

Sydney WorldPride 2023: impacts on a peer-led STI-HIV testing site in Central Sydney

Ray, A1, Turner F1, Batchelor J1, Sinkovic T3, Vaughan M3, Varma R 1,2
 1 Sydney Sexual Health Centre, Sydney, NSW
 2 Kirby Institute, UNSW Sydney, NSW
 3 ACON

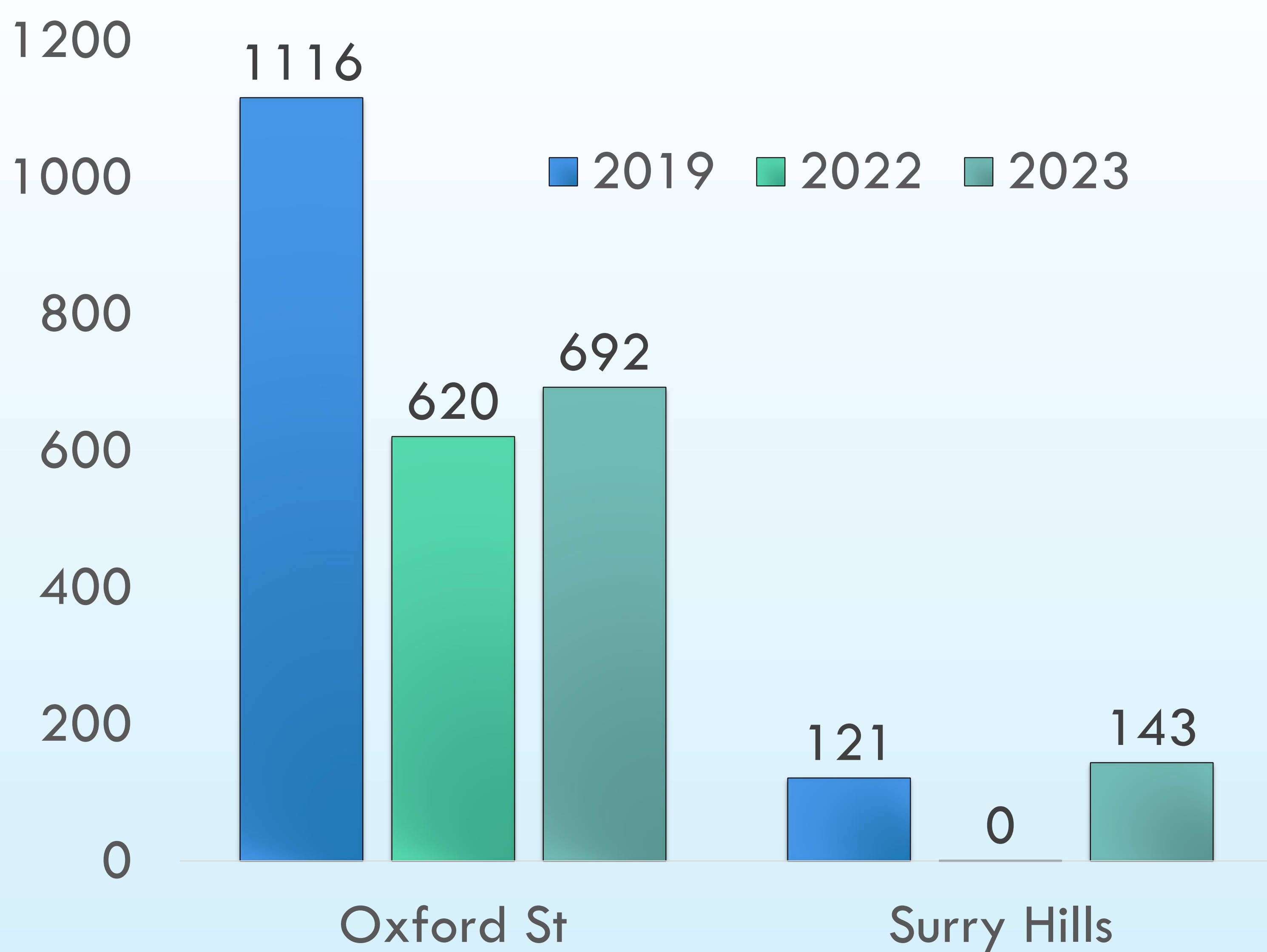
Background:

Sydney Sexual Health Centre (SSHC) in partnership with ACON coordinates the a[TEST] services at two locations in central Sydney: Oxford Street and Surry Hills. We describe our response to WorldPride (WP), a large-scale LGBTQI+ event hosted by Sydney in 2023, attracting a large population of men who have sex with men (MSM) to the busiest peer-led testing site operating in NSW.

Aim:

We describe our response to a large scale LGBTQI+ event which included increased accessibility to PrEP, STI and BBV testing for people attending WP 2023.

Unique clients by pride season



Method:

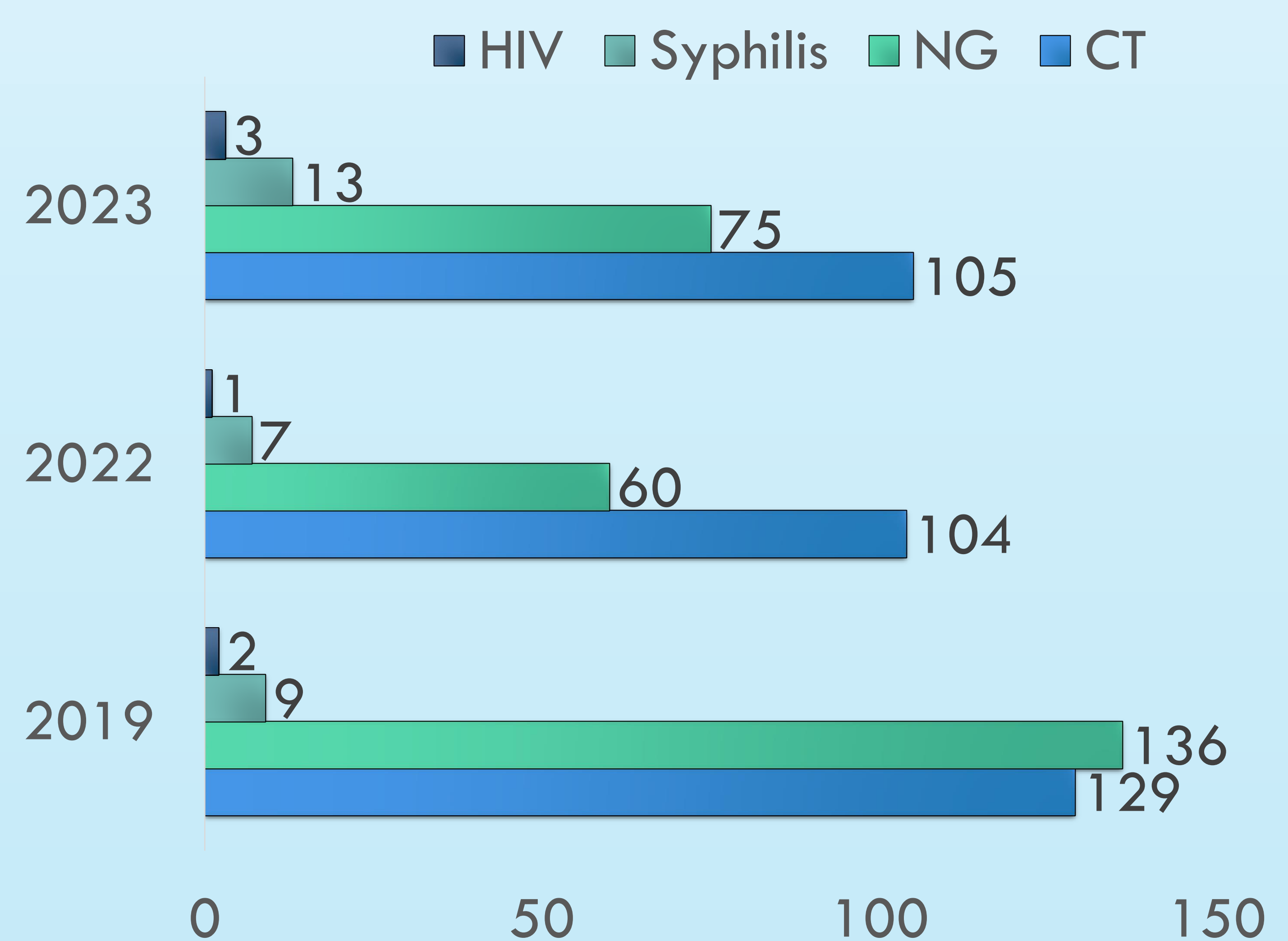
During WP, SSHC and ACON took several measures to ensure that the community received accessible sexual health services.

- Nursing staff at Oxford St increased by 50%.
- a[TEST] procedure was changed to allow clients to attend without an appointment.
- Asymptomatic contacts of STIs could access testing without an appointment.
- SSHC was the first to implement the updated NSW nurse protocol, which allowed nurse led dispensing and supply to initiate PrEP and provide PEP without a doctor's prescription.

Results:

- From 6/02/23 – 20/03/23, 36 clinics were run by a[TEST] which provided testing for 692 unique clients, including 616 HIV tests, of which 2 were confirmed positive.
- Total number of clients diagnosed with a STI was 85, a 56% decrease from 2019.
- 19 clients were able to access nurse dispensed PrEP.
- Most clients attending a[TEST] during WP were overseas born 443 (64%) and of these, almost half 334 (48%) were from a non-English speaking country.

Infections by pride season at a[TEST] sites



Innovation and Significance:

Several factors may have contributed to over all client attendance

- NSW has not reached pre-pandemic levels of STI and BBV testing
- ACON and SSHC collaborated with other local health districts to implement MPOX vaccination and testing hubs which also provided PrEP/PEP
- ACON campaign advising people to test and acquire PrEP prior to attending WP
- New models of care were required to facilitate testing for local and overseas visitors.
- Increasing nurse scope of practice by allowing PrEP dispensing demonstrated its feasibility in the context of community based sexual health clinic.