



A decade of HIV surveillance among injecting drug users in Australia: Results from the Australian Needle and Syringe Program Survey

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on behalf of the collaboration of Australian NSPs**

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HIV in Australia



- **First HIV/AIDS case in 1982 → IDU 1985**
- **Predominantly among gay men/MSM**
- **Varying prevalence among IDU**
 - **1987: 12% Sydney** (Wolk et al., 1990)
 - **1994: 7% Sydney** (Rutter et al., 1996) **≤2% other jurisdictions** (Loxley et al., 1995)
 - Higher prevalence in Sydney probably due to sampling issues, eg 3% heterosexual only (Rutter et al., 1996)
- **Low HIV prevalence among IDU**
 - **Significant changes in the drug market**
 - ↓heroin; ↑ methamphetamine
 - **Recent increases in HIV diagnoses**

NSPs in Australia



- **Commenced 1986**
- **Widespread and publicly funded**
- **Bipartisan support**
- **General public support** (Treloar & Fraser 2007)
- **Fixed site, outreach, vending machines and pharmacy**
- **Distribution rather than exchange**

Aims



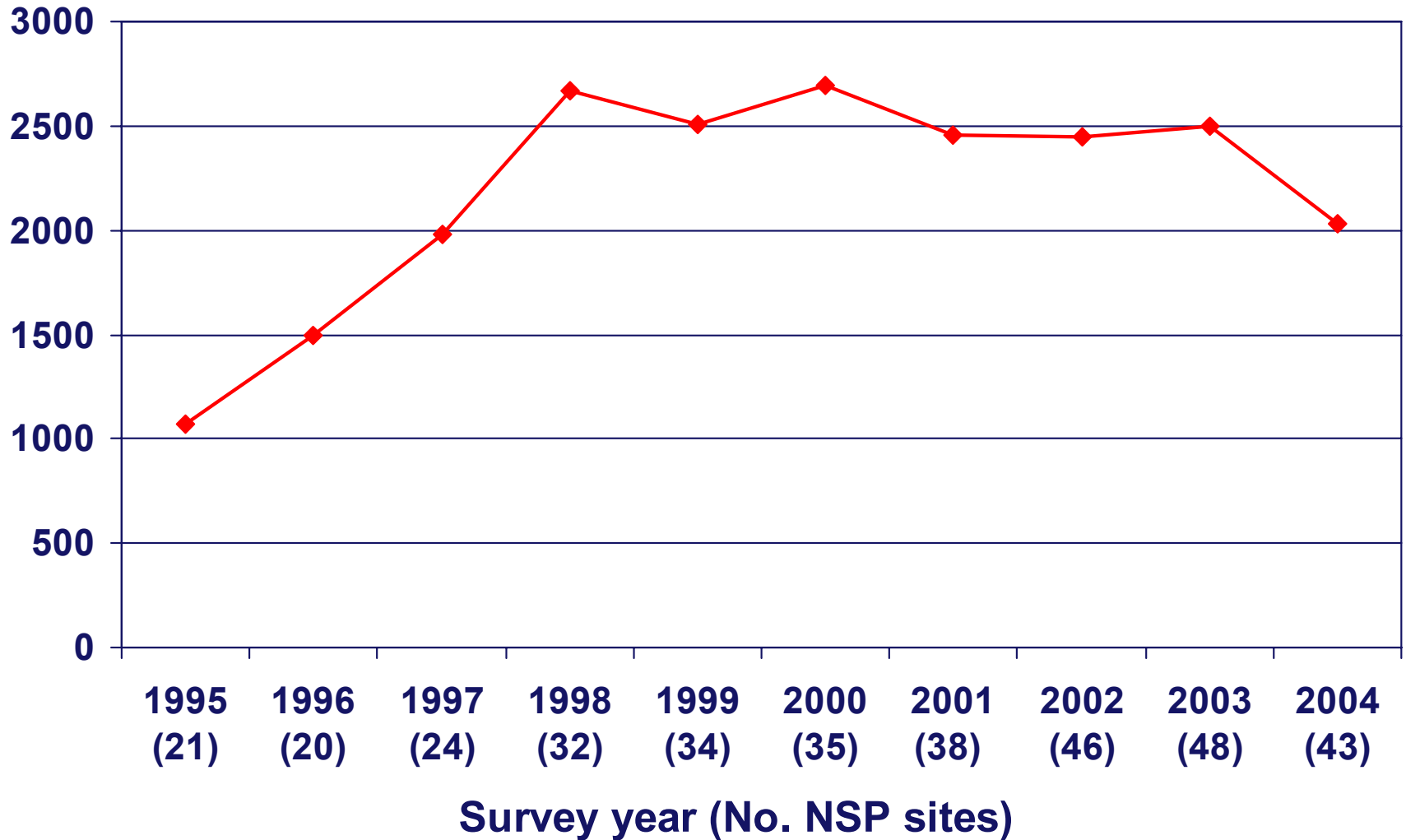
- **National Needle and Syringe Program survey:**
 - **Monitor HIV prevalence and risk behaviour among IDU in Australia**
- **Examine trends in HIV prevalence, risk behaviours for the period 1995-2004**
- **Determine correlates of HIV infection**

Methods



- **Brief survey: demographics, drug use and treatment history, injecting and sexual risk and previous BBV testing**
 - **Self-completed (assistance where required)**
- **Capillary blood sample**
 - **Anti-HIV-1 EIA and Western blot**
- **Survey conducted during 1 week in October**
- **Eligibility: all attendees during study week**
- **De-duplicated data (n=2,557)**
 - **Unique identifier: first 2 initials of first & last name birth month & year, sex and indigenous status**
- **Trends and aggregated data (1995-2004)**

Results: Participation



- Mean response rate of 47%, ranged 41% in 1995 to 60% in 1997

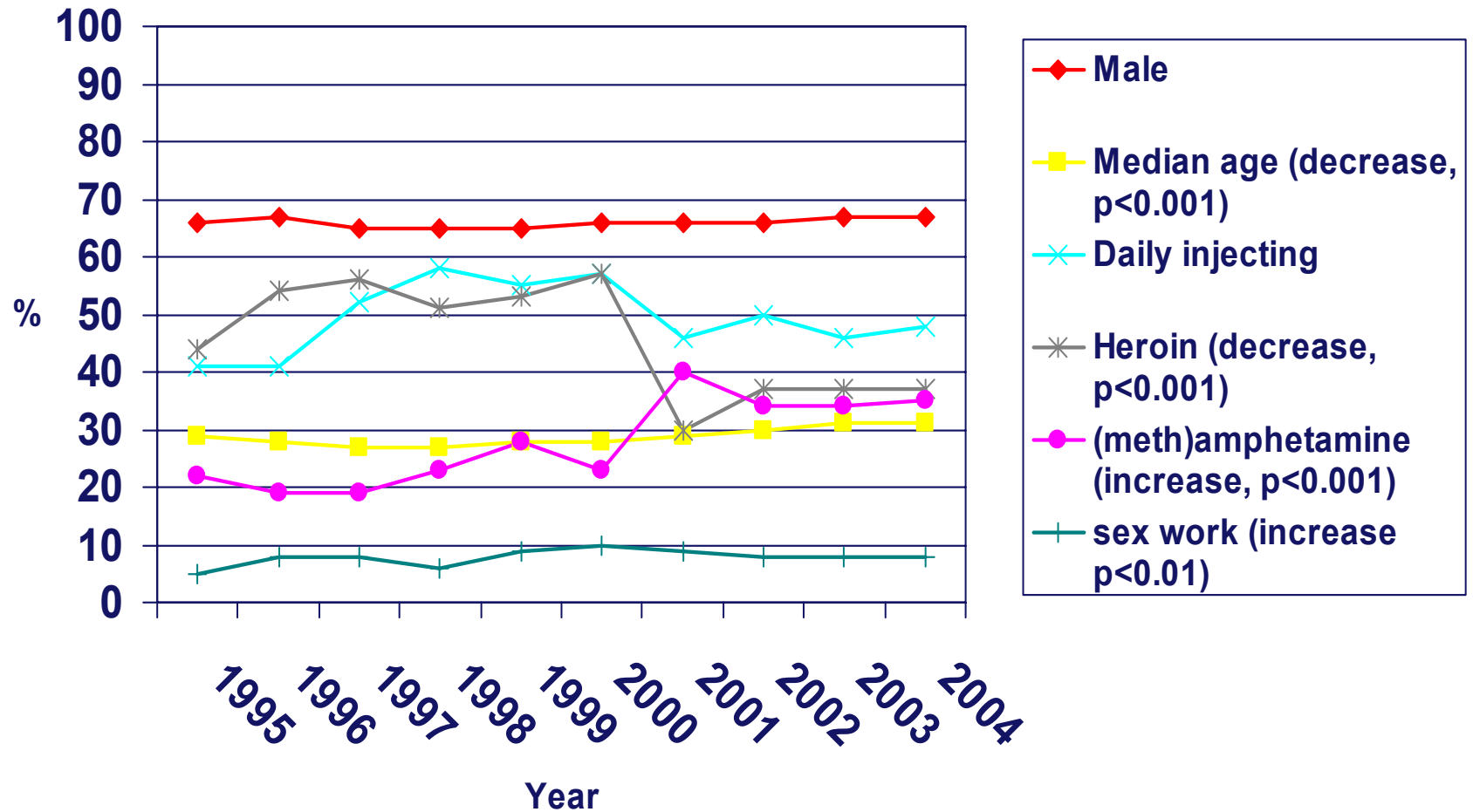
Results: sample characteristics



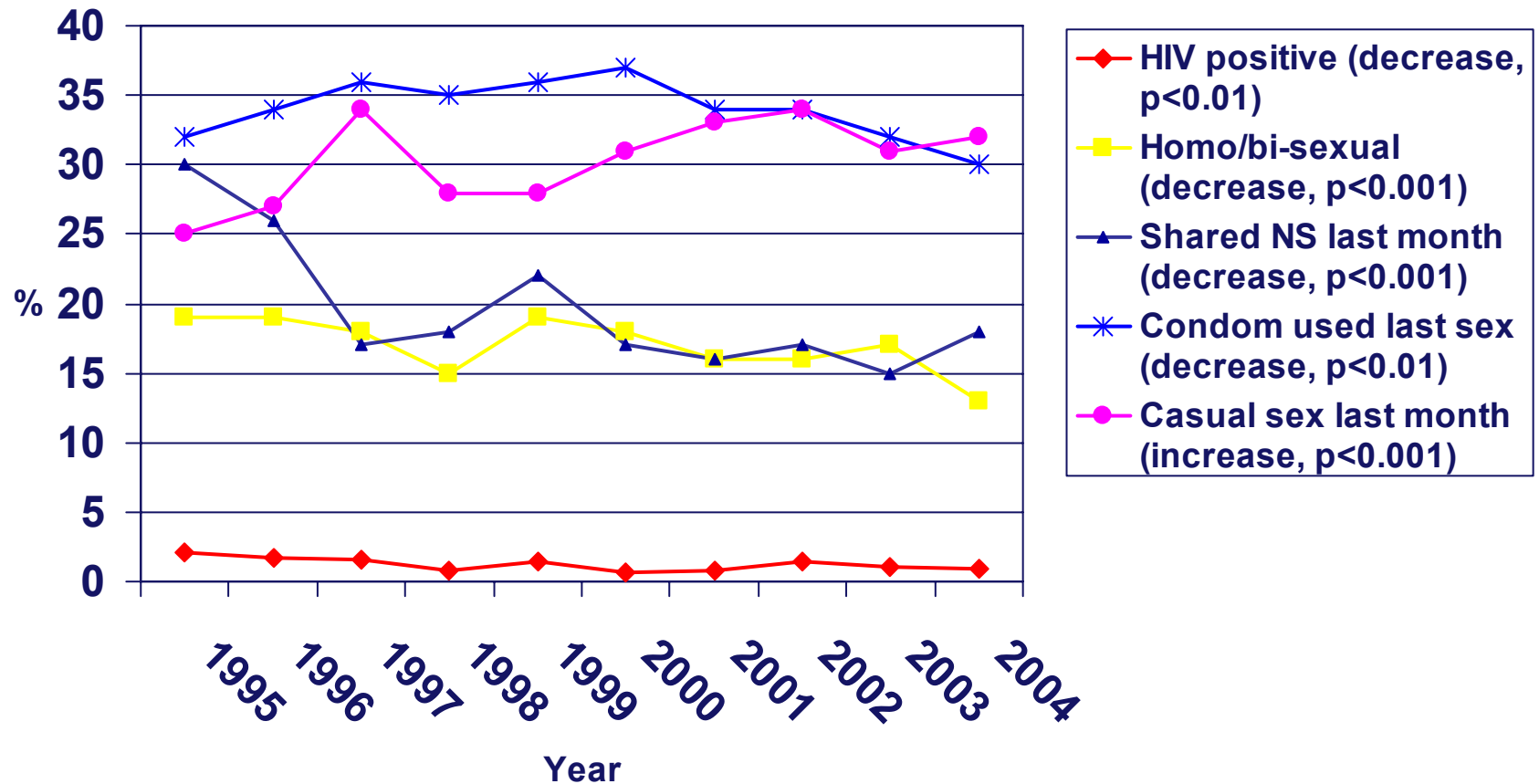
- Median age 29 years (13-87)
- 66% male; 34% female; 0.4% transgender
- 78% heterosexual, (16% homo-/bi-sexual)
- Median 9 years of injecting (<1-72)
- Last drug injected:
 - 45% heroin
 - 28% (meth)amphetamine
- 50% reported \geq daily injecting
- 8% sex work in preceding month



Trends in sample characteristics



Trends in HIV prevalence and risk behaviour



1.2% aggregate HIV prevalence (1995 2.1% - 2000 0.7%)

Correlates of HIV infection



	N	%	Adj OR	95%CI
Age	-	-	1.06	1.04-1.08
Male	173	1.5	4.33	2.76-6.77
Female	33	0.6	-	
Heterosexual	72	0.5	-	
Homo/bisexual	137	4.7	13.34	9.36-19.01
Methamphetamine	80	1.6	1.47	1.04-2.07
Other drugs	132	1.0	-	
Daily injecting	78	0.9	0.74	0.53-1.05
<Daily injecting	136	1.5	-	
Condom use last sex	119	0.7	0.49	0.52-0.69
No condom last sex	80	2.0	-	



Limitations

- **NSPs are points of prevention**
 - **Widespread, legal and readily accessible**
 - **Data consistent with other sources**
- **Low response rate**
 - **Recent work shown respondents not atypical of service users**
- **Social desirability**
 - **Self report** (White et al., 2007)

Summary/conclusions



- **Decreased HIV prevalence - low at <math><2\%</math>**
 - **Epidemiology of HIV among IDUs mirrors that in the broader Australian population**
- **Variation in risk factors across the years**
 - **Patterns of drug use, decrease in risk groups and behaviours consistent with other indicators**
- **NSPs are a crucial component of Australia's successful HIV surveillance mechanism**
 - **Simple and cost effective**

Acknowledgements



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