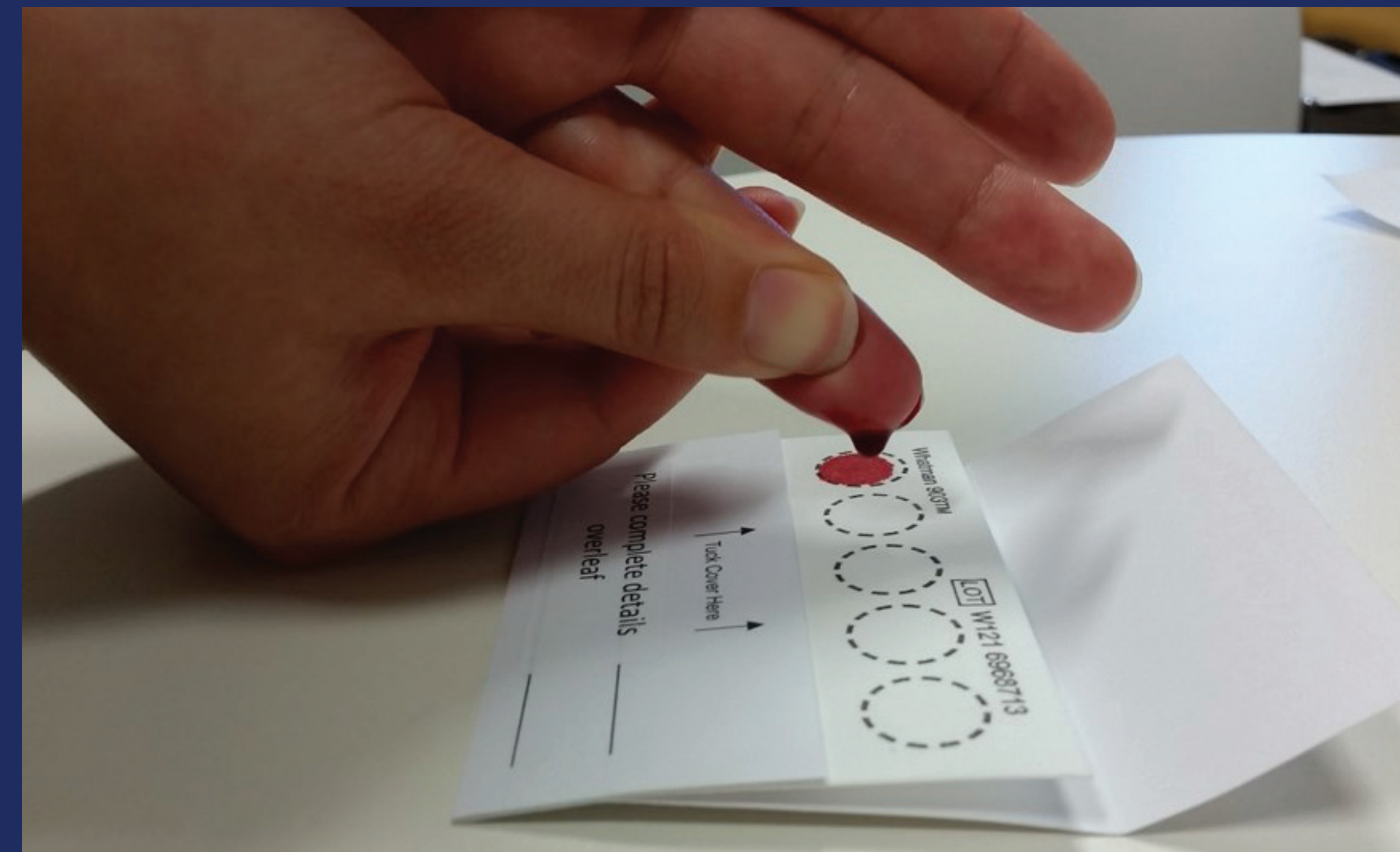


DBS Validation in NSW: Partnership success in a private prison setting



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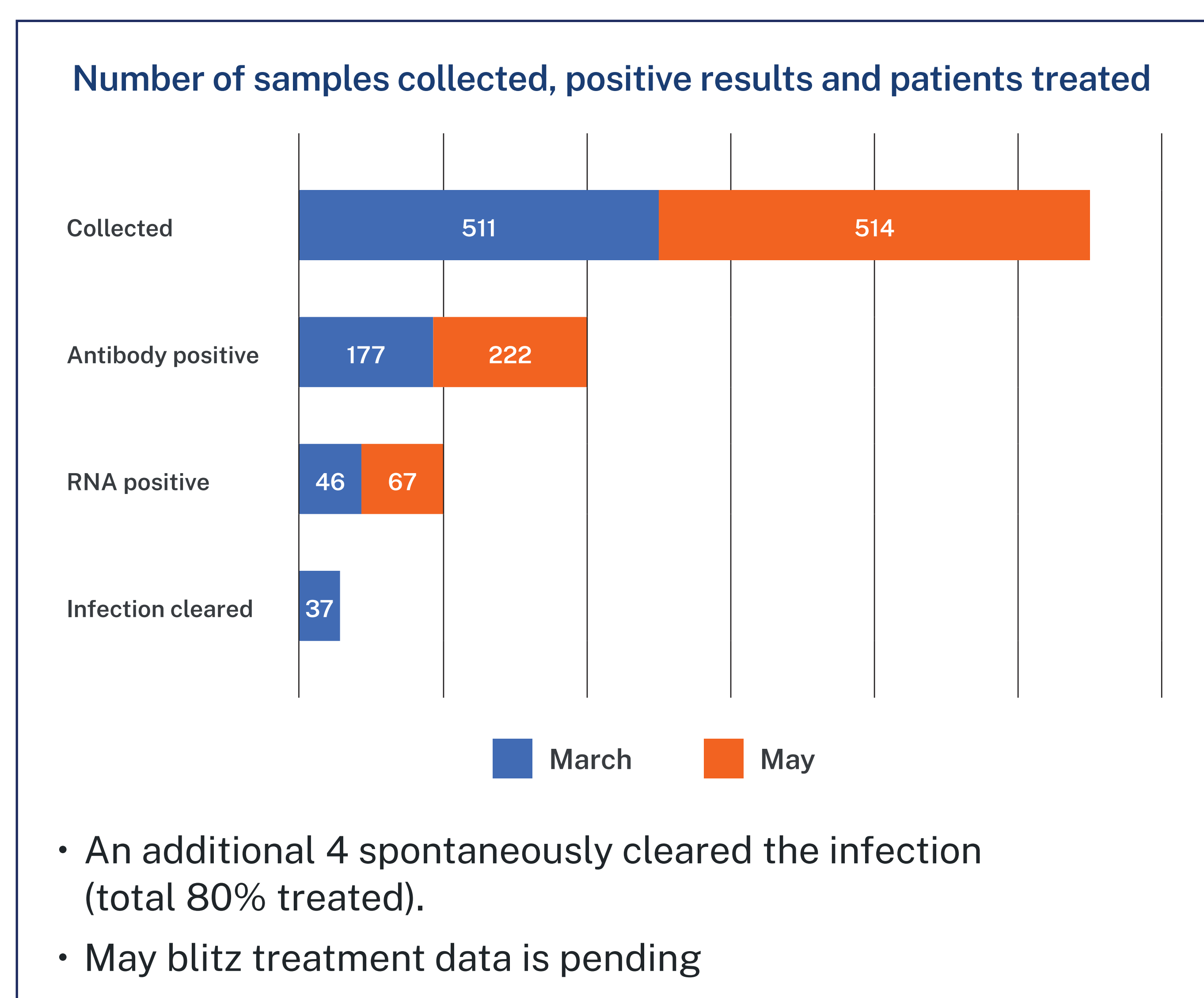
Why was this needed?

- To achieve elimination goals of the NSW Health Hepatitis C Strategy (2022-2025) by 2028.
- Alternative HCV testing technologies such as Dried Blood Spot (DBS) sampling can reduce barriers to care among vulnerable populations and support testing scale up.
- DBS for HCV testing is not approved by the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) and testing is only offered in NSW through a clinical trial.
- A scientific sub-study for HCV testing using DBS samples was commenced to validate use outside of a clinical trial.

What did we do?

- Formed partnership between NSW Health, NSW Health Pathology (NSWHP), Mid North Coast Local Health District (MNCLHD), and Serco Asia Pacific.
- Collected paired DBS and venous samples to compare conventional and DBS assays at Clarence Correctional Centre (CCC).
- MNCLHD provided nursing and health promotion staff for collecting venous blood and DBS samples directly from inmates in prison neighbourhoods.
- Serco provided hepatitis C testing information, organised inmates to come forward, and entered data on patient database.
- NSWHP staff spun down blood samples, tested all plasma and DBS samples, provide results to CCC via clinical database.
- Ministry of Health staff entered data on DBS database and couriered packaged samples to the Virology Research Laboratory in Sydney.

What were our results?



What are our conclusions?

- Partnerships between government, clinicians, researchers and community are essential.
- The strong partnership approach resulted in 1025 samples collected across eight days in a high prevalence setting, with molecular and serology testing performed in real time.
- A high treatment rate was achieved for the March blitz.

DBS blood samples



DBS sampling is simple, convenient and can be performed at home, in community or custodial settings.



Part of the testing team – staff provided by MNCLHD (nurses, health promotion and admin staff) plus NSW DBS Coordinator (NSW Ministry of Health).

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