

---

Subject: Re: Neonatal mortality

Posted by [Bridgette-DHS](#) on Wed, 20 Oct 2021 12:49:06 GMT

[View Forum Message](#) <> [Reply to Message](#)

---

Following is a response from DHS Research & Data Analysis Director, Tom Pullum:

Thank you for catching this. The current version of the Guide to DHS Statistics is supposed to say 28 days.

Keep in mind that in almost all settings where DHS surveys are conducted, there is not a reliable vital statistics system. Age at death is based on recall of an event that may have occurred many years ago. The mother will not be concerned about the difference between 28, 29, or 30 days.

Age at death is supposed to be reported in days, if less a month. The length of a calendar month in the Gregorian calendar is not fixed--it can be 28, 29, 30, or 31 days (for some purposes we interpret it as  $365.25/12=30.4375$  days).

If you look at the distribution of b6 in any BR file you will see that there are almost no deaths reported at 28 or 29 or 30 days or in the days just before 28. It is very likely that some late neonatal deaths are actually reported at "1 month", which displaces them OUT of the neonatal period. That's probably more common than over-reporting of late neonatal deaths because of slippage between 28 and 30.

There is a measurement issue here, but you are certainly correct about the official definition of a neonatal death and we want to be consistent with that. We'll fix it.

---