

Long-term trends in Australian gay and bisexual men's sexual practices with male partners: a 25-year retrospective

Martin Holt, Curtis Chan, Limin Mao, James MacGibbon,
Anthony Smith, James Gray, & Ben Bavinton

Disclosures & acknowledgments

- Funding: Australian Government Department of Health, National Health and Medical Research Council (GNT2002625), state/territory health departments
- No pharmaceutical funding was received for this research
- Thanks to all the people living with HIV, gay and bisexual men and non-binary people who participate in our research

Background

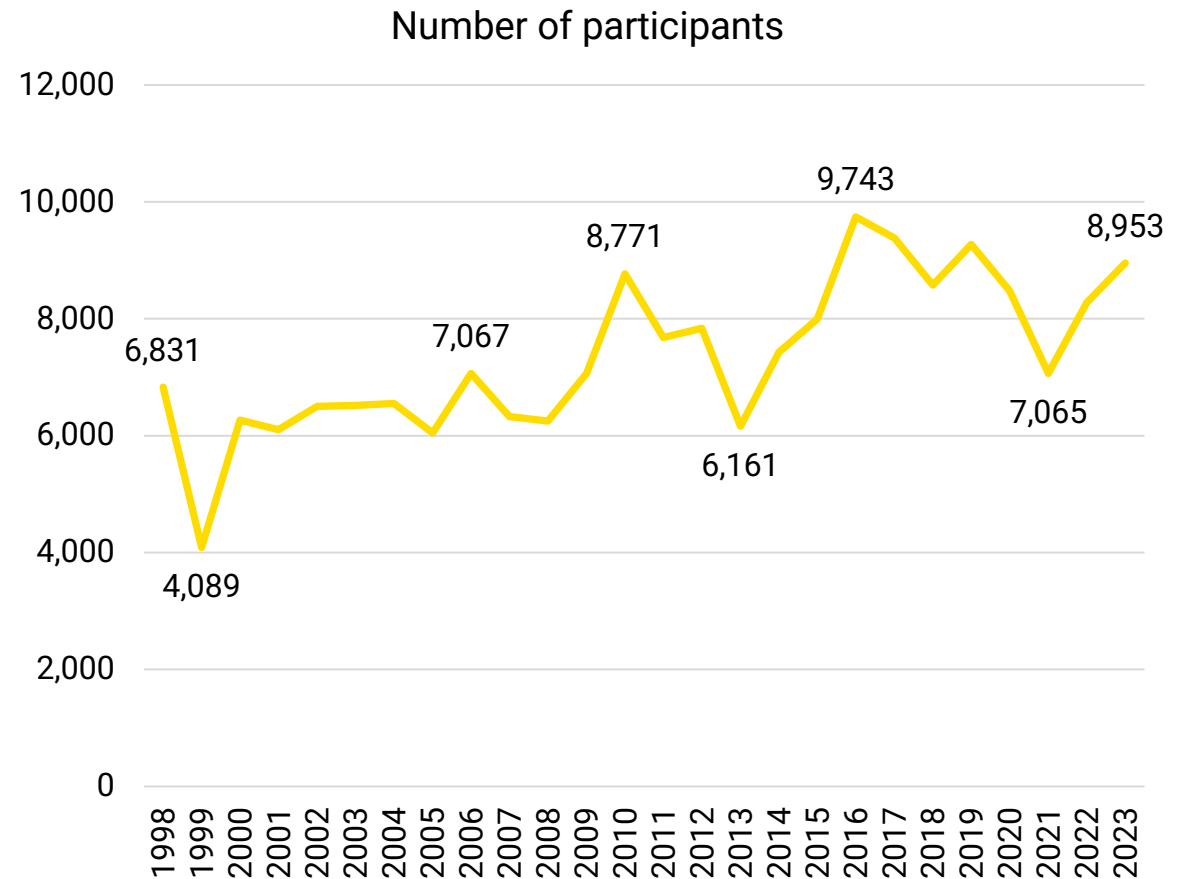
- The GBQ+ (formerly Gay) Community Periodic Surveys are in their 30th year in Australia
- The GCPS are repeated cross-sectional surveys of gay and bisexual men and non-binary people
- They are conducted at LGBTQ+ venues, festival events, clinics, and online in 7 states/territories every 1-2 years
- Peer- and community-based recruitment is a critical part of the design
- The surveys track HIV and sexual health-related behaviour among GBM and NB people, including community responses to risk and use of different forms of HIV prevention

Analyses

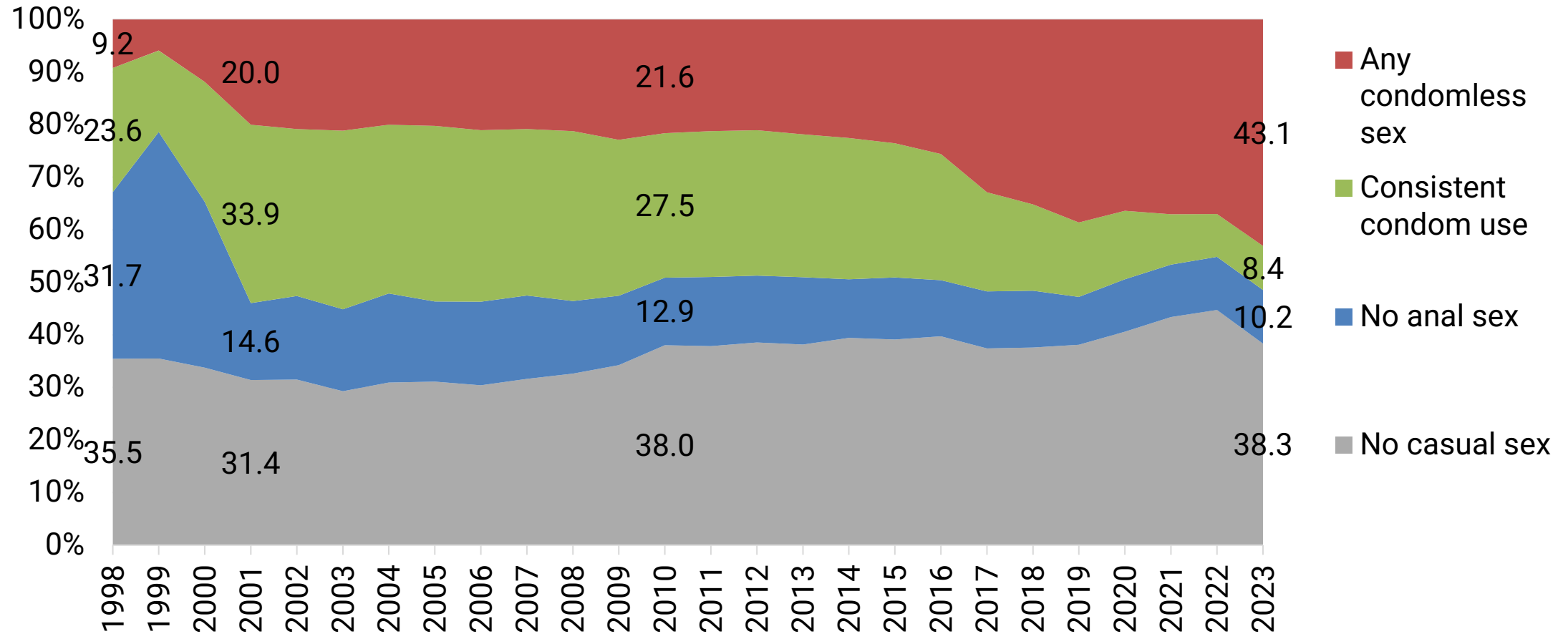
- Trends in sex with casual male partners, 1998-2023
- 191,230 survey responses included
- No casual sex, no anal intercourse, condom use, any condomless sex
- How common are 'tops', 'bottoms', versatile participants and 'sides'?
- Trends in combination prevention and coverage during casual anal intercourse, 2001-2013, by sexual position
- 96,896 responses included
- Does sexual position affect HIV risk and engagement with different prevention methods?

Participant characteristics 1998-2023

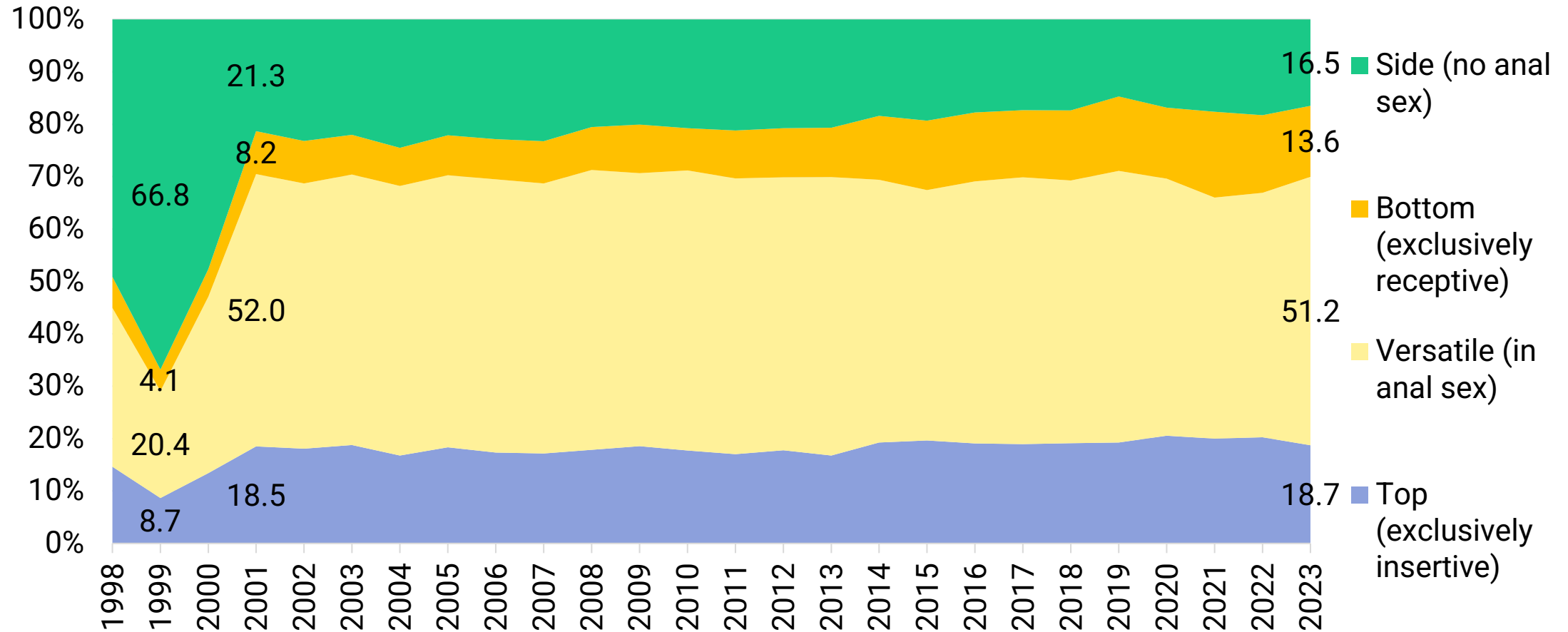
- Median age 34 years
- 88% identified as gay
- 8% identified as bisexual
- 81% HIV-negative
- 9% living with HIV
- 11% untested/unknown status
- 41% reported 2-10 male partners in the last 6mths
- 22% >10 male partners in last 6mths



Trends in sex with casual male partners, 1998-2023 (N=191,230)



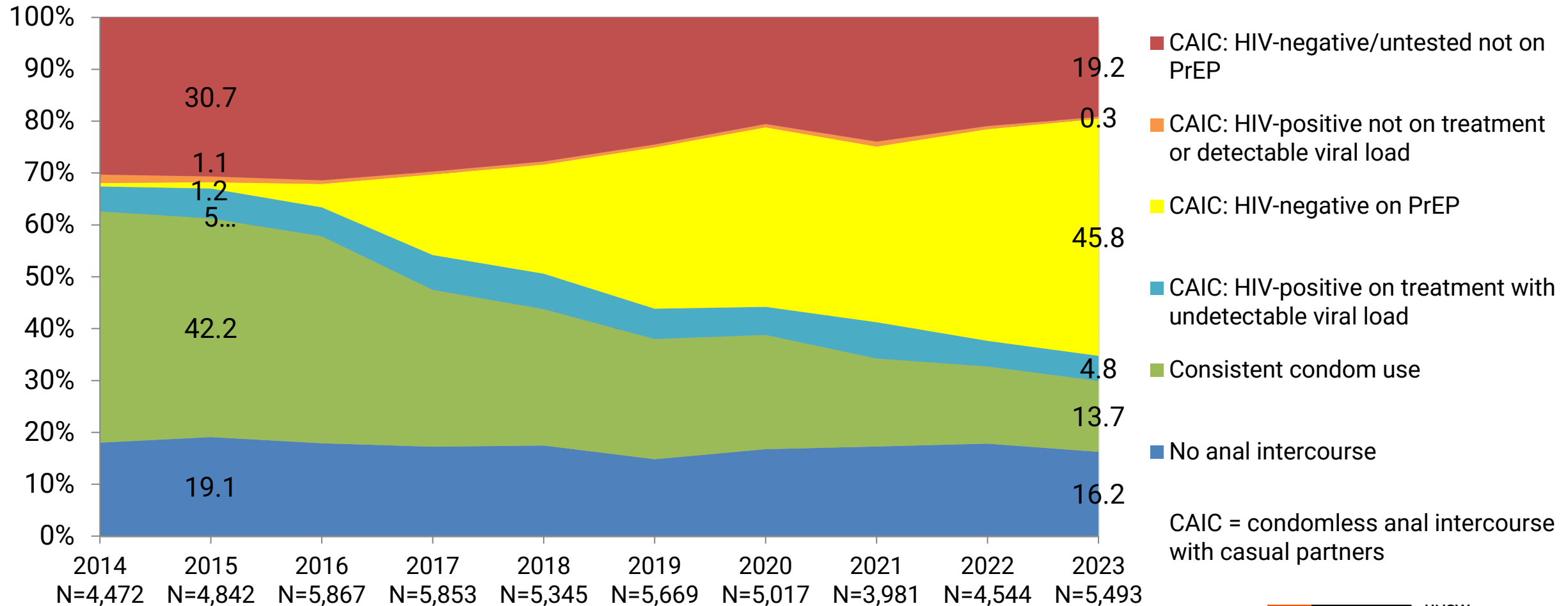
Trends in position and practice with casual male partners, 1998-2023 (N=121,392)



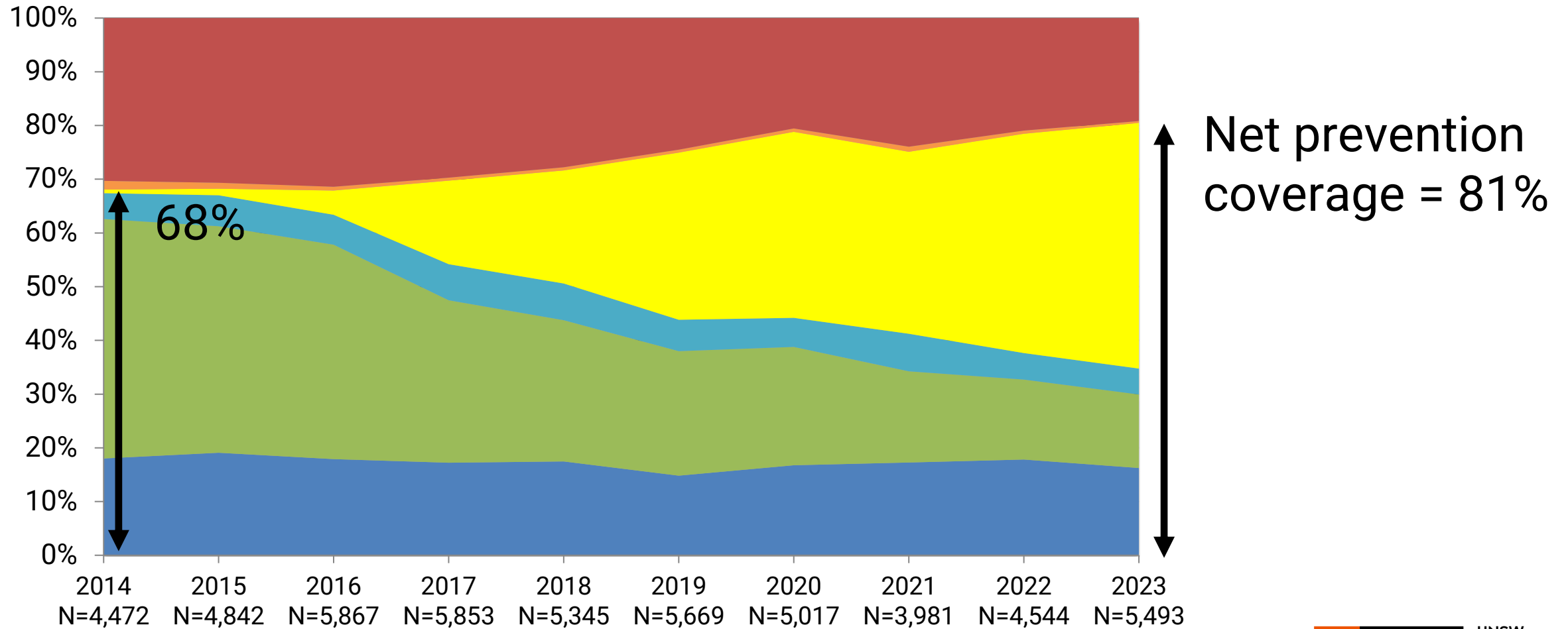
Characteristics of participants by sexual position/practice (2014-2023)

Tops	Bottoms	Versatile	Sides
Slightly more likely to be bi+	Smallest group	Largest group	Older
	Younger	Have the most male partners	Less likely to be full-time employed
	Less likely to be full-time employed	Most likely to be recently tested for HIV	Have the fewest male partners Least likely to be recently tested for HIV

Combination HIV prevention with casual sex partners, last 6m

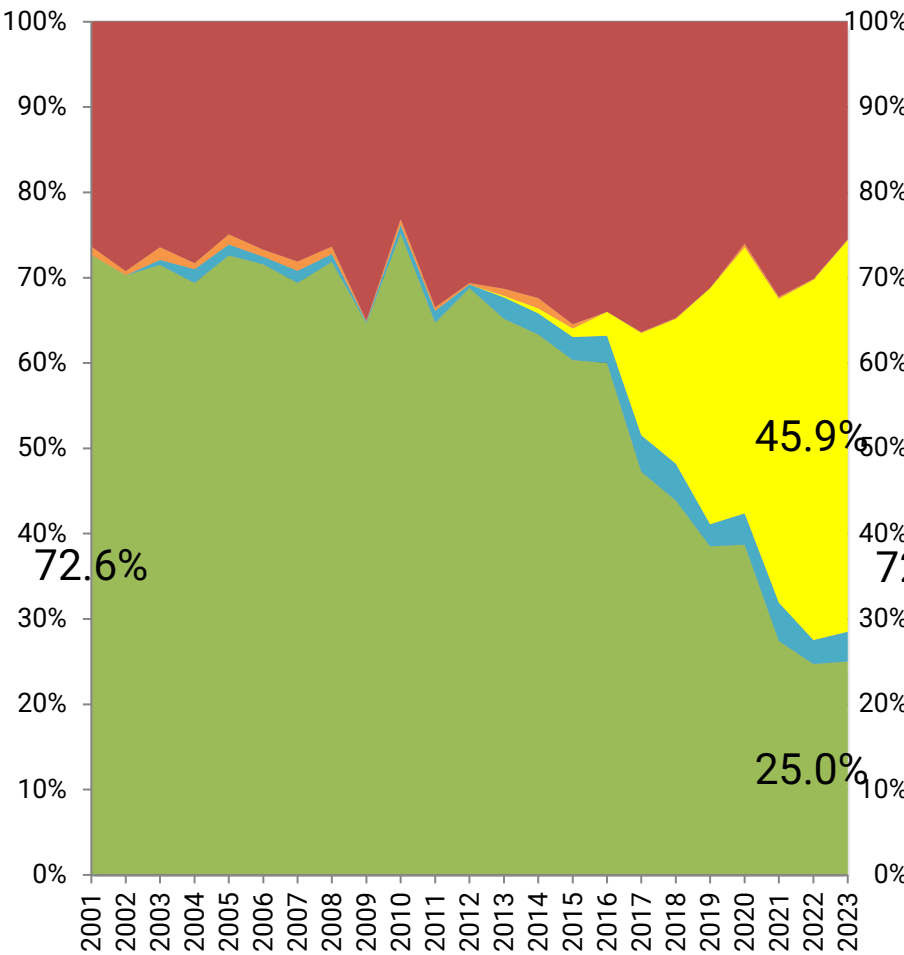


Net prevention coverage

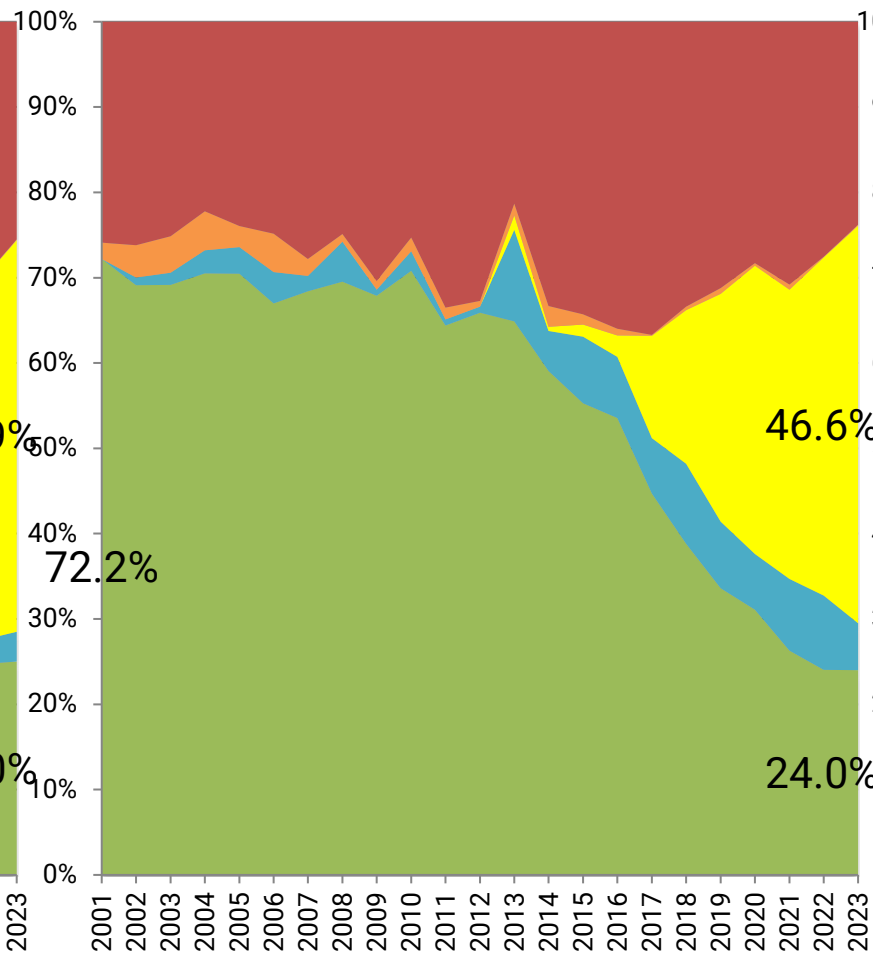


Combination HIV prevention during casual anal intercourse, by sexual position

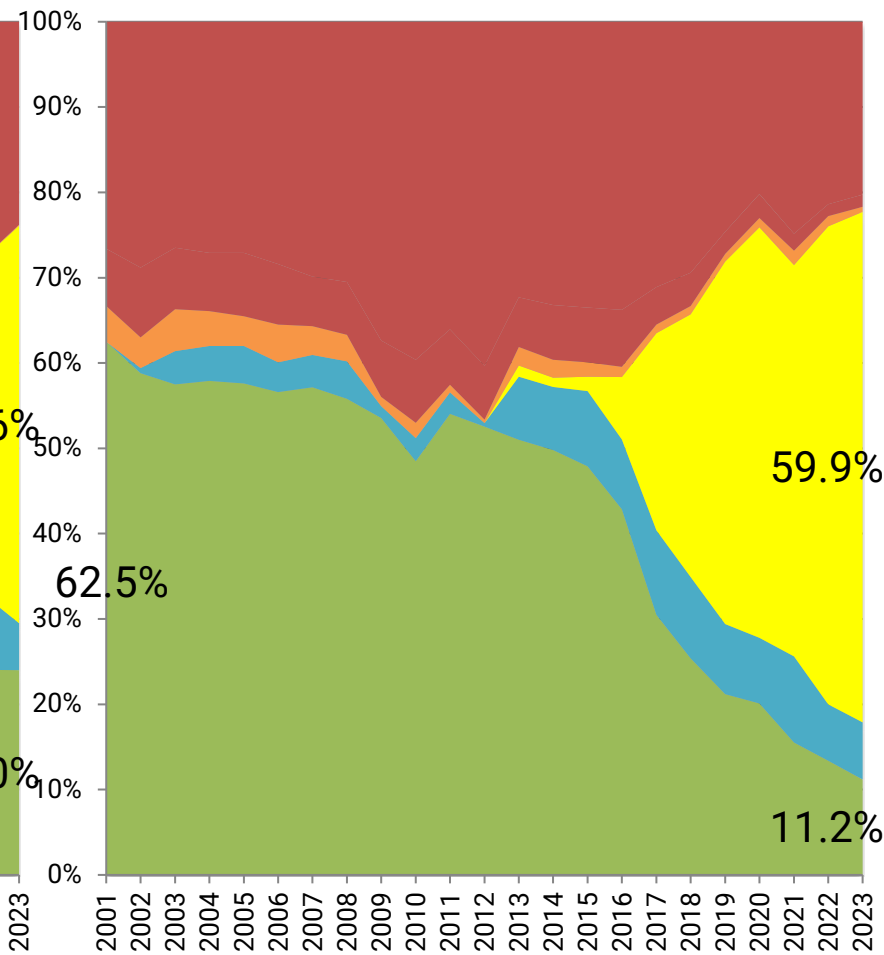
Top



Bottom

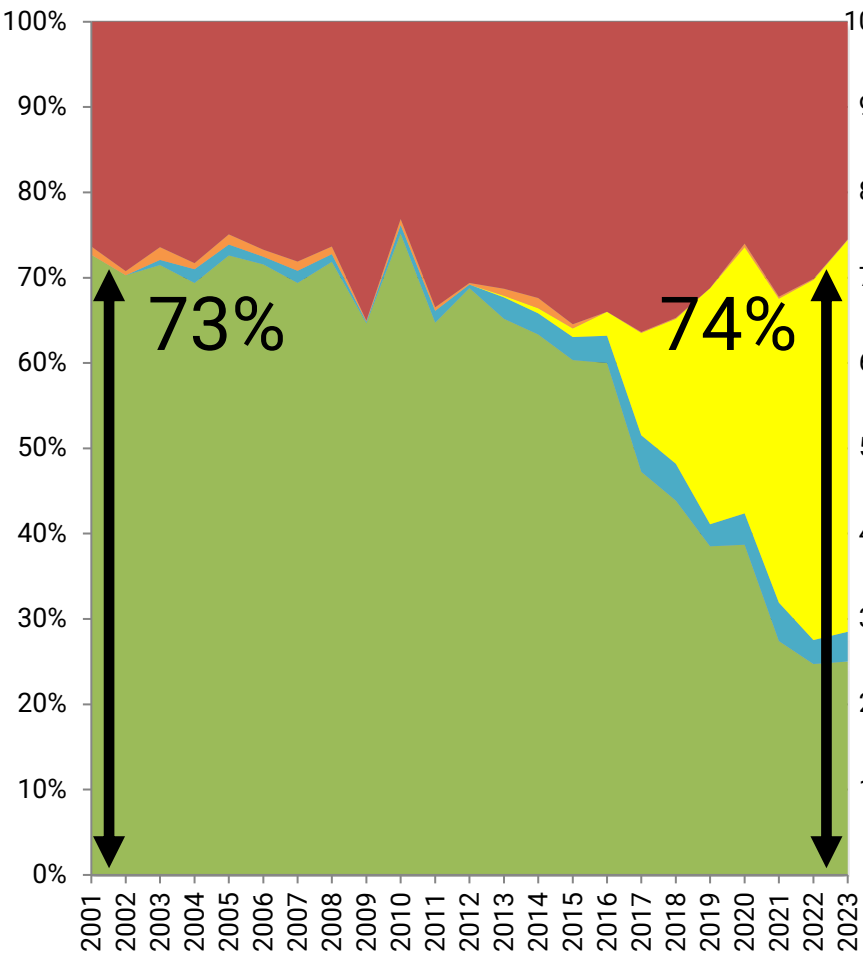


Versatile

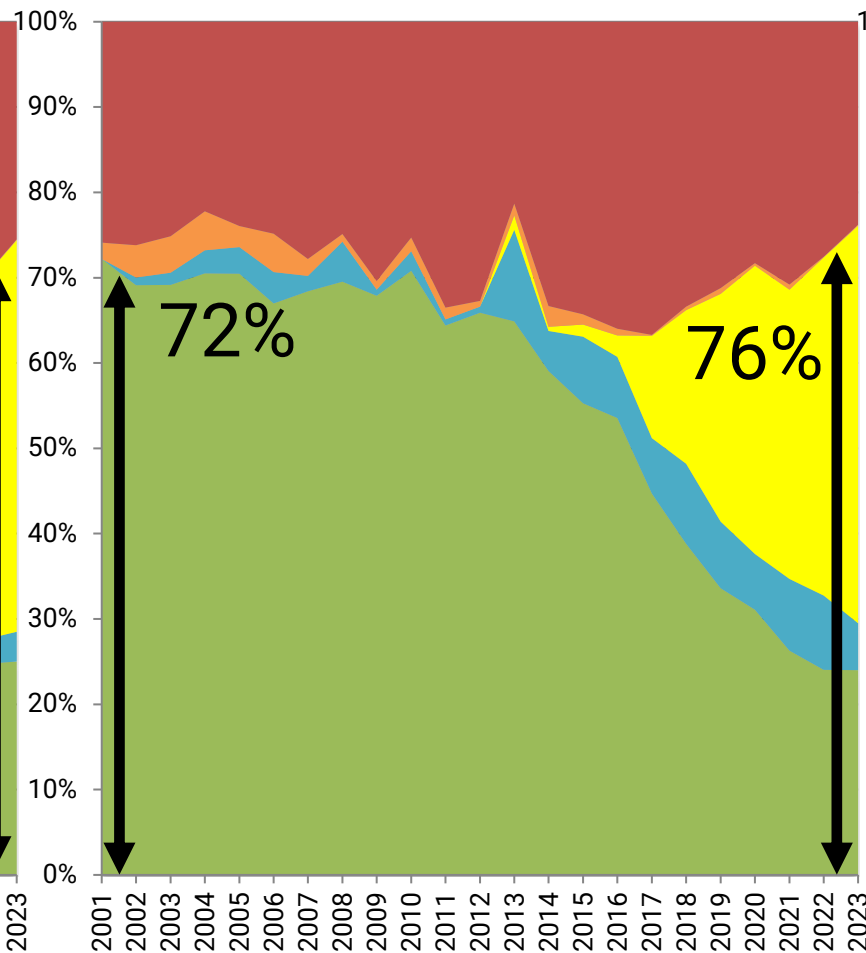


HIV prevention coverage by sexual position with casual male partners

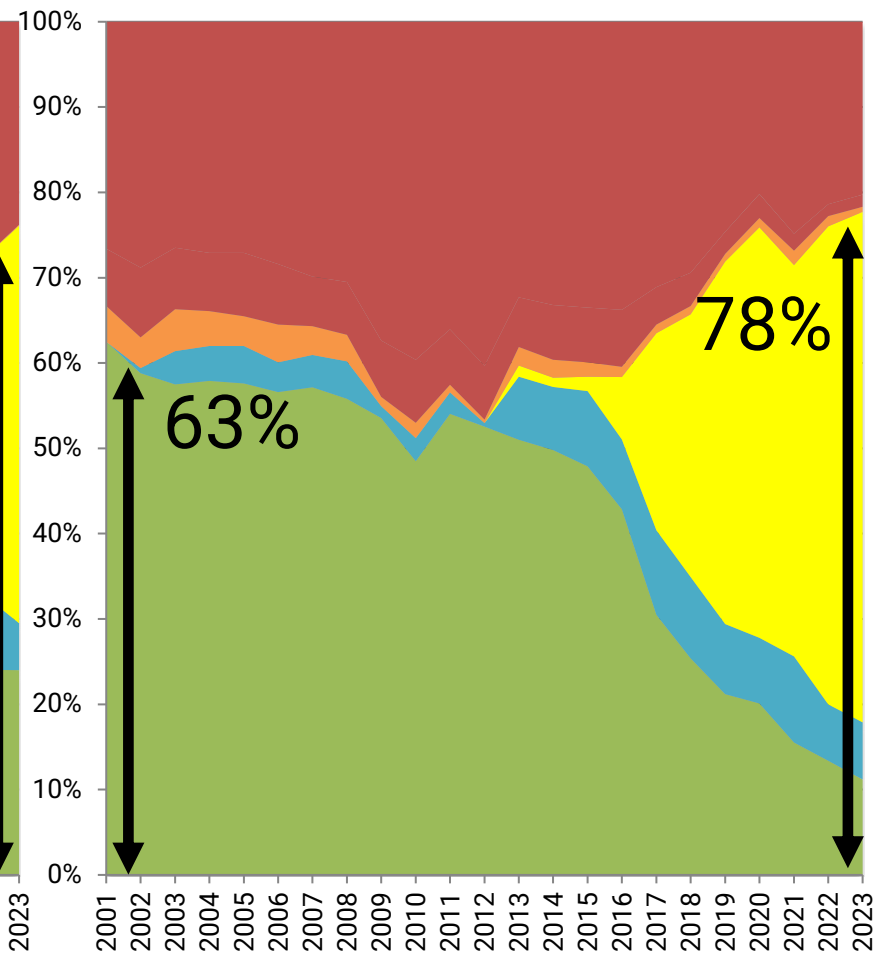
Top



Bottom



Versatile



Summary

Over a 25-year period, the GCPS have shown:

- The successful engagement of >191k people
- A change from condom use to PrEP as the most common HIV prevention strategy
- The majority of GBM & NB people are versatile when having casual anal sex with male partners
- 18% are exclusive tops
- 14% are exclusive bottoms
- 17% are sides
- Bottoms have become slightly more common and sides slightly less common since PrEP was introduced
- Vers participants were most at risk of HIV in the early 00s. They have most heavily embraced PrEP and now are more protected than others; very few only use condoms.
- Exclusive tops and bottoms have also embraced PrEP but ~24-25% still use condoms as their main prevention method.