

The 2004 National Nursing Home Survey (NNHS) Linked Mortality File

Analytic guidelines

The 2004 NNHS Linked Mortality File is a mortality follow-up study of eligible 2004 NNHS participants through December 31, 2006. This is the first data release of mortality follow-up information for the 2004 NNHS.

These guidelines address the following analytical topics:

[I. Eligibility status](#)

[II. NNHS participants with an age last known alive of 100 years or greater](#)

[III. Nursing home residents aged 17 years and younger](#)

[IV. Inconsistencies in baseline age and follow-up age](#)

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I. Linkage eligibility status

All 2004 NNHS participants with sufficient identifying data to create a [NDI](#) submission record were eligible for mortality follow-up. Eligibility status for mortality follow-up is indicated by the variable ELIGSTAT and for mortality or survival analyses, analysts should keep only the records with a value of ELIGSTAT = 1. For more information please refer to the File Layout and Detailed Notes for Selected Variables.

II. NNHS participants with an age last known alive of 100 years or greater

The 2004 NNHS Linked Mortality File includes records where the calculated age presumed alive at the end of mortality follow-up (December 31, 2006) is 100 years or greater. For these cases there was no valid NDI record match or any other source of mortality information. Yet, given the probabilistic nature of the mortality ascertainment, analysts may wish to consider these cases as loss to follow-up and make them ineligible for mortality analyses.

III. Nursing home residents aged 17 years and younger

The restricted-use 2004 NNHS Linked Mortality File includes 14 records for children, 17 years of age and younger, at the time of their survey participation.

IV. Inconsistencies in baseline age and follow-up age

Misreporting or discrepancies in reported age at interview or date of birth can result in values for age at death or age last presumed alive that may be inconsistent with baseline age, resulting in negative follow-up time for survival analyses. When this occurs, the number of cases is small, but analysts should be aware and make appropriate adjustments to the data.

V. Source of mortality information

The primary determination of mortality for eligible 2004 NNHS participants is based upon matching records to the NDI. However, NCHS collects multiple sources of information to determine the final mortality status of a survey participant. For the 2004 NNHS, indication of deceased status from the Social Security Administration also may have been obtained. Variables

indicating which source or sources were used to determine vital status are available on the linked mortality file. More than one source of mortality may be available. For more information please refer to the File Layout and Detailed Notes for Selected Variables.

VI. Special request data file

A [special request data file](#) is available that includes additional death certificate data as well as NDI record match results for potential NDI matches that were considered “false” by the probabilistic matching algorithm, thus providing date and cause of death for those NNHS participants NCHS determined to be alive. To provide the analysts with the opportunity to alter the criteria for determining final vital status, NCHS has provided the SCORE and CLASS for the best NDI record match. The analyst can take either a more or less conservative approach to vital status ascertainment by setting a different cut-off score within each class and/or determining which classes contain true matches. For more information on the implications of using alternate cut-off scores on vital status ascertainment, please refer to the [matching methodology document](#), [Appendix B](#).