uncertainties in these data, the life tables should be considered as experimental and as such, care should be exercised when interpreting them.

Coherence: Due to significant changes in methodology, ABS strongly advises that comparisons between 2005–2007 estimates of Indigenous life expectancy at birth and previously published estimates should not be made.

Source and reference attributes

Submitting organisation: Australian Bureau of Statistics.

Relational attributes

Related metadata references: Has been superseded by [National Healthcare Agreement: P1 18-Life expectancy, 2011 QS](#)
[Health!](#), Superseded 04/12/2012

Indicators linked to this Data Quality statement: [National Healthcare Agreement: P18-Life expectancy, 2010](#)
[Health!](#), Superseded 08/06/2011