



Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Health**

Data Quality Statement

Midwives Notification System

Document version control

Version	Date	Purpose
0.6	April 2020	Metadata compilation for Data Management
1.0	August 2020	This version. Format content into current document template for Department of Health

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Summary details for Midwives Notification System

Background / history

Midwives' notifications in their current format have been received since 1975 by the Chief Health Officer (previously the Executive Director, Public Health) as Form 2 of the Health (Midwives Notifications) Regulations 1994. The Midwives Notification System (MNS) compiles all notifications of births occurring since 1st January 1980. Legislation requires registered midwives to notify the Chief Health Officer within 48 hours of a birth they attend. The notification is then resubmitted within one month of the infant's discharge from the maternity service when its content is complete and valid.

Purpose

The notification by a midwife is to "protect the lives of mothers and infants"¹ and is also critical for the initiation of community services for mother and family. The compilation of these notifications in MNS supports annual reporting about pregnancy and birth in Western Australia (WA), and enables review of health outcomes for mothers and infants through audit and research.

Governance

The MNS is a compilation of information regulated as Form 2 of the Health (Midwives Notifications) Regulations 1994 for Section 335 of the *Health (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1911*.

Data Steward: Assistant Director General, Public and Aboriginal Health

Data Custodian: Principal Data Management Officer, Maternal & Child Health (MCH), Information & Performance Governance Unit

Data collection

Information for MNS is regulated as Form 2. This information is submitted as a digital data file specified for Form 2 for more than 99% of births occurring in WA. The remaining cases are notified on a paper version of Form 2.

Type of data collected

Demographic: Identifying data include name, address, DOB and phone number of the mother, DOB and sex of the infant. Other demographic data include requirement for interpreter, language spoken at home, marital status and ethnic origin of the mother and aboriginal status of the infant.

Clinical: previous pregnancy outcomes, current pregnancy events and conditions, labour, birth and neonatal outcomes.

Additional: Additional data is available to each MNS record from other sources via data administrative processes within the Department of Health, these include geocodes for maternal address, limited data for mother and infant available from their hospital separation for the birth, and calculated data determined from other data fields like percent of optimal birthweight (POBW) and duration of pregnancy. WA Health maternity services also provide additional data items not mandated by Form 2 which are the Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale (EPDS) score and whether the mother has a Medicare card.

¹ Section 333 of the *Health (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1911*

Scope of data

All births in Western Australia of at least 20 weeks gestation or if gestation unknown of at least 400 grams birthweight that were notified by a registered midwife.

Frequency/timing

Midwives' notifications are first submitted every 1 to 2 business days and for births occurring in the last 2 days where content is often incomplete for events that have not yet occurred. A small group of validation rules are applied to the notification when received at the Department of Health and the notifications are distributed to Child Health Services and then stored in a dataset called the Birth Notification Dataset (BND).

A second submission of a complete notification is made in a batch file where the batch includes all births at the maternity service that occurred in the last calendar month.

This second data file has a comprehensive validation process applied as described below.

Quality

Data is available from January 1980 onwards. The MNS collection is regulated by Form 2 of the Health (Midwives Notifications) Regulations 1994. The latest version of Form 2 was regulated in 2019. Changes to Form 2 are implemented no more frequently than annually after a comprehensive process of determining requirements, resources available and objectives to be achieved. The process includes collaboration with midwives and child health nurses providing maternity services, child health services and research and their professional colleges. For an outline of MNS scope, metadata, validation processes and changes over time please see documents found at https://ww2.health.wa.gov.au/Articles/J_M/Midwives-Notification-System.

Further information

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