

Changes to the NSW cancer incidence and mortality dataset for 2017 release

Date updated: 12th November 2020

The 2017 cancer incidence and mortality data release has incorporated a change that impacts historical death data. For more information please see detailed sections below.

1. National death index (NDI) update

1.1. Change description

The National Death Index (NDI) is a database developed and maintained by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW). It contains a listing of all deaths that have occurred in Australia since 1980.

Records for people alive on the NSW Cancer Registry (NSWCR), who were diagnosed with cancer between 1980 and 2014, have undergone a matching process against the records in the NDI. This matching is conducted in order to identify people who may have died but were not captured by existing death data update processes. This typically occurs when people move interstate or die of causes other than cancer:

- The 2017 cancer incidence and mortality data release has incorporated the NDI matches associated with deaths that occurred interstate.
- Future dataset releases will include the additional NDI matches for people who died in NSW, largely of causes other than cancer.

1.2. Change analysis

The following table shows the difference between the 2016 and 2017 cancer incidence and mortality data releases relating to the NDI update for interstate deaths as described above.

Cause of death	Number of patients identified using NDI matching (#)		
	2016 data release	2017 data release	Difference
Cancer death	2,307	2,420	113
Non-cancer death	40,476	40,711	235
Unknown cause of death	3,153	3,150	-3
Total	45,936	46,281	345

The change mostly impacted years of death from 2009 to 2014, with an average increase of 0.16% of all deaths as shown in the table below.

Year of death	Number of patients identified using NDI matching (#)			All deaths in 2017 data release	Increase in deaths in 2017 data release (%)
	2016 data release	2017 data release	Difference		
2009	22	46	24	18,158	0.13
2010	0	35	35	18,393	0.19
2011	0	35	35	19,131	0.18
2012	1	31	30	19,412	0.15
2013	1	26	25	19,450	0.13
2014	2	35	33	19,776	0.17
Total 2009-2014	26	208	182	114,320	0.16

1.3. Use of data for survival reporting

The current 2017 incidence and mortality dataset is complete for reporting **cancer-specific survival** for people who were diagnosed with cancer between 1980 and 2014 and followed up to 2014.

Future data releases will enable reporting of complete **all-cause survival** from cancer for people who were diagnosed with cancer between 1980 and 2014 and followed up to 2014.