



A study about you
and your experiences

Flux Study COVID-19 Diary

Monthly Report

Report 06: Reporting week ending 10 January 2021

Prepared by Daniel Storer

On behalf of the BRISE Reference Group for the Flux Study

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Collaborating Organisations

COVID-19 Diary Study is a collaboration between the Kirby Institute, the National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre (NDARC), the Australian Research Centre in Sex Health and Society (ARCSHS), the Centre for Social Research in Health (CSRH), University of Auckland, Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations (AFAO), National LGBTI Health Alliance, ACON, and Thorne Harbour Health.

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Executive summary

This is a report on the findings from the Flux Study COVID-19 Diary for the period 16th November 2020 to 10th January 2021. The report is a summary of data collected during the COVID-19 pandemic in Australia among gay and bisexual men (GBM). Weekly data are collected on key sexual and other risk behaviours, and monthly data collected on health seeking practices and social connectedness in relation to COVID-19.

Between 420 and 475 GBM completed online diary entries at weekly intervals followed by a larger six-monthly survey at Week 32 and an extended weekly diary at Week 36.

Summary of findings:

- The mean number of sexual partners among GBM in this reporting period increased slightly compared to the previous reporting period. Men in NSW continue to report higher partner numbers than men in other jurisdictions.
- The proportion of men in NSW that report sex with more than one fuckbuddy/friends with benefits/any casual partners continues to be higher than other jurisdictions in this reporting period.
- An average of 52.6% of men reported any type of sex each week over the reporting period, peaking at 57.3% in week 32.
- An average of 33.9% of men reported sex with fuckbuddies/friends with benefits during the reporting period. This proportion peaked in week 36 at 37.3%.
- Among men reporting condomless anal intercourse with more than one fuckbuddy/friend with benefits/any casual partners the average proportion not protected by biomedical prevention for receptive CLAI was 18.4% and for insertive CLAI was 22.1%.
- PrEP use among non HIV-positive men remained stable over the reporting period and peaked in weeks 33 and 35 at 37.8%.
- Between 69.9% and 84.6% of non-HIV-positive men reporting CLAI with more than one fuckbuddy/friend with benefits/any casual partners were protected by PrEP in the reporting period.
- Participation in group sex has become more common compared to other reporting periods with approximately one in nine men reporting engagement in group sex at weeks 32 and 36.
- Recent (in the past 7 days) testing for COVID-19 has been between 0.7-8.5% of participants over the reporting period.

- The proportion of men who indicated they were coping poorly with the current COVID-19 crisis over the reporting period has increased slightly from the previous reporting period of approximately one in five men to one in four.
- During the reporting period, men in Victoria were more likely to indicate they were coping poorly and peaked at 25.2% in week 32, down from a peak of 40.4% in the previous reporting period.
- Over the reporting period, the number of hours participants reported spending each day communicating with gay male friends has remained fairly consistent with an average of 5.4% reporting no contact with gay male friends.
- Over the reporting period, between one in five and one in six men indicated they had been tested for STIs or HIV.

Previous reports

- [Flux Study COVID-19 Diary Monthly Report 05](#): 7 September 2020 to 15 November 2020
- [Flux Study COVID-19 Diary Monthly Report 04](#): 10 May 2020 to 6 September 2020
- [Flux Study COVID-19 Diary Monthly Report 03](#): 13 July 2020 to 9 August 2020
- [Flux Study COVID-19 Diary Monthly Report 02](#): 15 June 2020 to 12 July 2020
- [Flux Study COVID-19 Diary Monthly Report 01](#): 3 May 2020 to 14 June 2020

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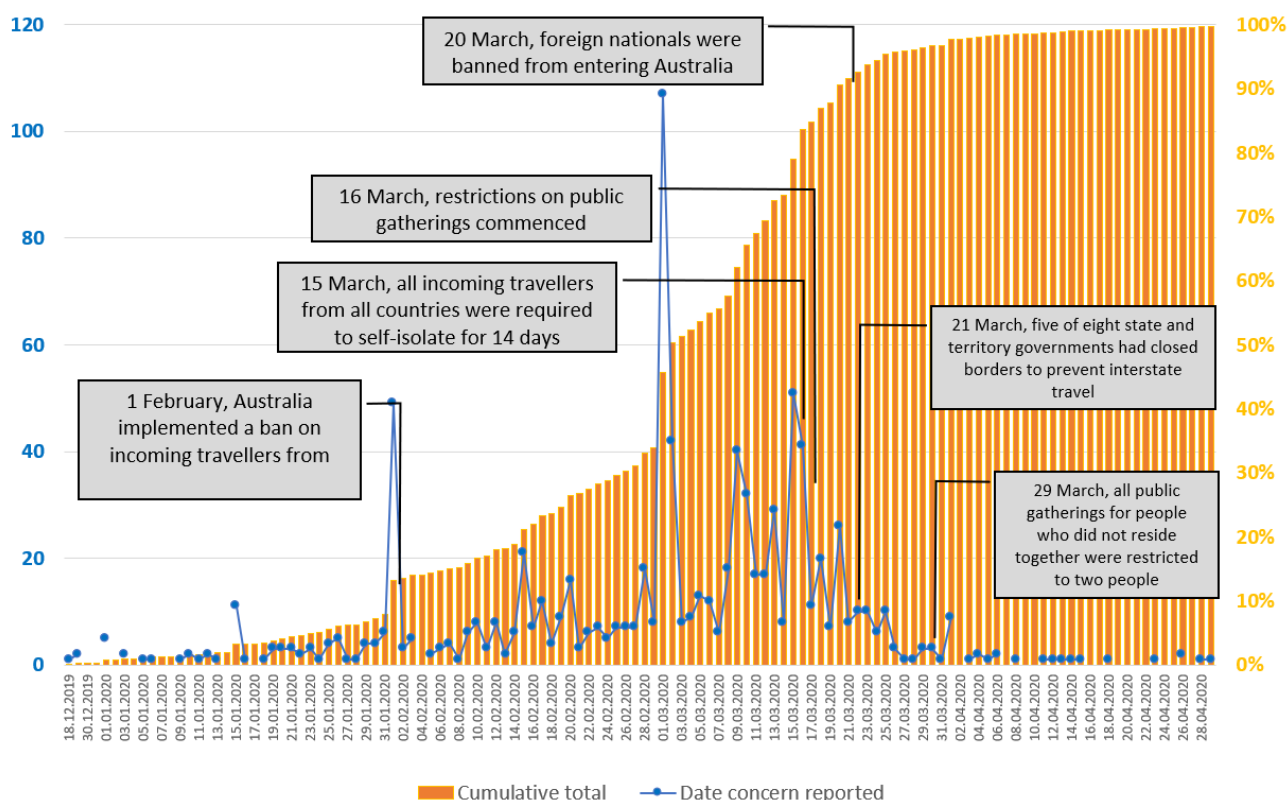
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Background

At baseline, gay and bisexual men reported the date they became concerned about the COVID-19 pandemic. Figure 1 details the cumulative percentage as men became concerned and the date concern started. This is accompanied by implementation of restrictions around the country.

Figure 1. Onset of concern about COVID-19 by date and cumulative frequency



Changes in restriction by study week

The COVID-19 Diary Study commenced collecting weekly diary entries from participants on 10th May 2020. Each Sunday thereafter participants are asked to complete their diary entries within 48 hours of receiving an emailed invitation. Below are the details of restrictions across each jurisdiction from Weeks 19-28 of the study.

Week 29 (16-22 November 2020)

NSW: Announcement of plans for New Year's Eve celebrations to provide premium viewing spots to frontline workers around Mrs Macquarie's Point, Sydney Opera House, Campbell's Cove and the Cahill Expressway. Circular Quay and North Sydney will only be accessible on the night to persons attending

a venue, venue staff, residents and guests of residents who will be required to hold a NYE Pass from Service NSW.

Victoria: 48-hour hard border closure with SA put in place from 11:59pm 19 November to 11:59pm 21 November. Only freight drivers and people with medical or emergency reasons, urgent animal welfare or other authorised reason will be able to cross the border. A permit system was put in place. 15 people allowed to visit a residence. Outdoors gatherings increased to 50 people. Weddings, funerals and religious ceremonies indoors increased to 150 people. For small hospitality venues one person per two square metres not allowed up to 50 patrons. For larger venues the density limit will remain and one per four square metres, but the cap will increase to a maximum of 150 patrons. Total venue capacity increases to 300. QR code record keeping mandatory in venues. Contact and non-contact sport for adults and children commence with up to 150 indoors and a group of up to 20 and 500 outdoors with a group of up to 50. Public events now able to take place with requirements dependent on the type of event.

WA: Travel to WA from SA not allowed unless travellers meet strict exemption criteria. If exemption is granted, 14-day mandatory quarantine to be undertaken upon entry into WA.

SA: SA goes into six-day lockdown from 12:01am 19 November with everyone required to stay at home and all businesses apart from those providing essential services to temporarily close. Lockdown revoked 11:59pm 21 November. Groups of up to 50 allowed at private functions and funerals, up to 10 people at private residences and up to 100 people can attend hospitality venues. Businesses able to reopen.

ACT: Residents advised to reconsider on-essential travel to SA. Anyone who has been in SA in the past 14 days should not visit or work in high-risk settings for 14 days (hospitals, residential aged cared and correctional facilities). From 19 November, travellers entering the ACT that have been to SA in the last 14 days who has declared they have been to a COVID-19 Declared Place must quarantine for 14 days.

NT: From 16 December, all of SA declared a hotspot for the purposes of travel and all travellers from SA must quarantine for 14 days upon arrival in the NT. From 18 December, Regional South Australia's status as a hot spot removed and anyone from this area currently in quarantine will be able to leave. From 21 November, Greater Adelaide's status as a hot spot is removed.

Week 30 (23-29 November 2020)

NSW: Digital registration of customers mandated at venues using QR codes. Up to 500 people not allowed at outdoor, seated religious services. Up to 30 singers allowed outdoors, an audience may participate in singing but those over the age of 12 years old must wear a mask. Up to 3,000 people can attend ticketed, seated outdoor events with one person per two square metres.

SA: Announcement of strengthened medi-hotel program. Travellers from the Greater Sydney region, the Central Coast local government area and the City of Wollongong local government area are not permitted to enter residential aged care facilities.

Tasmania: Travellers from SA who arrived in Tasmania before 5:30pm 16 November no longer required to self-isolate if they are not waiting for a COVID test result. Those who arrived after 5:30pm 16 December from SA are required to remain in self-isolation for 14 days. Any travellers intending to travel to Tasmania from SA are required to quarantine for 14 days upon arrival. COVID-19 Residential Tenancy Emergency Period extended until 31 January 2021.

ACT: From 23 November, unrestricted travel will commence again between the ACT and Victoria.

Week 31 (30 November-6 December 2020)

NSW: Funeral capacity increased to 300. Up to 50 people can visit a private residence if an outdoors space is used and recommended that no more than 30 allowed if no outdoor space. Up to 50 people can gather outdoors in public spaces. Hospitality venues up to 200 square metres allowed to have one person per two square metres indoors.

Victoria: Up to 25% of workers able to attend onsite. New hotel quarantine program unveiled. Announcement of mandatory quarantine fees to be charged to international arrivals.

Queensland: Hard border with NSW and Victoria removed. 50 people allowed to gather in homes and 100 allowed to gather in public places. Density limits for hospitality, galleries, museums, places of worship, convention centres and Parliament House now reduced to one person per two square metres. Weddings and funerals can now have 200 people and all guests can dance at weddings. Indoor events now permitted to have up to 500 people and larger events require a COVID Safe Plan. 100% capacity is now allowed at seated, ticketed venues and patrons are encouraged to wear masks. Performers can distance two metres from the crowd, but choirs must be four metres. 1,500 people allowed at outdoor events with a COVID Safe Event Checklist and larger events must have a COVID Safe Plan. 100% seated capacity allowed at open air stadiums with all patrons encouraged to wear

masks upon entry and exit. Dancing now allowed at all indoor and outdoor venues subject to one person per two square metres.

WA: Places of worship exempt from one person per two square metre rule and able to have up to 60% capacity. Prescribed businesses and venues, including places of worship, must now keep contact registers.

SA: All defined public activities must have a COVID Safe Plan and use an approved contact tracing system.

Tasmania: List of premises required to collect patron information expanded for contact tracing purposes. Direction for Mass Gatherings released. Up to 250 people now able to stand and drink alcohol in outdoor spaces of premises with a liquor licence. If the density limit of one person per two square metres allows then additional patrons can be in the outdoor area if they are not standing and drinking. SA deemed a 'low-risk' area from 3 December and travellers are no longer required to quarantine upon arrival, except for travellers who have been to the Woodville High School.

ACT: Move to Stage 4 of Recovery Plan from 2 December with Check In CBR app launched for contact tracing at venues. This includes: venues allowed more than 25 people with a maximum density of one person per 2 square metres in indoor and outdoor spaces provided they use the Check in CBR app; patrons can consume food standing up in indoor and outdoor spaces; GIO Stadium, Manuka Oval and other enclosed outdoor venues with permanent seating and grandstands can have crowds up to 65% so long as they are ticketed, seated and have a COVID Safe Plan, these other enclosed outdoor venues can have a maximum of 1,500 people; theatres and arenas can have up to 65% capacity for ticketed and seated events with a maximum of 1,500 people; cinemas and theatres can have up to 65% of seated capacity up to 500 people; and events up to 8,000 people can be considered for exemptions.

NT: Greater Melbourne's status as a hotspot removed from 30 November. COVID-Safe check-in system introduced for businesses and venues.

Week 32 (7-13 December 2020)

NSW: Hospitality, retail and places of worship no longer capped on numbers except for one person per two square metres. Gyms and nightclubs allowed one person per four square metres and a maximum of 50 people in gym classes and on dancefloors. Stadiums and theatres can have 100% capacity outdoors and one person per two square metres for unstructured seating, and 75% capacity indoors. Up to 100 people can gather outdoors in public places. Up to 5,000 for outdoor events that

are fenced, ticketed and seated but also subject to the one person per two square metre rule. Up to 3,000 people allowed or organised outdoor events (e.g., outdoor sports or protests) and subject to the one person per two square metre rule. Up to 50 singers allowed to perform indoors and no cap on outdoors. Capacity caps removed and the one person per two square metre rule applies for the following activities: bookings at hospitality venues; weddings; funerals; regional agricultural shows; corporate events; and religious services.

Victoria: International flights resume arriving. Masks now only mandatory for public transport, rideshare vehicles and taxis, indoor shopping centres, supermarkets, department stores and indoor markets. Up to 30 people able to attend a residence. Outdoor public gatherings increase to 100 people. Density limits in hospitality venues move to one person per two square metres for indoor and outdoor areas with no cap. For smaller venues there is no density limit if the number of patrons is under 25. Caps on funerals and weddings removed but subject to the one person per two square metre rule and dance floors allowed on person per four square metres up to 50 people, including for nightclubs. The same density limits apply for community facilities, including libraries, RSLs and community halls. Gyms have a density limit of one person per four square metres and classes limited to 50 indoors and 100 outdoors. Relaxed density and capacity limits also in place for entertainment venues.

Queensland: New Zealand residents can now enter Queensland without mandatory 14-day hotel quarantine. Border restrictions with South Australia removed.

WA: Travel from Victoria and NSW to WA now classified as 'very low risk'. Same entry rules now apply for Victoria and NSW that already apply for ACT, Queensland, NT and Tasmania. Travellers from SA now reclassified as 'low risk' and can enter WA but are required to self-quarantine for 14-days.

Tasmania: Dancing and standing and drinking alcohol up to 100 people indoors and 250 outdoors allowed. If the density limit of one person per two square metres allows there can be additional people in the indoor or outdoor venue if they are not standing and drinking alcohol. Household gatherings increased to 100 people.

ACT: Nightclubs allowed to reopen. Venues with a dedicated dancefloor indoors must have a maximum density limit of one person per two square metres up to 25 people. For venues not using the Check in CBR app, a maximum density of one person per four square metres up to 25 people applies.

Week 33 (14-20 December 2020)

NSW: Works from home orders repealed. Due to an outbreak, from 5pm 19 December 2020 residents in the Northern Beaches Local Government Area ordered to stay home unless for the following reasons until 11:59pm 23 December 2020: shopping for food or other goods or services; medical care or compassionate needs; exercise; and work or education where this cannot be done from home. The following restrictions introduced for greater metropolitan Sydney region 20 December 2020: households gatherings limited to 10 visitors, including children (up to 11:59pm 23 December); one person per four square metre rule reimposed for all indoor settings; maximum of 300 people for hospitality and places of worship; singing and chanting indoors not allowed; and dancefloors not permitted, except for weddings where a maximum of 20 from the bridal party allowed. Residents in Greater Sydney, the Central Coast, Illawarra-Shoalhaven, and Nepean Blue Mountains asked not to visit aged care facilities until 11:59pm 23 December.

Victoria: Announcement that the 2021 Australian Open will take place in February 2021.

Queensland: Mandatory 14-day hotel quarantine enforced for anyone, including Queensland residents, who have been to the Northern Beaches. Anyone already in Queensland who has been to the Northern Beaches since 11 December must quarantine in their home or accommodation for 14 days from the day they left the Northern Beaches and get tested. Everyone in NSW now must apply for a Queensland Border Declaration Pass.

WA: Announcement on 17 December that anyone who has arrived in WA from NSW from 11 December or was in NSW from 11 December and now in WA must self-quarantine and present for COVID-19 testing within 24 hours. Self-quarantine will need to continue until a negative test result is confirmed. NSW moved from 'very low risk' to 'low risk'. From 18 December all travellers arriving from NSW must self-quarantine for 14-days. 20 December, NSW moved from 'low risk' to 'medium risk' and travel from NSW is no longer permitted unless for exempt travellers.

SA: Masks must be worn for people offering personal care services, including hairdressers and barbers, beauty and nail salons, tattooists, wellness centres/day spas/massage parlours, saunas/bathhouse, etc. Masks are encouraged for clients. For cinemas, live theatre or other live performance venues with fixed seating, capacities can increase to 75% with patrons wearing masks and 50% if patrons are not wearing masks. In aged care, masks must be worn by all people including care providers, patients and clients, admin and other staff, employees, visitors, students and contractors. All general retail must have a complete COVID Safe Plan and use an approved contact tracing system for customers. All travellers from interstate or New Zealand are now required to complete a Cross-Border Travel Registration.

Tasmania. From 20 December to 27 December churches and religious services can have up to 75% seated capacity. Those services outdoors should base limit on one person per two square metres. From 18 December, Northern Beaches Local Government Area declared a 'high-risk' area. Travellers who have been in this area or Kirribilli, Peakhurst or Penrith during specific times are not permitted to enter Tasmania unless approved as an essential traveller. For Tasmanians returning who have been to these 'high-risk' areas they are required to quarantine for 14 days upon arrival and apply through G2G to provide proof of residency. From 19 December, Greater Sydney Region deemed a 'medium-risk' area (excluding the Northern Beaches Local Government Area). Travellers from the Greater Sydney Region from 12:01am 20 December are required to quarantine for 14 days upon arrival. Travellers already in Tasmania who have been in the Greater Sydney Region should monitor for symptoms and get tested.

ACT: From 17 December, all residents advised not to travel to the Northern Beaches, any residents who have been in the Northern Beaches area from 11 December should immediately self-quarantine and get tested.

NT: From 18 December, the Northern Beaches Local Government Area is declared a hot spot and anyone travelling to the NT from this area is now required to quarantine for 14 days upon arrival. Anyone currently in the NT and has been in this area from 11 December should self-isolate and get tested. From 20 December, Greater Metropolitan Sydney, the Central Coast and City of Blue Mountains Local Government Areas and the Illawarra Region are classified as hot spots. Anyone entering the NT from these areas must enter 14 days quarantine and those already in the NT from these places must self-isolate and get tested. Travellers on a flight from Sydney on this same day were advised they could return home or enter mandatory, supervised 14-day quarantine. From 11:59pm 20 December, all non-ACT residents who have been in Greater Sydney, Central Coast, Illawarra-Shoalhaven and Nepean Blue Mountains are asked to not travel to the ACT. All those that do travel to the ACT will be required to quarantine for 14 days. All residents returning will have to quarantine but can do this from home.

Week 34 (21-27 December 2020)

NSW: On 24, 25 and 26 December new restrictions put in place. For the northern section of the Northern Beaches: new reason to leave home added which is to visit other who live in this zone; up to 5 visitors total allowed to visit a residence if they also live in this zone; people may not leave the zone unless for any reason already stated on 19 December; and on 27 December restrictions will revert to those put in place 19 December. For the southern section of the Northern Beaches: able to now visit

other who live in this zone; up to 10 visitors allowed in home and this includes people outside of this zone, excluding those from the northern section of the Northern Beaches; residents of this zone still not able to leave unless this section for the approved reasons; and restrictions will be reassessed following Boxing Day. For the Greater Sydney region, Central Coast, Wollongong and Nepean Blue Mountains: Restrictions put in place 20 December to stay in place, except that primary school-aged children and younger are now allowed on top of the 10 visitors to a home and not included in the 10; and restrictions announced 20 December will be reimposed 27 December. From midnight 26 December until 11:59pm 30 December some alterations for restrictions were put in place. For the northern section of the Northern Beaches the only change is that five people, including children, can gather outdoors for exercise or recreational activities. For the southern section of the Northern Beaches: the 'stay at home' orders will stay in place; and up to 10 people, including children, can gather outdoors for exercise or recreational activities. For the Greater Sydney region, Central Coast, Wollongong and Nepean Blue Mountains restrictions remain unchanged from those on 20 December but people who work in the CBD are encouraged to work from home if possible.

Victoria: On 20 December, Greater Sydney area and the Central Coast labelled a 'red zone' meaning that people who have visited this area since 11 December or live in this zone are not permitted to enter Victoria without mandatory 14-day hotel quarantine. Victorian residence who had visited or were in these communities were given until 11:59pm 21 December to return to Victoria. Residents returning were required to register for an exemption via Service Victoria, get tested within 24 hours of their return and self-isolate for 14 days. The Northern Beaches area is labelled as a 'hot zone'.

Victorians returning from the Northern Beaches are subject to the 'stay at home' orders applicable in NSW and should not return to Victoria. Regional NSW is a 'green zone' but residents from this area are still required to apply for a permit. Resident's in border communities will not need permits but can use their driver's license or passport.

Queensland: All hospitality venues must comply with collection of electronic information requirements. Greater Sydney, including the Central Coast, Illawarra-Shoalhaven and Nepean Blue Mountains, declared a hotspot. Non-Queensland residents from the hotspot will not be permitted after 1am 21 December and Queensland residents returning from the hotspot will have until 1am 22 December. From these dates, mandatory 14-day hotel quarantine will apply. Restrictions eased for marine tourism operators. Anyone in Queensland that has been in Victoria on or since 21 December 2020 should get tested and self-isolate until they receive a negative test.

WA: From 25 December, SA moved from 'low risk' to 'very low risk' and travelers are subject to the conditions that come with this classification.

SA: Masks no longer mandatory in healthcare settings.

Tasmania: Indoor theatres and cinemas can have up to 75% seated capacity to a maximum of 250 people.

ACT: Illawarra-Shoalhaven area removed from affected areas in NSW.

NT: From 23 December, the Illawarra Region will have its hot spot status removed. From 24 December, all areas in NSW with a hot spot status will have this status removed except for the northern section of the Northern Beaches Local Government Area.

Week 35 (28 December 2020-3 January 2021)

NSW: On 28 December announcements made for NYE include: CBD vantage points for frontline workers on NYE cancelled and this will be offered again in 2021; hospitality venues may stay open for NYE but must adhere to one person per four square metre rule; NYE Council events may continue but must be controlled and seated with no mingling and records of attendance must be kept; harbour NYE fireworks reduced to seven minutes at midnight, 9pm fireworks cancelled; and Circular Quay, North Sydney and the City off limits unless a NYE Pass is obtained through Service NSW. For the northern section of the Northern Beaches until 9 January the current restrictions remain in place except that indoor and outdoor gatherings are allowed with people from within this section and up to five people for NYE and NYD, this does not include hospitality venues which are not permitted to open. For the southern section of the Northern Beaches until 2 January the current restrictions remain in place except that indoor and outdoor gatherings are allowed with people from within this section and up to 10 people for NYE and NYD, this does not include hospitality venues which are not permitted to open. For Greater Sydney, Central Coast, Wollongong and Nepean Blue Mountains gatherings at home remain at 10 people including children and outdoor gatherings restricted to 50. Further updates to restrictions for NYE announced 30 December until further notice: for Greater Sydney, Central Coast, Wollongong and Nepean Blue Mountains house gatherings are restricted to five people including children and outdoor gatherings reduced from 50 to 30; and for the southern section of the Northern Beaches household gatherings restricted to five people including children from the southern section. All hospitality venues and hairdresser required to use the NSW Government QR code system. From midnight 2 January 2021 new restrictions announced. Stay at home orders for the northern section of the Northern Beaches remain in place until 9 January 2021

along with the following alterations: no visitors to homes; five residents from the northern section can gather outdoors for exercise and recreation within this section; and non-essential business to remained closed. The southern section of the Northern Beaches will now be subject to the same restrictions as Greater Sydney. The following restrictions apply for Greater Sydney, Central Coast, Wollongong and Nepean Blue Mountains: face masks are mandatory in certain indoor settings including shopping centres, retail, supermarkets, public transport, indoor entertainment, places of worship, and hair and beauty businesses; face masks are mandatory for hospitality and casino staff and gaming services patrons; gym classes reduced to 30 people; places of worship limited to one person per four square metres and to a maximum of 100 people per separated area; weddings and funerals restricted to one person per four square metres up to 100 people; outdoor performances and protests reduced to 500 people; controlled, outdoor gatherings reduced to 2,000 people; and nightclubs not permitted to reopen.

Victoria: NYE fireworks in Melbourne and Greater Geelong cancelled. Travel to the Melbourne City on NYE should on be for a booking to a ticketed event. Announcement 31 December that the border with NSW will close 11:59pm 1 January. Victorian residents in the 'green zone' given until 11:59pm to return, excluding Victorian residents from Blue Mountains City Council and Wollongong City Council local government areas. Limits on gatherings in home reduced to 15 from 30 and masks are mandatory indoors.

SA: Travellers who have been to NSW in the previous 14 days are not able to travel to SA.

Tasmania: Outdoor spectator sports can have up to 75% seated capacity. Travelers who have spent time in Victoria from 20 December should check the exposure sites listed on the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services website. Any travellers who have visited the listed sites should self-isolate and get tested. From 2 January 2021 the Wollongong Local Government Area will be classified as 'medium-risk'. All travellers who have been to this area will be required to quarantine for 14 days upon entry into Tasmania. Anyone in Tasmania who has been in the Wollongong Local Government Area on or after 18 December should contact the Public Health Hotline for advice.

ACT: Announcement on 30 December that travel restriction in affected areas of NSW will remain in place until 6 January 2020. From 2 January, all non-ACT residents travelling from NSW affected areas must have an exemption to be in the ACT.

NT: From 31 December, the suburbs of Croydon, Croydon Park, Lilli Pilli, North Strathfield, Strathfield, Strathfield South and Sutherland in NSW are declared hotspots and anyone entering the NT from

these areas must undergo 14 days of quarantine. Anyone who has arrived in the NT from any hot spots in NSW on or after 25 December are advised to self-isolate and get tested. From 1 January, Greater Metropolitan Sydney declared a hot spot and anyone travelling to the NT from this area must quarantine for 14 days.

Week 36 (4-10 January 2021)

NSW: The following guidelines put in place for the SCG test cricket: mandatory face masks while waiting for public transport and during travel; maintain physical distancing when waiting for or boarding public transport; sit or stand on a green dot when travelling; register your Opal card and check in with a QR code to help contact tracing; and check for service capacity of public transport. Residents from the following suburbs are not able to attend the cricket: Auburn, Belmore, Berala, Birrong, Lidcombe, Potts Hill, Regents Park, Rookwood and Wentworthville.

Queensland: Queensland hospitals, aged care facilities and disability accommodation facilities are closed to people that have been in Victoria on or since 21 December 2020 or left Victoria less than 14 days ago. Greater Brisbane enters lockdown for three days (until 11 January), residents can only leave their homes for four reasons: for work or study if not able to be conducted at home; to buy essentials; exercise; and provide healthcare, help, care or support. Masks must also be worn everywhere except in the home.

WA: From 12:01am 9 January, a hard border comes into effect with Queensland. Queensland reclassified from 'very low risk' to 'medium risk'. Travel into WA from Queensland will no longer be allowed unless for exempt travellers. Travellers who arrived in WA from Queensland 8 January will be tested on arrival and required to self-isolate for 14 days. Travellers who have arrived from Queensland since or were in Queensland on 2 January are required to self-isolate for 14 days and get tested by 12 January and again on day 11. Because of the detection of the UK variant of COVID-19 WA's quarantine staff will have daily saliva tests, international arrivals will be capped at 512 per week until mid-February and masks are mandatory for all international, domestic and intrastate flights and in airports at all times.

SA: People in SA that have visited Victorian high-risk exposure locations should get tested and self-quarantine for 14 days. Travellers that arrived in SA from Greater Brisbane between 2-7 January must; get tested and again in five days' time; isolate after the first test but not required to isolate after the second if negative; and must not attend any event with an approved COVID Management Plan or over 1,000 people. Travellers that arrive in SA from Greater Brisbane from 8 January must; get tested

immediately, on day five and again at day 12; self-isolate after the first but not required after day five or 12 test if negative; and not attend any event with an approved COVID Management Plan or over 1,000 people. Travellers arriving in SA from Greater Brisbane from 9 January must immediately self-quarantine for 14 days and get tested on days one, five and 12.

Tasmania: Any travellers to Tasmania that have been to any of the listed venues in Brisbane where a confirmed VODI case had been should self-isolate and contact the Public Health Hotline. From 8 December, Greater Brisbane is declared a 'high-risk' area. If travellers have been in Greater Brisbane they need to self-isolate and monitor the contact tracing alerts from Queensland Health. From 12:01am 10 December, the Northern Beaches Local Government Area is now classified as a 'medium-risk' area. Travellers who have spent time in this area and arrive in Tasmania are required to quarantine for 14 days. Travellers from outside of Greater Brisbane who are travelling to Tasmania from Brisbane airport can enter without quarantine provided they: have transited through a medium or high-risk area to an airport or seaport by vehicle and only stopped for fuel; or arrive directly into an airport on a flight and do not leave the airport except on another flight.

ACT: Announcement 5 January that travel restrictions for non-ACT residents from affected areas in NSW will stay in place until 13 January. From 8 December, Greater Brisbane declared a COVID-19 affected area. All ACT residents in Greater Brisbane are advised to remain in place unless returning to the ACT is absolutely necessary. For ACT residents who do return, they will be subject to 14-day quarantine. Anyone who has been in Greater Brisbane on or after 2 January and have already returned to the ACT must enter 14-day quarantine from when they left Greater Brisbane and get tested. Travellers transiting through Brisbane to return to the ACT may do so as long as they do not leave the airport, stop or exit their vehicle while in Greater Brisbane. If travellers are from a COVID-19 affected area in NSW or Queensland and their flight transit through Canberra Airport they are allowed to travel by the state or territory they are travelling to or from as long as they do not leave the airport. If residents who live in regional NSW around Canberra are returning from a COVID-19 affected area in NSW or Queensland they can transit through Canberra airport/bus station provided they are permitted to travel by the state or territory they are travelling to or from.

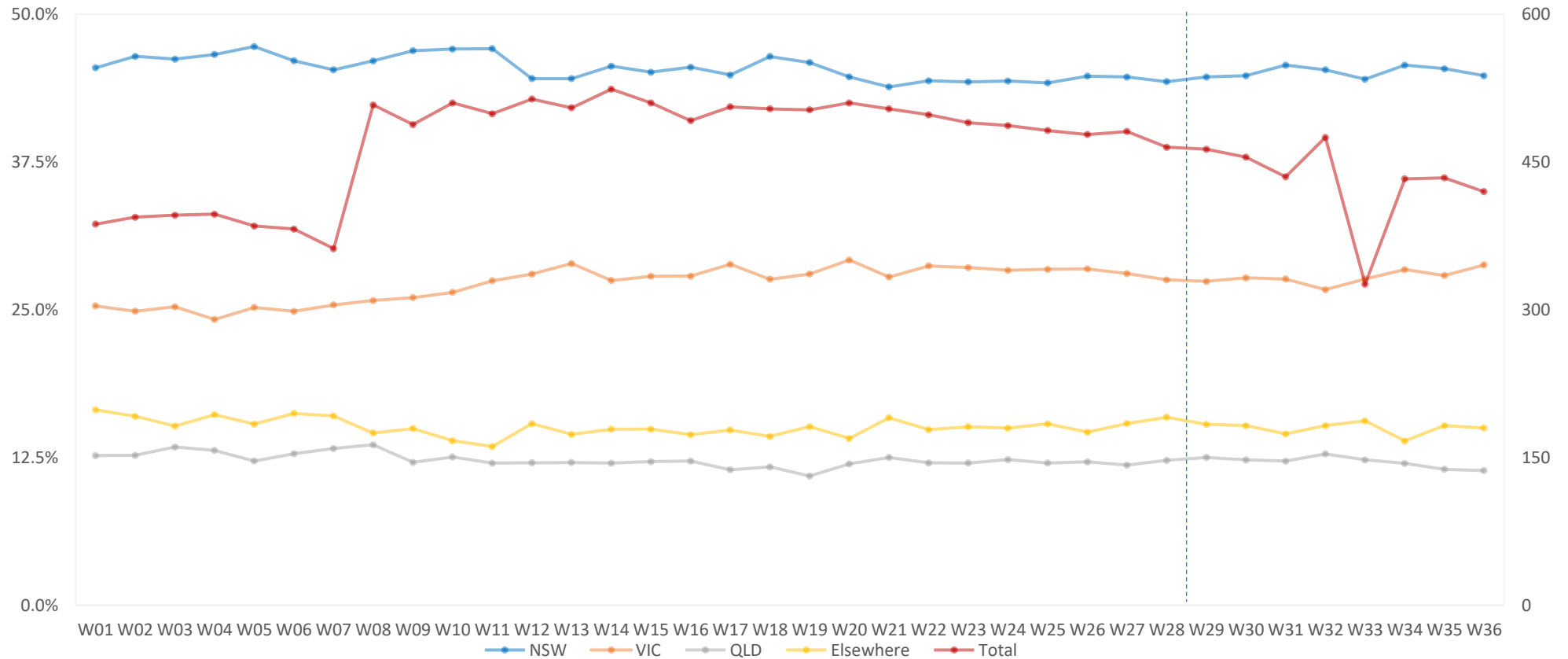
NT: From 8 January, Greater Brisbane declared a hot spot and anyone arriving in the NT from this area must quarantine for 14 Days. Anyone already in the NT and has been in Greater Brisbane on or after 2 January must self-isolate and get tested.

The proportion of men responding in each state and territories has remained stable in the reporting period, with a slight decline overall. The percentage of non-responders has increased from 34.3% to 46.6% over the reporting period. NSW remains the jurisdiction with the largest number of responders at just under half the sample, this remained consistent over the reporting period.

Table 1. Responses

	Week 29	Week 30	Week 31	Week 32	Week 33	Week 34	Week 35	Week 36
NSW only	205 (44.3)	202 (44.4)	198 (45.5)	241 (43.3)	144 (44.2)	198 (45.7)	196 (45.2)	187 (44.5)
VIC only	125 (27.0)	124 (27.3)	119 (27.4)	140 (25.2)	87 (26.7)	120 (27.7)	119 (27.4)	119 (28.3)
QLD only	60 (13.0)	58 (12.7)	54 (12.4)	75 (13.5)	41 (12.6)	52 (12.0)	51 (11.8)	49 (11.7)
Other states/territories	73 (15.8)	71 (15.6)	64 (14.7)	100 (18.0)	54 (16.6)	63 (14.5)	68 (15.7)	65 (15.5)
Total sample	463	455	435	556	326	433	434	420
Initial enrolment	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	81 (10.3)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
Previous enrolment	463 (65.7)	455 (64.5)	435 (61.7)	475 (60.4)	326 (41.5)	433 (55.1)	434 (55.2)	420 (53.4)
Non-response	242 (34.3)	250 (35.5)	270 (38.3)	230 (29.3)	460 (58.5)	353 (44.9)	352 (44.8)	366 (46.6)
Cumulative total	705	705	705	786	786	786	786	786

Figure 2. Number of respondents each week (by state and total)*



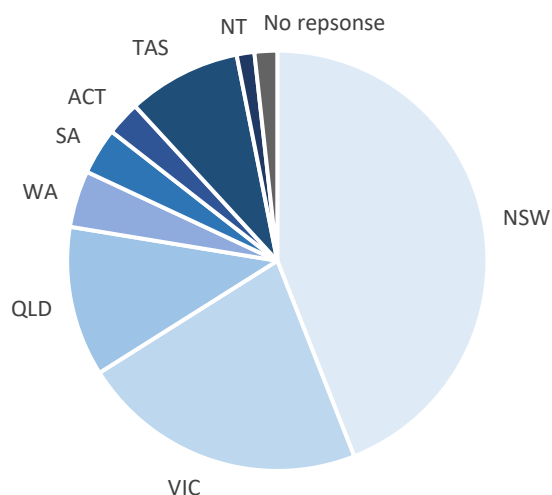
*Note: weeks to the right of the dotted line in all figures indicates the period covered by this report in all figures

Geographic distribution

Table 2. Geographic distribution of sample (*note: new enrolments began in Week 8)

	Existing Flux cohort	Newly enrolled cohort*	Total
State/Territory			
New South Wales	243 (45.0)	77 (46.7)	320 (45.4)
Victoria	143 (26.5)	52 (31.5)	195 (27.7)
Queensland	73 (13.5)	11 (6.7)	84 (11.9)
Western Australia	9 (1.7)	1 (0.6)	10 (1.4)
South Australia	29 (5.4)	3 (1.8)	32 (4.5)
ACT	20 (3.7)	6 (3.6)	26 (3.7)
Northern Territory	16 (3.0)	3 (1.8)	19 (2.7)
Tasmania	3 (0.6)	3 (1.8)	6 (0.9)
Unknown	4 (0.7)	9 (5.5)	13 (1.8)
Postcode¹			
Very highly gay populated	49 (9.1)	14 (8.5)	63 (8.9)
Highly gay populated	100 (18.5)	24 (14.5)	124 (17.6)
Moderately gay populated	236 (43.7)	66 (40.0)	302 (42.8)
Sparsely gay populated	130 (24.1)	40 (24.2)	170 (24.1)
Very sparsely gay populated	15 (2.8)	8 (4.8)	23 (3.3)
No response	15 (2.5)	13 (7.9)	28 (3.6)

Figure 3. State of residence



¹ We draw on Callander et al.'s work estimating the number and prevalence of adult gay men and lesbian women in Australian postcodes. 'Prevalence categories assigned relative to jurisdictionally specific percentiles: very sparse (1st percentile), moderately sparse (1st–50th percentile), moderately populated (50th–95th percentile), highly populated (95th–99th percentile), very highly populated (99th percentile).' Callander D, Mooney-Somers J, Keen P, Guy R, Duck T, Bavinton BR, Grulich AE, Holt M, Prestage G, 2020, 'Australian 'gayborhoods' and 'lesborhoods': a new method for estimating the number and prevalence of adult gay men and lesbian women living in each Australian postcode', *International Journal of Geographical Information Science*, pp. 1 - 17, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13658816.2019.1709973>

Sample characteristics

Table 3a. Sample characteristics

		Existing Flux cohort	New enrolled cohort*	Total
Age	Mean (SD)	45.2 (13.9)	44.8 (15.0)	45.1 (14.1)
	Median	45	44	45
	Under 25	32 (5.9)	11 (6.7)	43 (6.1)
HIV Status	Positive	44 (8.1)	30 (18.2)	74 (10.5)
	Negative	477 (88.3)	124 (75.2)	601 (85.2)
	Unknown	19 (3.5)	11 (6.7)	30 (4.3)
Sexuality	Gay	456 (84.4)	142 (86.1)	598 (84.8)
	Bisexual	36 (6.7)	10 (6.1)	46 (6.5)
	Other/unknown	48 (8.9)	13 (7.9)	61 (8.7)
Country of birth	Australia	431 (79.7)	121 (73.8)	552 (78.3)
	Oceania	14 (2.6)	5 (3.0)	19 (2.7)
	Asia	29 (5.4)	1 (0.6)	30 (4.3)
	Other	67 (12.4)	37 (22.6)	104 (14.8)
Level of education	Less than year 12	17 (3.1)	4 (2.4)	21 (3.0)
	Completed year 12	53 (9.8)	17 (10.3)	70 (9.9)
	Trade certificate	68 (12.6)	19 (11.5)	87 (12.3)
	Undergraduate degree	207 (38.3)	52 (31.5)	259 (36.7)
	Postgraduate degree	194 (35.9)	64 (38.8)	258 (36.6)
	No response	1 (0.2)	9 (5.5)	10 (1.4)

*Note: new enrolments began in Week 8

Table 3b. Employment status

	Week 32	Week 36
Laid off temporarily	7 (1.5)	3 (0.7)
Laid off completely	7 (1.5)	8 (1.9)
Reduced hours	12 (2.5)	17 (4.0)
Working from home	52 (10.9)	44 (10.2)
Redeployed due to COVID-19	2 (0.4)	3 (0.7)
Commenced new job	29 (6.1)	11 (2.6)
Returned to workplace	30 (6.3)	15 (3.5)
Increased hours	31 (6.5)	21 (4.9)
Began taking payment for sex	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
No changes	347 (72.6)	323 (75.1)

† Items are not mutually exclusive

Sexual Behaviour

Number of sexual partners

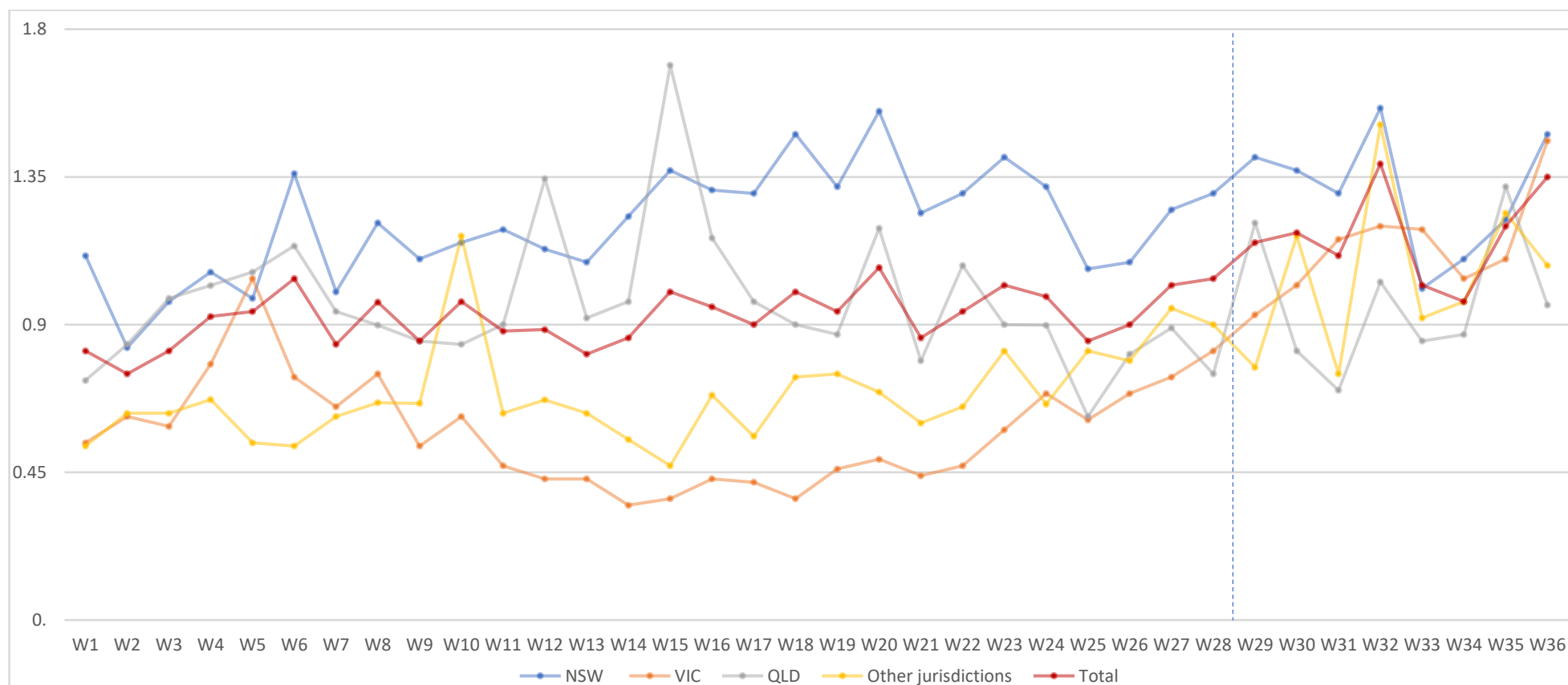
In previous reporting periods, mean number of sexual partners in the previous 7 ranged from the lowest reported in week 2 (mean: 0.75) to the highest reported in week 28 (mean: 1.04). In this reporting period, mean number of sexual partners has slightly increased from 1.18 in week 30 to 1.35 in week 36. Among Victorian men, the mean number of sexual partners has steadily increased from 0.93 in week 29 to 1.46 in week 36, almost the same as NSW in week 36. Men in NSW continue to report a higher mean number of partners compared to men in other jurisdictions, and there appears to be no reduction in partner numbers after the changes to restrictions from the Northern Beaches outbreak.

Table 4. Weekly number of sexual partners

Mean (SD)	Week 29	Week 30	Week 31	Week 32	Week 33	Week 34	Week 35	Week 36
NSW	1.41 (2.39)	1.37 (2.59)	1.30 (2.55)	1.56 (2.52)	1.01 (1.64)	1.10 (1.99)	1.22 (1.90)	1.48 (2.77)
Victoria	0.93 (1.26)	1.02 (1.61)	1.16 (2.15)	1.20 (2.04)	1.19 (2.09)	1.04 (2.74)	1.10 (2.43)	1.46 (3.42)
QLD	1.21 (2.24)	0.82 (1.14)	0.70 (1.03)	1.03 (1.40)	0.85 (1.58)	0.87 (1.16)	1.32 (1.98)	0.96 (1.68)
Other jurisdictions	0.77 (1.50)	1.17 (4.72)	0.75 (1.37)	1.51 (4.67)	0.92 (1.20)	0.97 (1.36)	1.24 (3.01)	1.08 (1.98)
Total sample	1.15 (2.00)	1.18 (2.69)	1.11 (2.17)	1.39 (2.75)	1.02 (1.71)	0.97 (1.36)	1.20 (2.27)	1.35 (2.77)
Median	1.00	0.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.00	1.00	1.00

Trends for mean number of sexual partners among all participants shows a gradual increase between week 1 and week 36. The same pattern can be found for NSW and Victorian participants. However, elsewhere, the trends are quite stable. Due to the smaller numbers of participants in Queensland and other jurisdictions, caution should be exercised when interpreting these trends.

Figure 4. Mean number of sexual partners by week of response



Non-relationship partners and condomless anal intercourse (CLAI)

In the previous reporting period, men reporting any type of sex increased from 46.3% in week 19 to 53.8% in week 28. Prevalence of any sex has remained stable in this reporting period ranging from 49.4% to 57.3%. During this reporting period, around a quarter of men reported engaging in sex with more than one fuckbuddy/friend with benefits or any casual partners. Consistent with the previous reporting period, most men who engaged in CLAI were protected by biomedical prevention. The proportion of biomedically unprotected receptive CLAI is approximately 18% and 22% for insertive CLAI.

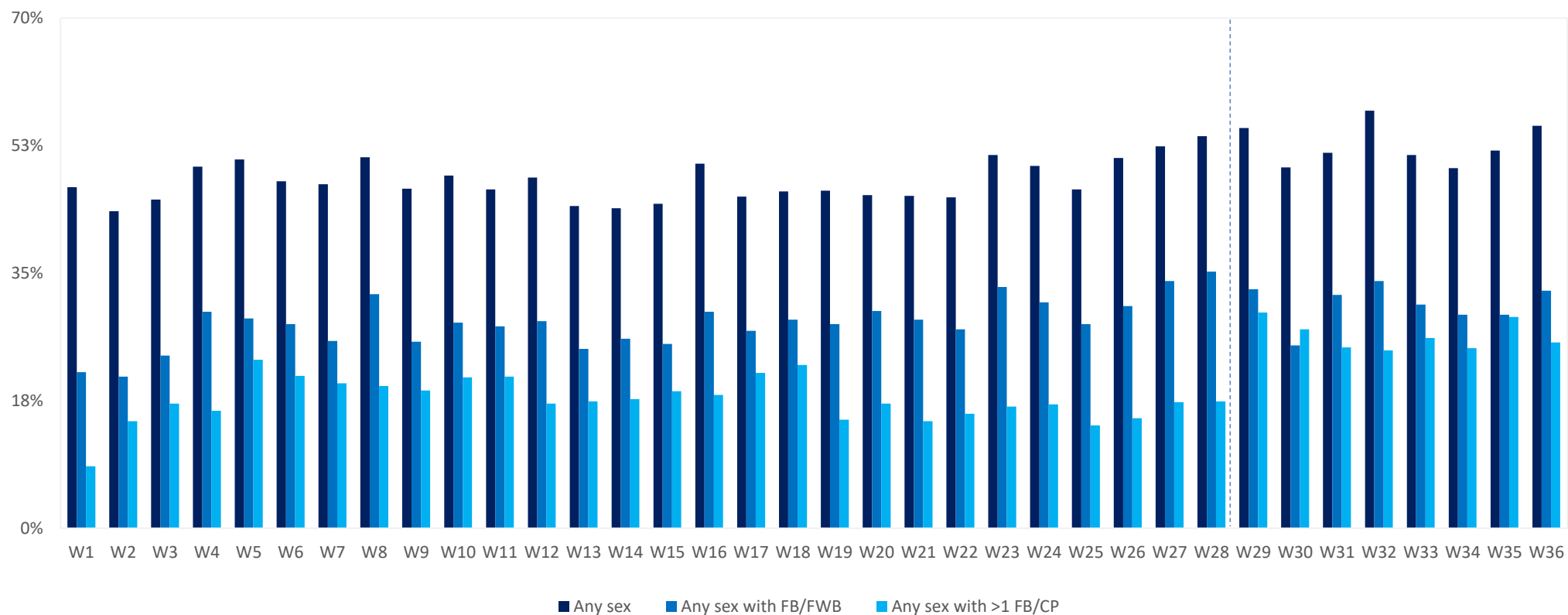
Table 5. Sex by partner type and CLAI for men reporting sex with multiple (>1) FB/any CP

	Week 29	Week 30	Week 31	Week 32	Week 33	Week 34	Week 35	Week 36
Any sex	254 (54.9)	225 (49.5)	224 (51.5)	272 (57.3)	167 (51.2)	214 (49.4)	225 (51.8)	232 (55.2)
Sex with 1 partner only	152 (32.8)	114 (25.1)	139 (32.0)	161 (33.9)	100 (30.7)	127 (29.3)	127 (29.3)	137 (32.6)
Any sex with FB/FWB	164 (35.4)	149 (32.7)	143 (32.9)	176 (37.1)	106 (32.5)	127 (29.3)	149 (34.3)	157 (37.3)
Any sex with >1 FB/any CP	137 (29.6)	124 (27.3)	108 (24.8)	116 (24.4)	85 (26.1)	107 (24.7)	126 (29.0)	107 (25.5)
Any receptive CLAI	55 (35.0)	53 (42.7)	55 (50.9)	59 (50.9)	31 (36.5)	48 (44.9)	66 (52.4)	62 (57.9)
No biomedical protection	10 (18.2)	9 (17.0)	12 (21.8)	13 (22.0)	7 (22.6)	7 (14.6)	11 (16.7)	9 (14.5)
Used TasP	7 (12.7)	5 (9.4)	6 (10.9)	8 (13.6)	2 (6.5)	2 (4.2)	2 (3.0)	5 (8.1)
Used PrEP	38 (69.1)	39 (73.6)	37 (67.3)	38 (64.4)	22 (71.0)	39 (81.3)	53 (80.3)	48 (77.4)
Any insertive CLAI	61 (44.5)	58 (46.8)	60 (55.6)	68 (58.6)	47 (55.3)	52 (48.6)	65 (51.6)	62 (57.9)
No biomedical protection	12 (19.7)	10 (17.2)	15 (25.0)	19 (27.9)	9 (19.1)	14 (26.9)	14 (21.5)	12 (19.4)
Used TasP	6 (9.8)	5 (8.6)	6 (10.0)	8 (11.8)	0 (0.0)	3 (5.8)	3 (4.6)	5 (8.1)
Used PrEP	43 (70.5)	43 (74.1)	39 (65.0)	41 (60.3)	38 (80.9)	35 (67.3)	48 (73.8)	45 (72.6)

*Note: CLAI is reported specifically among men who had sex with >1 FB/ any CP.

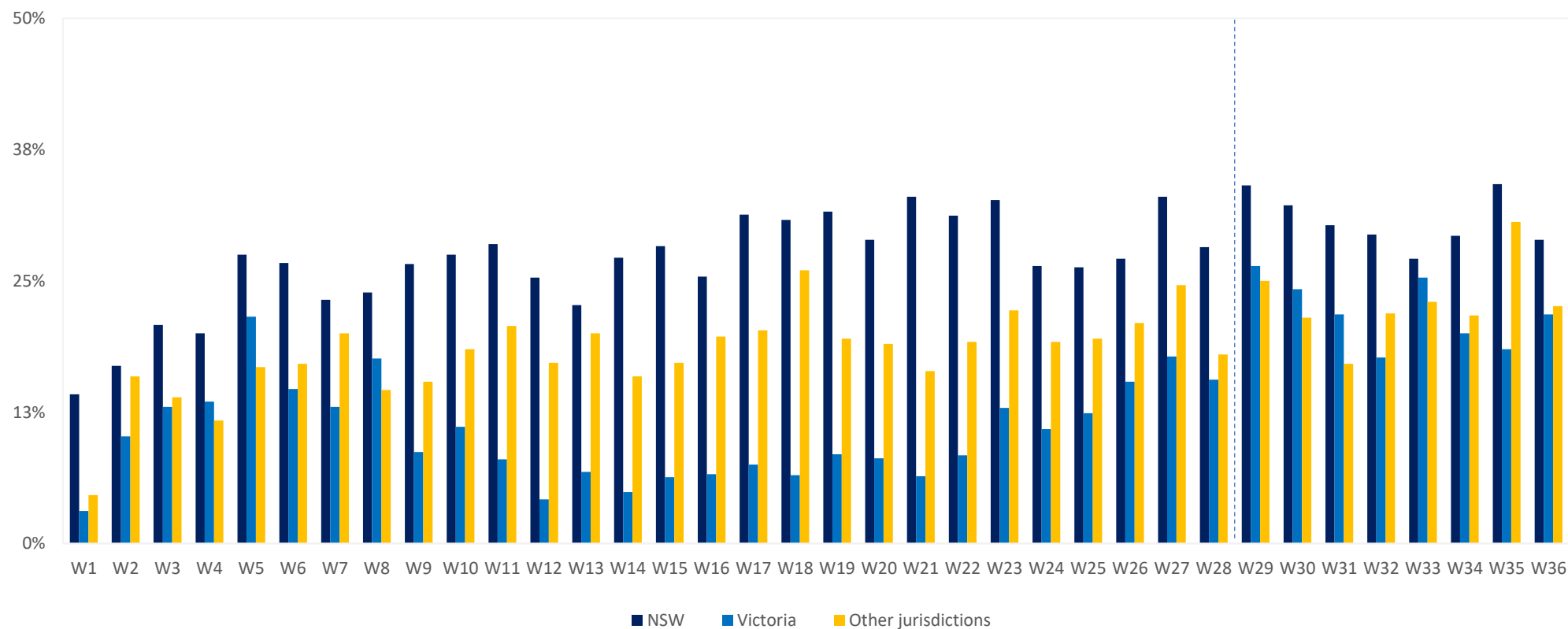
**Note: PrEP/TasP coverage is reported specifically among men who reported CLAI and had sex with >1 FB/ any CP.

Figure 5a. Proportion of men engaging in sex by partner type



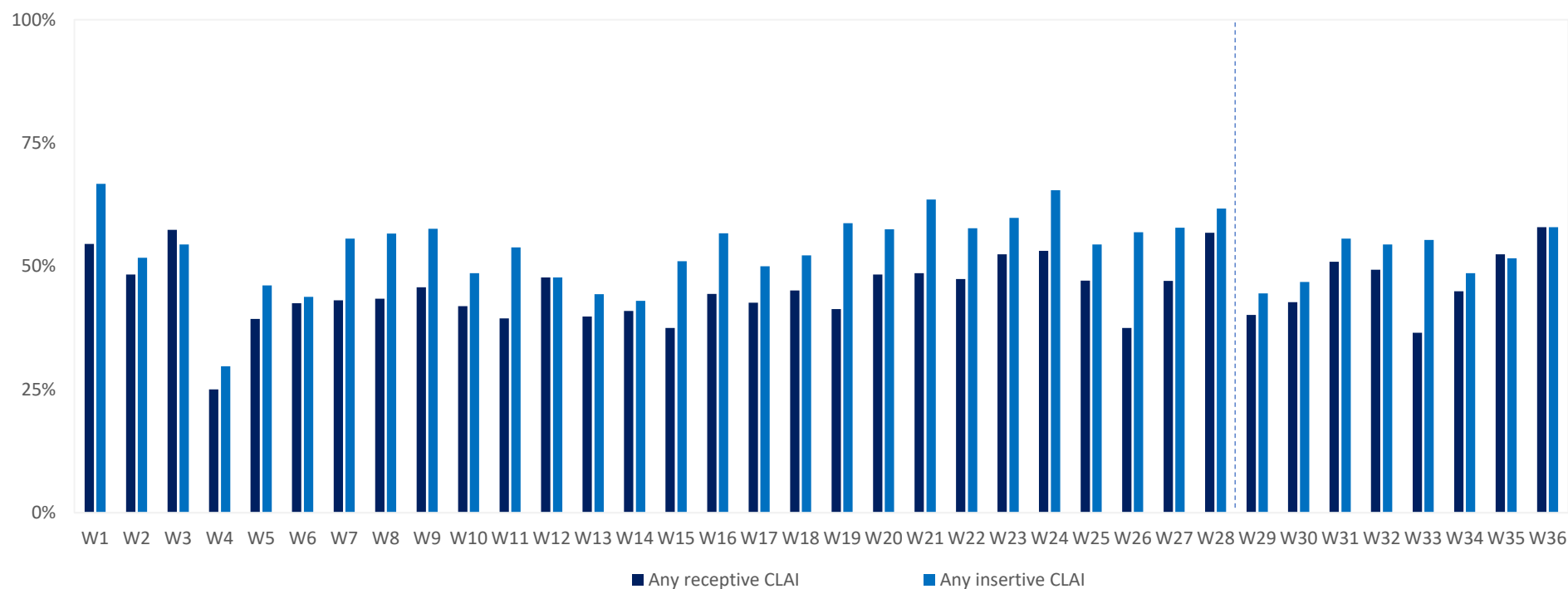
NSW respondents continue to report higher proportions of sex with more than one fuckbuddy/friend with benefits or any casual partners compared to other jurisdictions. For participants in Victoria, men reporting sex with more than one fuckbuddy/friend with benefits or any casual partners has continued to increase since the previous reporting period.

Figure 5b. Proportion of men in NSW, Victoria and other jurisdictions engaging in sex with multiple (>1) non-relationship partners



Trends between week 1 and week 36 show a gradual increase in any receptive or insertive CLAI over time. Proportions reported during this reporting period remain stable when compared to the previous reporting period.

Figure 5c. Proportion of men engaging in CLAI among men reporting sex with multiple (>1) non-relationship partners



Participation in group sex is becoming more common with approximately one in nine men in weeks 32 and 36 reporting they engaged in group sex at some time during the previous four weeks. This has increased from one in twelve men in the previous reporting period.

Sex within the household and with fuckbuddies/casual partners

The median number of men who indicated they lived with all the men with whom they had sex has decreased from an average of 1 during the last reporting period to 0 during this reporting period. Similar to previous weeks, almost all sex was conducted with men outside of the participant's household.

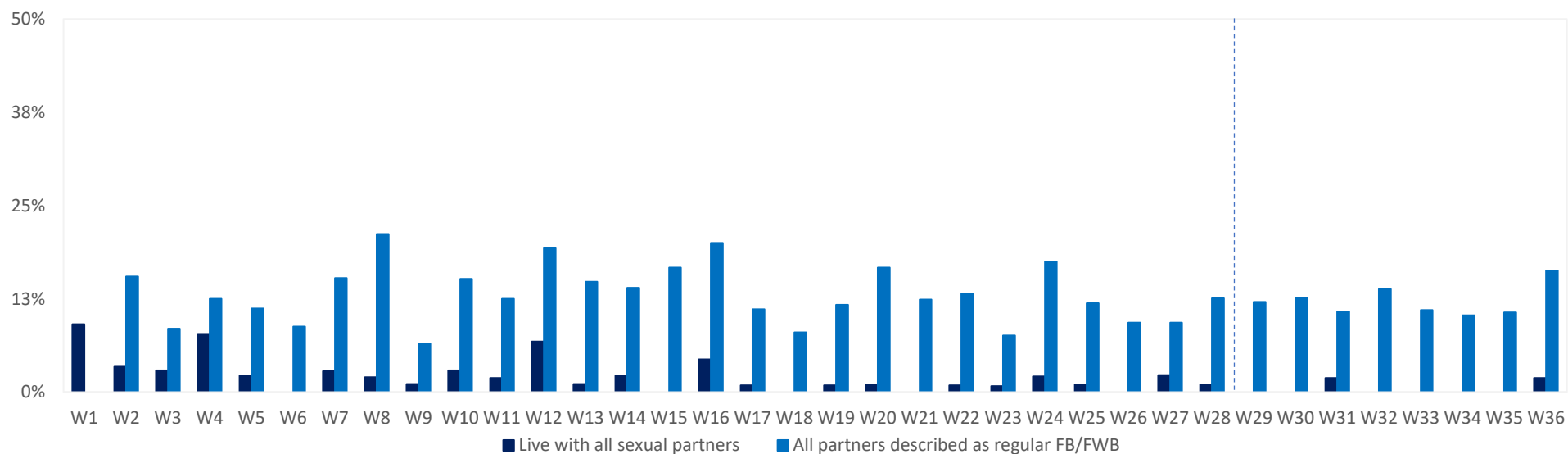
Table 6. Sex within the household and description of partners as FBs/FWBs

	W29 N=137*	W30 N=124*	W31 N=108*	W32 N=116*	W33 N=85*	W34 N=107*	W35 N=126*	W36 N=107*
Live with all sexual partners	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	2 (1.9)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	2 (1.9)
All partners described as FB/FWB	16 (11.7)	15 (12.1)	11 (10.2)	16 (14.0)	9 (10.6)	11 (10.3)	13 (10.3)	17 (15.9)

*N = men each week who reported having >1 fuckbuddy/ any casual partner

The proportion of men who reported living with all their sex partners has remained small throughout the study period. However, unlike previous reporting rounds, reports of men living with all their sex partners has remained consistently and consecutively low during this study period.

Figure 6. Proportion of men having sex with FBs/CPs within their immediate household and describe as FBs/FWBs



PrEP and PEP use

Prevalence of PrEP use is stable during this study period, with an average of 36.6% of non HIV-positive men reporting PrEP use over the period. Mean number of PrEP pills remaining during this study period ranged from 35.7 to 37.8. PEP use during the reporting period remains low at 1.5% to 1.8%. Almost all men using PrEP reported adhering to a minimum of 4 or more pills per week when reporting any CLAI with >1 FB/any CP.

Table 7. PrEP and PEP use among non HIV-positive men

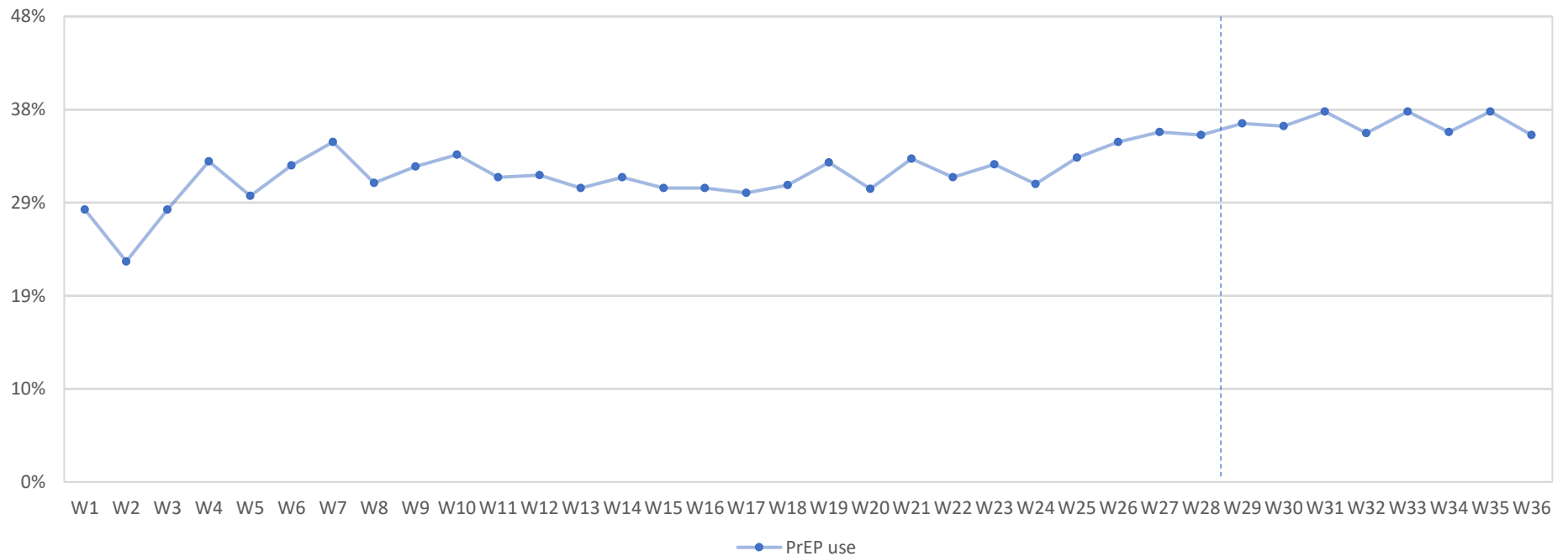
	Week 29	Week 30	Week 31	Week 32	Week 33	Week 34	Week 35	Week 36
No use	268 (63.4)	262 (63.7)	249 (62.3)	279 (64.4)	186 (62.2)	254 (64.3)	247 (62.2)	254 (64.6)
*PrEP use	155 (36.6)	149 (36.3)	151 (37.8)	154 (35.6)	113 (37.8)	141 (35.7)	150 (37.8)	139 (35.4)
Mean (SD) PrEP pills remaining	39.1 (30.9)	42.0 (31.3)	41.7 (42.2)	44.0 (58.3)	40.7 (31.4)	40.8 (30.2)	35.7 (26.9)	40.6 (31.4)
Median	30.0	30.0	30.0	30	30.0	30.0	30.0	30.0
*PEP use				8 (1.8)				6 (1.5)
Sex with >1 FB/any CP	125 (29.6)	113 (27.5)	100 (25.0)	103 (23.8)	78 (26.1)	97 (24.6)	117 (29.5)	97 (24.7)
PrEP use among men reporting sex with >1 FB/any CP	83 (66.4)	78 (69.0)	63 (63.0)	67 (65.0)	55 (70.5)	68 (70.1)	79 (67.5)	66 (68.0)
Any CLAI with >1 FB/any CP	75 (17.7)	75 (18.2)	73 (18.3)	77 (17.8)	52 (17.4)	71 (18.0)	87 (21.9)	77 (19.6)
PrEP use among men reporting CLAI with >1 FB/any CP	60 (80.0)	61 (81.3)	51 (69.9)	57 (74.0)	44 (84.6)	58 (81.7)	71 (81.6)	60 (77.9)
4+ days/week PrEP use when reporting CLAI with >1 FB/ any CP	52 (69.3)	58 (77.3)	47 (64.4)	56 (72.6)	41 (78.8)	56 (78.9)	65 (74.7)	61 (79.2)

HIV-positive men excluded. CLAI: condomless anal intercourse

* Items not mutually exclusive

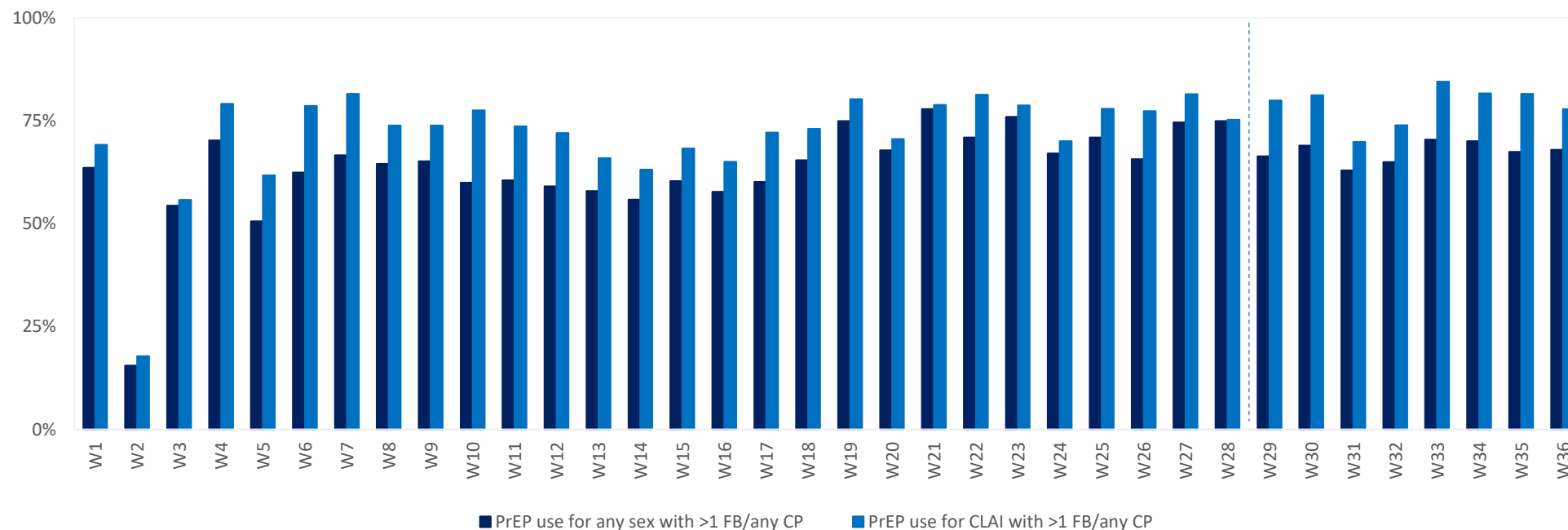
After initial declines, PrEP use has remained stable between week 13 and 23, then started to increase in week 24. During this study period, prevalence of PrEP use has continued to increase with 35.4% reporting its use in week 36.

Figure 7. Proportion of non HIV-positive men using PrEP



The majority of non HIV-positive men who reported CLAI with more than one fuckbuddy/friend with benefits/any casual partners remained protected by PrEP and this proportion has remained stable since the previous reporting period.

Figure 8. Proportion of men having CLAI with multiple non-relationship partners using PrEP



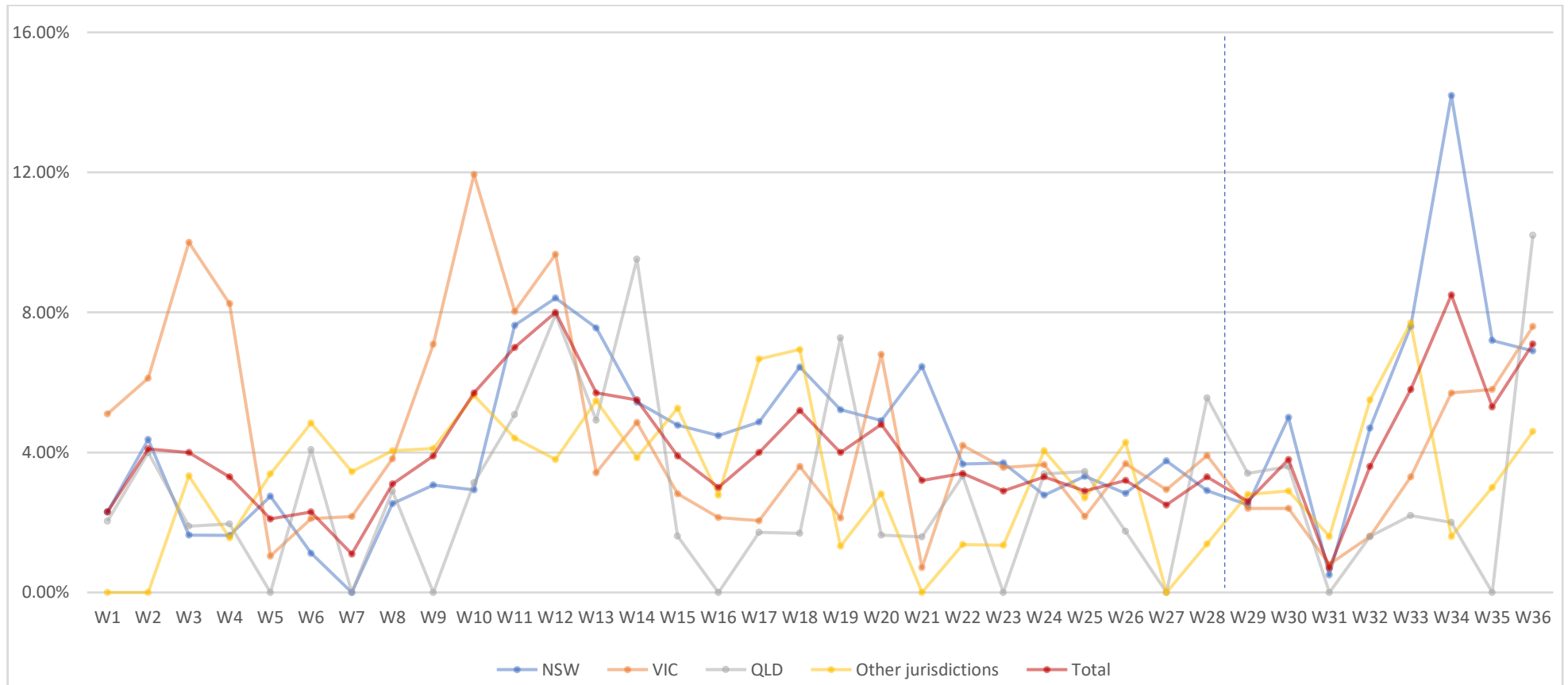
COVID-19 Testing

Recent (in the past 7 days) testing for COVID-19 has been between 0.7-8.5% of participants in the reporting period, with testing peaking at week 34. Testing for COVID-19 in the reporting period has increased overall, but has declined from its peak at week 12, and has increased again in the recent weeks of the reporting period likely due to outbreaks in Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane. NSW had its greatest proportion of testing since the study began in week 34.

Table 8. COVID-19 testing

	Week 29	Week 30	Week 31	Week 32	Week 33	Week 34	Week 35	Week 36
NSW	5 (2.5)	10 (5.0)	1 (0.5)	10 (4.7)	11 (7.6)	28 (14.2)	14 (7.2)	13 (6.9)
VIC	3 (2.4)	3 (2.4)	1 (0.8)	2 (1.6)	3 (3.3)	7 (5.7)	7 (5.8)	9 (7.6)
QLD	2 (3.4)	2 (3.6)	0 (0.0)	1 (1.6)	1 (2.2)	1 (2.0)	0 (0.0)	5 (10.2)
Other Jurisdictions	2 (2.8)	2 (2.9)	1 (1.6)	4 (5.5)	4 (7.7)	1 (1.6)	2 (3.0)	3 (4.6)
Total tested in previous week	12 (2.6)	17 (3.8)	3 (0.7)	17 (3.6)	19 (5.8)	37 (8.5)	26 (5.3)	30 (7.1)

Figure 9. Proportion of men tested for COVID-19 in previous seven days



Test type

Nose and throat swabs remain the most common form of testing for COVID-19 with either one or no participants having blood tests to test for COVID-19 infection. No participants have tested positive to COVID-19 throughout the study.

Table 9. COVID-19 test type

	Week 29	Week 30	Week 31	Week 32	Week 33	Week 34	Week 35	Week 36
Blood test	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0
Nose and throat swab	12	17	3	17	19	36	23	25
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Unknown result	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	2
Positive result	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Social connectedness

Proportions of men reporting no contact with gay male friends has remained fairly stable since the last reporting period, with fewer than one in ten reporting no contact.

Table 10. Proportion of men having no contact with friends and family

	Week 29	Week 30	Week 31	Week 32	Week 33	Week 34	Week 35	Week 36
No contact with gay male friends in the past 7 days (total)	22 (4.8)	29 (6.4)	31 (7.1)	63 (12.5)	23 (7.1)	27 (6.3)	29 (6.7)	1 (0.3)
NSW	8 (3.9)	13 (6.5)	10 (5.1)	24 (10.7)	9 (6.3)	9 (4.6)	9 (4.6)	9 (4.9)
VIC	6 (4.8)	6 (4.9)	9 (7.6)	19 (15.0)	5 (5.8)	8 (6.7)	9 (7.6)	9 (8.1)
QLD	4 (6.7)	4 (6.9)	7 (13.0)	8 (12.7)	7 (16.7)	7 (14.0)	7 (14.0)	9 (21.4)
Other jurisdictions	4 (5.5)	6 (8.6)	5 (7.7)	12 (13.8)	2 (3.7)	3 (4.6)	4 (5.9)	8 (13.1)
No contact with other friends or family in the past 7 days (total)*								16 (3.8)
NSW								8 (4.2)
VIC								5 (4.2)
QLD								2 (3.9)
Other jurisdictions								1 (1.5)

*Note: contact with other friends or family was not recorded as Week 32

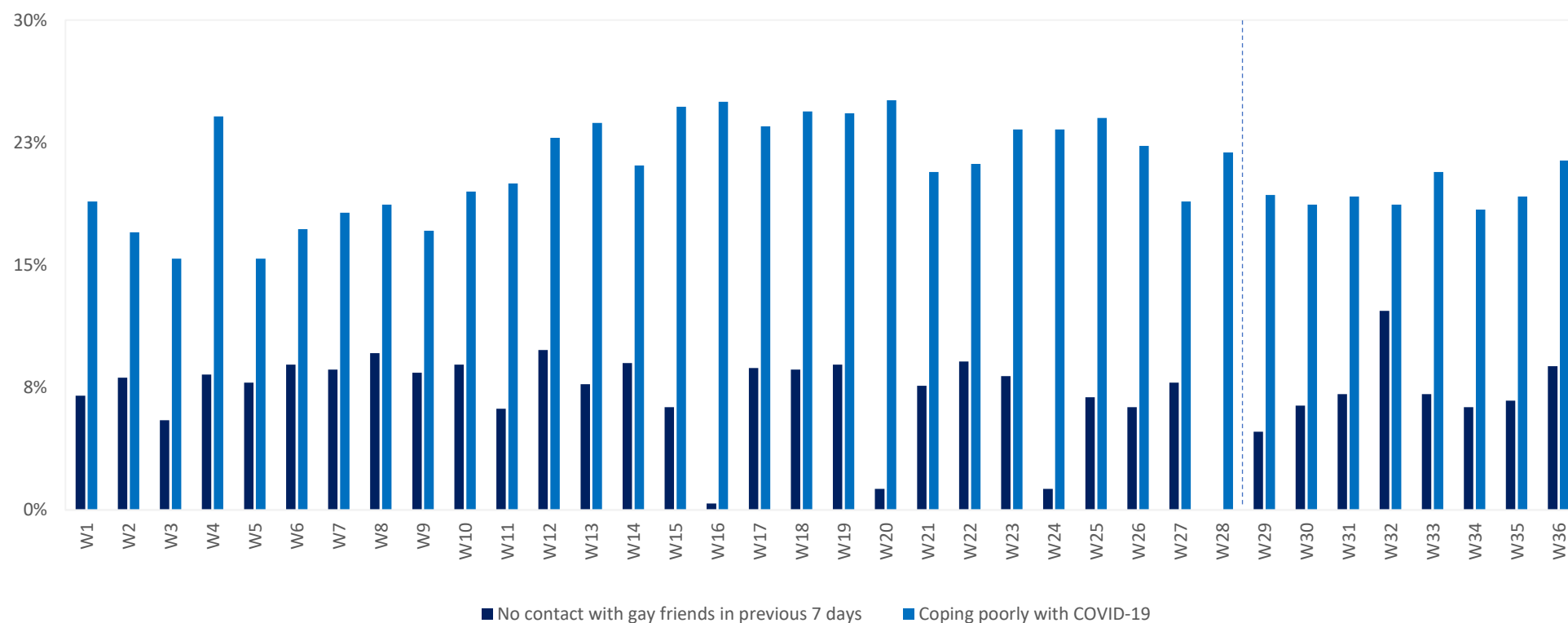
Compared to the previous reporting period, men were slightly less likely to report they were coping poorly during this reporting period. Men in Victoria continue to be more likely to indicate they were coping poorly compared to other jurisdictions, but there is now little difference between men in Victoria and men in NSW.

Table 11. Proportion of men coping poorly by jurisdiction and total

	Week 29	Week 30	Week 31	Week 32	Week 33	Week 34	Week 35	Week 36
NSW	40 (19.4)	41 (20.2)	38 (19.2)	42 (17.2)	36 (25.0)	41 (20.8)	40 (20.4)	44 (23.5)
VIC	31 (24.4)	29 (23.0)	25 (20.8)	35 (24.0)	17 (18.9)	26 (21.1)	28 (23.1)	60 (24.8)
QLD	9 (15.5)	7 (12.5)	10 (18.9)	9 (12.2)	2 (5.0)	7 (13.5)	5 (10.0)	6 (12.5)
Other jurisdictions	9 (12.5)	8 (11.4)	10 (15.6)	11 (12.0)	11 (21.2)	5 (8.2)	10 (14.9)	10 (15.6)
Total	89 (19.2)	85 (18.7)	83 (19.1)	97 (17.4)	66 (20.0)	79 (18.2)	83 (19.1)	90 (21.4)

About one fifth of men indicated that they felt they were coping poorly during this reporting period. This has slightly decreased from around one quarter of men in the previous reporting period. Coping was measured on a six-point scale from 'Very well' to 'Very poorly'.

Figure 10. Proportion of men with no contact with gay male friends and coping poorly with COVID-19



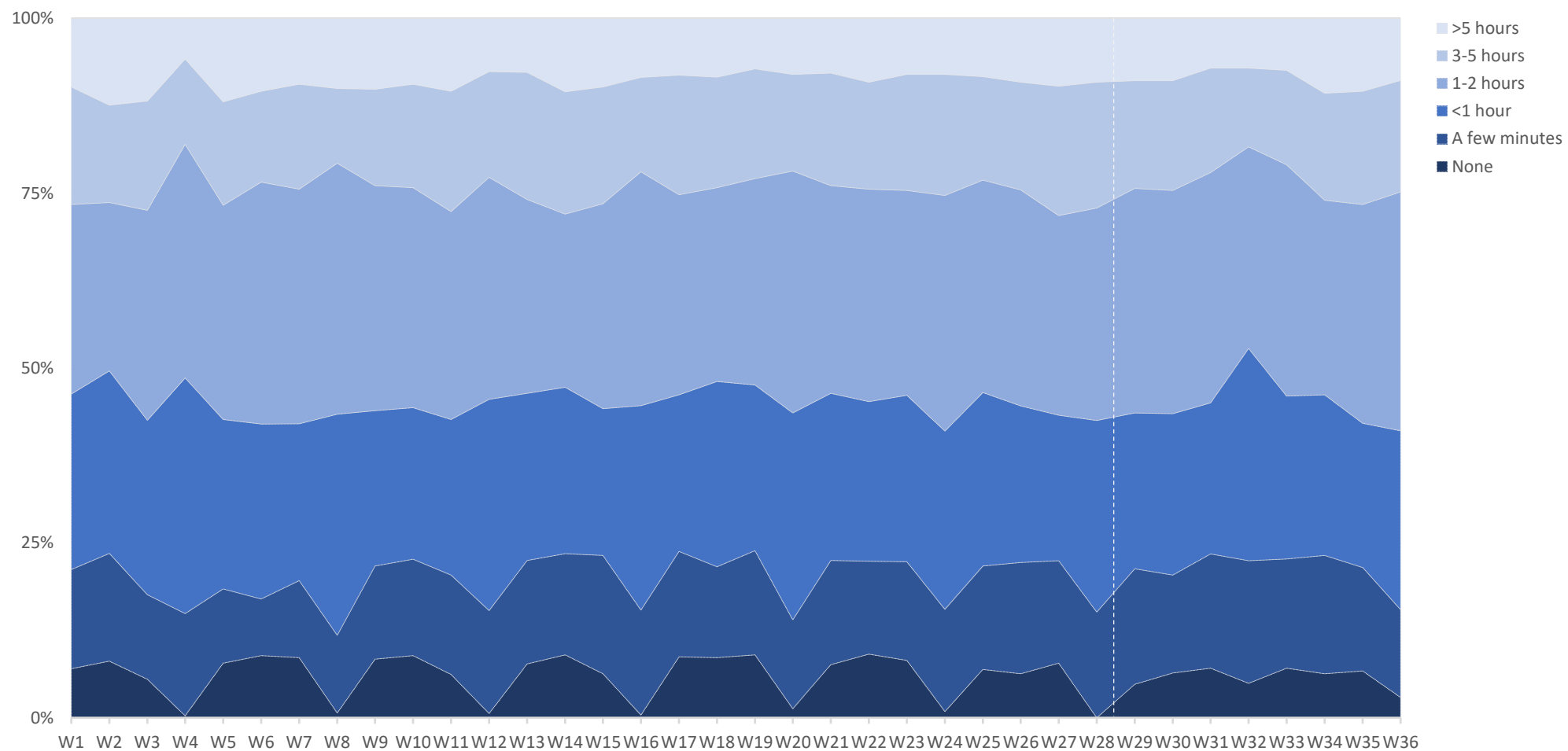
Time spent communicating with gay male friends

Despite some fluctuations, communication, in person, by phone or online, with gay male friends was fairly consistent during the reporting period. During this reporting period, over half the sample consistently spent an hour or more each day communicating with gay male friends. The proportion of men not engaging in daily communication with gay male friends remained low over the reporting period, between 0.3 - 7.1%.

Table 12. Time spent communicating with gay male friends among all respondents

	Week 29	Week 30	Week 31	Week 32	Week 33	Week 34	Week 35	Week 36
None	22 (4.8)	29 (6.4)	31 (7.1)	34 (4.8)	22 (7.1)	26 (6.3)	29 (6.7)	1 (0.3)
A few minutes	76 (16.5)	63 (14.0)	70 (16.3)	79 (17.1)	51 (15.6)	73 (16.9)	64 (14.8)	51 (12.9)
<1 hour	103 (22.3)	104 (23.1)	93 (21.6)	137 (29.6)	76 (23.3)	98 (23.0)	89 (20.6)	104 (26.3)
1-2 hours	148 (32.1)	144 (31.9)	142 (32.9)	130 (28.1)	108 (33.1)	120 (27.8)	135 (31.3)	139 (35.1)
3-5 hours	71 (15.4)	71 (15.7)	65 (14.9)	51 (11.0)	44 (13.5)	66 (15.3)	70 (16.2)	65 (16.4)
>5 hours	41 (8.9)	40 (8.9)	31 (7.1)	32 (6.9)	24 (7.4)	45 (10.7)	45 (10.4)	36 (9.1)

Figure 11. Time spent communicating with gay male friends



Health-seeking behaviour

Influenza vaccine uptake

At Weeks 32 and 36 there was little change in the proportion of men that had received the 2020 seasonal influenza vaccine compared to Report 01-05. Around three quarters of men indicated they had received the 2020 seasonal influenza vaccine.

STI/HIV testing

Over this reporting period, between one in five and one in six men indicated they had been tested for STIs or HIV. During this period, positive STI results were low: between 1.6% and 2.1% of men indicated they tested positive for chlamydia, between 1.4% and 1.8% had tested positive for gonorrhoea, and less than 1% for syphilis.

Most men reported being HIV negative (around 85.8%), almost one in 10 as HIV positive and around 3.9% reported an unknown HIV status. Around 80% of men who reported being HIV positive indicated they had a detectable viral load during this reporting period.

Appendix A – Methods

Data collection

The Flux Study COVID-19 Diary leverages the existing Flux cohort study infrastructure to investigate the experiences of the coronavirus (COVID-19) and its impact on pre-existing epidemics among GBM. Individual follow occurs systematically among consenting GBM every week for an initial three-month period, to be revisited at the end of each three-month period for up to a maximum of one year to collect specific information about sexual and other risk behaviours and direct impacts of COVID-19.

Baseline questionnaires are completed by newly enrolling participants to establish the characteristics, behaviours, and beliefs required to assess changes over time, during the COVID-19 pandemic. Additional information collected includes associated harms, health-seeking, social connectedness, COVID-19 physical distancing behaviours, mental health, and relevant personal characteristics.

Weekly diary questionnaires collect specific limited information on sexual behaviour, PrEP use, and COVID-19 health-seeking practices, to enable measurement of changes in behaviours against the rapid changes in physical distancing regulations as they are enforced, or relaxed. Every four weeks, a slightly expanded questionnaire will also collect specific information on physical distancing and social connections, drug use, and access to services.

Six-monthly follow-up questionnaires monitor changes in characteristics, behaviours, and beliefs over time, throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, required to assess changes over time as specified in the study aims.

Data analysis

SPSS™, Version 26 (IBM Corporation) was used to analyse data. Percentage values exclude the proportion of respondents who did not answer the question and may not add to 100 because of rounding. Data may change slightly over time due to minor error checking.

Ethical approval for data collection was obtained from UNSW Human Research Ethic.

Appendix B – Glossary

CLAI – condomless anal intercourse

COVID-19 – the disease caused by the novel coronavirus SARS-CoV-2

Fuckbuddy/Friend with benefits – a regular sexual partner with whom ongoing sexual contact occurs, generally in the absence of romantic attachment

GBM – gay and bisexual men

HIV – human immunodeficiency virus

HIV status – a person's antibody status established by HIV testing (e.g. HIV-negative, HIV-positive, or unknown [untested])

Non-relationship partner – a sexual partner that is not a boyfriend or husband with whom participants are in an ongoing romantic relationship, but characterised as a fuckbuddy, friend with benefits or casual partner

PEP – post-exposure prophylaxis; for the purpose of this report, it refers to the use of antiretroviral drugs by HIV-negative people to reduce the risk of HIV infection after a potential exposure has occurred

PrEP – pre-exposure prophylaxis; for the purpose of this report, it refers to the use of antiretroviral drugs by HIV-negative