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Subject: Menopause definition

Posted by [leonor](#) on Wed, 28 Apr 2021 20:02:11 GMT

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Hello DHS forum,

the definition below is for menopause women. Does anyone know why the DHS uses 6 instead of the standard 12 months?

Thanks

Numerator:

Number of women whose last menstruation occurred six or more months before the survey (v226 in 6:399) or before the last birth (v226 = 995):

- 1) who have had a hysterectomy (v226 = survey specific code)
- 2) who declare that they are menopausal (v226 = 994)
- 3) who never menstruated (v226 = 996).

Excludes women who are currently pregnant or have postpartum amenorrhea (v213 = 1 or v405 = 1).

Denominator: All women age 30-49

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Subject: Re: Menopause definition

Posted by [Trevor-DHS](#) on Fri, 18 Jun 2021 18:45:23 GMT

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Apologies for the long delay in getting back to you. I tried to research where this came from, but I have been unsuccessful. Its earliest use for DHS was in surveys conducted in 1990, and I wonder if that pre-dates the accepted WHO definition of menopause. WHO used a definition of 12 months in 1980 (WHO\_TRS\_670, 1980), but WHO\_TRS\_866, 1996 mentions the 1980 report and that "Reports on the menopause published since then have continued to use a variety of definitions", so it sounds like the definition was not formalized prior to the mid-1990s.

As far as I can tell this is one of those indicators for which there has been very little discussion over the years and the original definition has persisted since then.

The same definition using 6 months is also used as a measure of infecundity in the estimation of unmet need (AS25).

While I generally prefer to follow recommendations from normative bodies such as WHO, changing the definition in DHS now would be complicated for the trend series and involve a

substantial amount of work with all previous surveys (including re-issuing of all datasets if we changed the definition for unmet need).

Regards. Trevor

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