The 10 ANACONDA steps: A quick reference guide







Data input checks

Provides a quick overview of the composition of the population and those who died by age, sex and cause of death. Tabulates the input data by the two most used mortality tabulation lists: List 1 from the International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems (ICD-10), and List 2 from the 2017 Global Burden of Disease (GBD) study.

Crude death rate and completeness

The estimated and calculated crude death rates (CDR) from the input data are used to assess the extent of potential underreporting of deaths, and the true completeness of the assessed data is calculated using a modelled approach.

Age-specific mortality rates

The age- and sex-specific mortality rates are calculated and shown in a log-plot chart. Inconsistencies such as a non-linear line after age 35 should be investigated as they could indicate incompleteness of death reporting.

Age-sex distribution of deaths

The age distributions of deaths of both males and females are presented showing the ages at which most deaths occur. Comparators are used to point at potential missing deaths at certain ages.

Completeness of child mortality

This step calculates the probability of a child surviving to the age of five years (the 5Q0) and compares this with external estimates calculated from censuses and surveys by international experts for global usage. Comparing these gives an estimate the extent of under-registration of child deaths. This step also produces a life table from the input data, which includes life expectancy at any age.

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Mortality by broad GBD groups

To assess whether the reported causes of deaths (CODs) are consistent with expected patterns (given current mortality conditions) an important first step is to look at the distribution of CODs by three broad cause groups (communicable; non-communicable; external) and to separate the ill-defined/garbage causes into two blocks according to: causes which cannot be the underlying cause of death and causes which are insufficiently specified.

Quality of cause of death data

Two different typologies are used to analyse the garbage codes and to group them into types of certification errors and severity levels according to the impact they can have on misguiding policy and planning. Understanding this is important for taking action to reduce them and improving the reliability of the COD statistics.

Age pattern of mortality by broad groups

As the risk of dying from different diseases and injuries changes with age, the age pattern of deaths within each of the three broad cause groups will also be different. Comparator data are used to assess the plausibility of the patterns shown in your data. Given that health policies often focus on specific age groups, this step also assess the proportion of garbage codes within each five-year group allowing you to know how biased the data are.

Leading causes of death

Tabulating and ranking the 20 leading CODs is a common and useful way to present COD data to policy makers for prioritisation and planning. The presence of garbage codes in this ranking is indicated by highlighting these in either red or orange according to severity. Redistribution algorithms are used to show what the 20 leading CODs would look like if all garbage codes were distributed to more correct categories.

Vital statistics performance index (VSPI)

ANACONDA computes a single summary score of the overall performance of the mortality system that produced the data, the vital statistics performance index or VSPI(Q). This takes into account five essential components of data quality and can be reliably used to monitor the quality of system improvements.





The program partners on this initiative include: The University of Melbourne, Australia; CDC Foundation, USA; Vital Strategies, USA; Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, USA; World Health Organization, Switzerland.

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