

Person—sex, code X

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Person—sex, code X

Identifying and definitional attributes

Metadata item type:	Data Element
Short name:	Sex of a person
Synonymous names:	Sex characteristics of a person
METEOR identifier:	741686
Registration status:	Health! , Standard 15/02/2022 Youth Justice , Superseded 27/03/2023
Definition:	The sex of a person, as represented by a code.
Data Element Concept:	Person—sex
Value Domain:	Sex code X

Value domain attributes

Representational attributes

Representation class:	Code	
Data type:	String	
Format:	X	
Maximum character length:	1	
	Value	Meaning
Permissible values:	1	Male
	2	Female
	3	Another term
Supplementary values:	9	Not stated/inadequately described

Collection and usage attributes

Guide for use:

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

CODE 1 Male

Persons whose sex at birth or infancy was recorded as male, or who reported their sex as male at the time of collection.

CODE 2 Female

Persons whose sex at birth or infancy was recorded as female, or who reported their sex as female at the time of collection.

CODE 3 Another term

Persons whose sex at birth or infancy was recorded as another term (not male or female), or who reported their sex as another term (not male or female) at the time of collection.

The value meaning of "Another term" has been assigned to Code 3 for this value domain, which replaces "Other" and "Intersex or indeterminate" in previous versions of this element. The third option recognises that across Australian jurisdictions and elsewhere there are a range of terms used.

Alternative Codes

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) *Standard for sex, gender, variations of sex characteristics and sexual orientation variables* (ABS 2021) includes the following Alternative Code system:

CODE M Male

CODE F Female

CODE X Another term

These alternate Codes can be mapped to the Codes above.

Collection methods:

CODE 9 Not stated/inadequately described

This supplementary value is used to code inadequately described responses and non-responses for sex. 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 has not been collected.

Comments:

A person's sex is based upon their sex characteristics, such as their chromosomes, hormones and reproductive organs. While typically based upon the sex characteristics observed and recorded at birth or in infancy, a person's sex can change over the course of their lifetime and may differ from their sex recorded at birth.

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>

Data element attributes

Collection and usage attributes

Guide for use:

The terms [sex](#) and [gender](#) are interrelated, and are often used interchangeably, however they are distinct concepts:

- Sex is understood in relation to sex characteristics. Sex recorded at birth refers to what was determined by sex characteristics observed at birth or in infancy
- Gender is about social and cultural differences in identity, expression and experience.

While they are related concepts, caution should be exercised when comparing counts for sex with those for gender.

“The preferred Australian Government approach is to collect and use gender information. Information regarding sex would ordinarily not be required and should only be collected where there is a legitimate need for that information and it is consistent with Australian Privacy Principle 3.” (AGD 2015)

Collection methods:

This Data Element may be used to collect *either* sex recorded at birth *or* sex reported at the time of collection. This information should be specified in the Data Set Specific Information in order to provide transparency about which type of data was collected.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) *Standard for sex, gender, variations of sex characteristics and sexual orientation variables* (ABS 2021) recommends that where data on sex is collected, the preferred question should relate to sex recorded at birth. Sex recorded at birth refers to what was determined by sex characteristics observed at birth or in infancy. This is an important indicator for statistical analysis in births and deaths, health statistics, calculating fertility rates and deriving counts for cis and trans populations.

A data collection may instead collect data on a person's sex reported at the time of collection, rather than their sex recorded at birth. However, there are advantages of sex recorded at birth as the sex question and further data that can be derived when using sex recorded at birth as the sex question.

Caution should be exercised when comparing counts for sex of a person recorded at birth and the sex of a person reported at the time of collection, as a person's reported sex may change over the course of their lifetime. Also, as the terms sex and gender are often used interchangeably, a respondent might provide a gender response to a sex question.

Standard questions

Sex recorded at birth

The ABS recommends the following standard question structure:

What was [your/Person's name/their] sex recorded at birth? Please [tick/mark/select] one box.

Male

Female

Another term (please specify)

Mandatory elements

The following elements must be included:

- The words "sex recorded at birth" in the question to clearly articulate the concept being collected
- Label the response options "Male", "Female", and "Another term (please specify)"
- A write-in facility is available when the "Another term (please specify)"

response option is selected

- 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 elements are recommended:

- Use inclusive language (e.g. "they" or "their" rather than "he/she" or "his/her")
- If both sex and gender questions are included, ask the sex question first and note that a separate question on gender is also asked
- If both sex and gender questions are included, ask both on the same page if practical.

Sex reported at the time of collection

The ABS recommends the following standard question structure:

What is [your/Person's name/their] sex? Please [tick/mark/select] one box.

Male

Female

Another term (please specify)

Mandatory elements

The following elements must be included:

- The word "sex" in the question to clearly articulate the concept being collected
- Label the response options "Male", "Female", and "Another term (please specify)"
- A write-in facility is available when the "Another term (please specify)" response option is selected
- 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 elements are recommended for inclusion:

- Use inclusive language (e.g. "they" or "their" rather than "he/she" or "his/her")
- If both sex and gender questions are included, ask the sex question first and note that a separate question on gender is also asked
- If both sex and gender questions are included, ask both on the same page if practical.

The *Australian Government Guidelines on the Recognition of Sex and Gender* recommend "departments and agencies should refrain from making assumptions about a person's sex and/or gender identity based on indicators such as their name, voice or appearance" (AGD 2015.)

The inclusion of the write-in facility for "Another term" as a third response option recognises that there are a range of terms used to describe sex which is neither male nor female, and enhances data quality. Where the "Another term" code has been selected for sex, the data element [Person—sex, text X\[X\(99\)\]](#) may be used to capture any further (optional) specification of sex descriptors.

Comments:

Where this data element is used to record sex reported at the time of collection, the data may not be used to derive cis and trans counts through the 'two-step method'.

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 25 February 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 26 February 2021 <https://www.ag.gov.au/rights-and-protections/publications/australian-government-guidelines-recognition-sex-and-gender>

Relational attributes

Related metadata references: Supersedes [Person—sex, code X Early Childhood](#), Standard 24/07/2018
[Health!](#), Superseded 15/02/2022
[Homelessness](#), Standard 10/08/2018
[Indigenous](#), Standard 16/10/2017

See also [Person—gender, code X Health!](#), Standard 15/02/2022

See also [Person—sex, text X\[X\(99\)\] Health!](#), Standard 15/02/2022

Implementation in Data Set Specifications: [Activity based funding: Mental health care NBEDS 2022–23](#)
[Health!](#), Standard 17/12/2021
Implementation start date: 01/07/2022
Implementation end date: 30/06/2023

[Admitted patient care NMDS 2022–23](#)
[Health!](#), Standard 20/10/2021
Implementation start date: 01/07/2022
Implementation end date: 30/06/2023
Conditional obligation:

This data element is collected on a Conditional basis with the element [Person—gender, code X](#). Data must be reported for at least one of the two elements, either Sex or Gender.

Data may be reported for both elements.

DSS specific information:

In the APC NMDS a person's sex is understood to be reported as at the time of data collection.

[Alcohol and other drug treatment services NMDS 2022–23](#)
[Health!](#), Standard 17/12/2021

Implementation start date: 01/07/2022
Implementation end date: 30/06/2023

[Community mental health care NMDS 2022–23](#)
[Health!](#), Standard 17/12/2021

Implementation start date: 01/07/2022
Implementation end date: 30/06/2023

[Emergency service care NBEDS 2022–23](#)
[Health!](#), Standard 20/10/2021

Implementation start date: 01/07/2022
Implementation end date: 30/06/2023
Conditional obligation:

This data element is collected on a Conditional basis with the element [Person—gender, code X](#). Data must be reported for at least one of the two elements, either Sex or Gender.

Data may be reported for both elements.

DSS specific information:

In the ESC NBEDS a person's sex is understood to be reported as at the time of

data collection.

[National Bowel Cancer Screening Program NBEDS 2022–23](#)

[Health!](#), Standard 17/12/2021

Implementation start date: 01/07/2022

Implementation end date: 30/06/2023

[Non-admitted patient emergency department care NMDS 2022–23](#)

[Health!](#), Standard 20/10/2021

Implementation start date: 01/07/2022

Implementation end date: 30/06/2023

Conditional obligation:

This data element is collected on a Conditional basis with the element [Person—gender, code X](#). Data must be reported for at least one of the two elements, either Sex or Gender.

Data may be reported for both elements.

DSS specific information:

In the NAPEDC NMDS a person's sex is understood to be reported as at the time of data collection.

[Non-admitted patient NBEDS 2022–23](#)

[Health!](#), Standard 20/10/2021

Implementation start date: 01/07/2022

Implementation end date: 30/06/2023

Conditional obligation:

This data element is collected on a Conditional basis with the element [Person—gender, code X](#). Data must be reported for at least one of the two elements, either Sex or Gender.

Data may be reported for both elements.

DSS specific information:

In the NAP NBEDS a person's sex is understood to be reported as at the time of data collection.

[Perinatal NMDS 2022–23](#)

[Health!](#), Standard 17/12/2021

Implementation start date: 01/07/2022

Implementation end date: 30/06/2023

DSS specific information:

This data element is recorded for the baby only. In the case of multiple births, this data element should be recorded for each baby born.

[Residential mental health care NMDS 2022–23](#)

[Health!](#), Standard 17/12/2021

Implementation start date: 01/07/2022

Implementation end date: 30/06/2023

[Statistical linkage key 581 cluster](#)

[Health!](#), Standard 17/12/2021

Implementation start date: 01/07/2018

[Youth Justice Client file cluster](#)

[Youth Justice](#), Superseded 27/03/2023