

MyTest: Connecting never-testers to HIV self-testing and care in NSW

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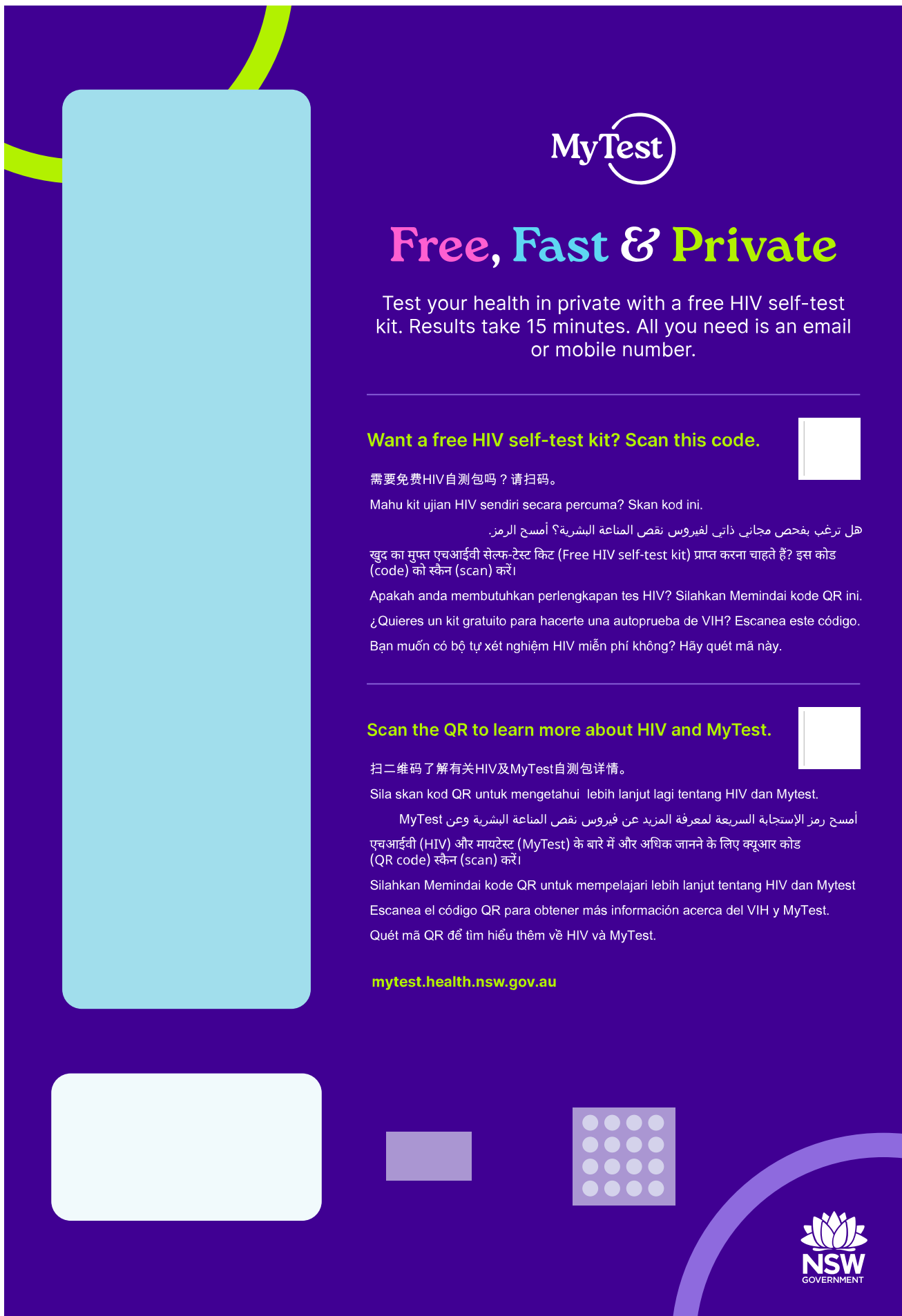
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Background

The NSW HIV Strategy aims to eliminate HIV transmission, ensure 95% of people with HIV are diagnosed, and encourage earlier testing among overseas-born populations. From 2013 to 2023, HIV notifications declined by 35%, primarily among Australian-born MSM in Inner Sydney. In contrast, diagnoses—especially late diagnoses—increased among overseas-born MSM and MSM in Greater Western Sydney. In response, NSW Health launched a HIV self test vending machine program, MyTest. MyTest distributes up to four free Atomo HIV self-test kits (HIVST) per month, per person to people aged 16+. The program is aimed at those who are at risk of HIV who have never tested or test infrequently. These vending machines are placed in alternative settings across Greater Western Sydney and other high-priority areas.



What did we do?

Between 15 May 2024 and 22 July 2025, 11 vending machines were installed in sex-on-premises venues (SOPVs), tertiary education settings, community services, and health facilities. MyTest kits are discreetly packaged with condoms, lubricant, and PrEP information. The MyTest website offers test instructions, prevention information, and links to support services. MyTest is promoted on Grindr ads and through community networks. Registration and dispensing data were analysed to explore testing history, country of birth, and vending machine location. Survey data assessed acceptability and future testing preferences. We conducted chi-2 tests to assess differences in HIV testing history according to country of birth, area of residence, and vending machine location type.

Did it work?

Between 15 May 2024 and 22 July 2025, 3126 unique individuals registered with the MyTest project. Among these, 1,362 (43.6%) collected one or more HIVST. Among those who collected tests, 1,127 (82.7%) provided an NSW postcode, 80 (5.9%) provided an interstate postcode, and 155 (11.4%) had an invalid or missing postcode.

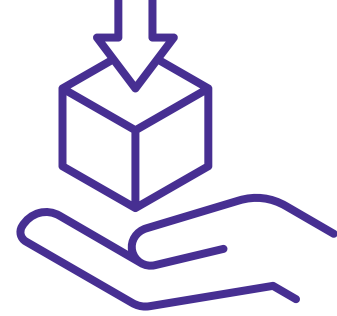
Total Registrations



3,126

Unique individuals registered with MyTest

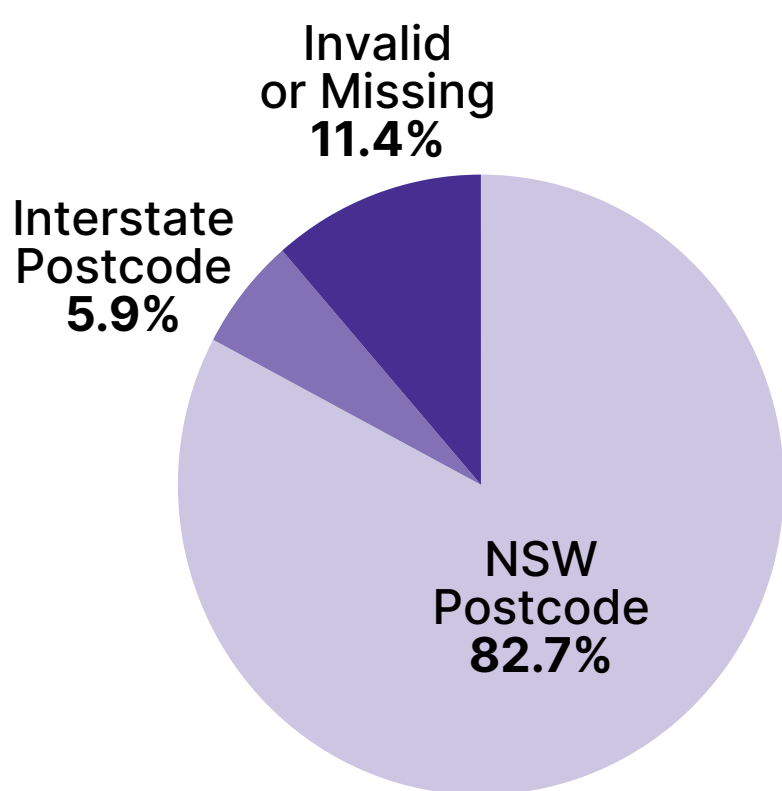
HIVST Collection



1,362

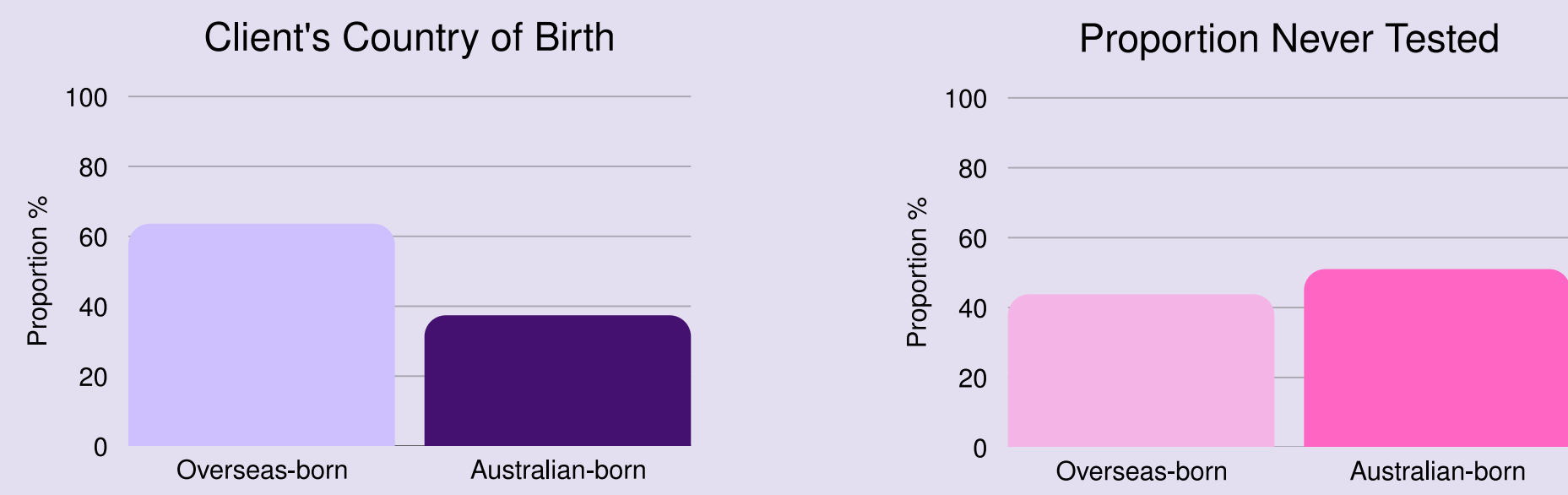
Participants (43%) collected one or more HIVST kits

Postcode Distribution Among Test Collectors



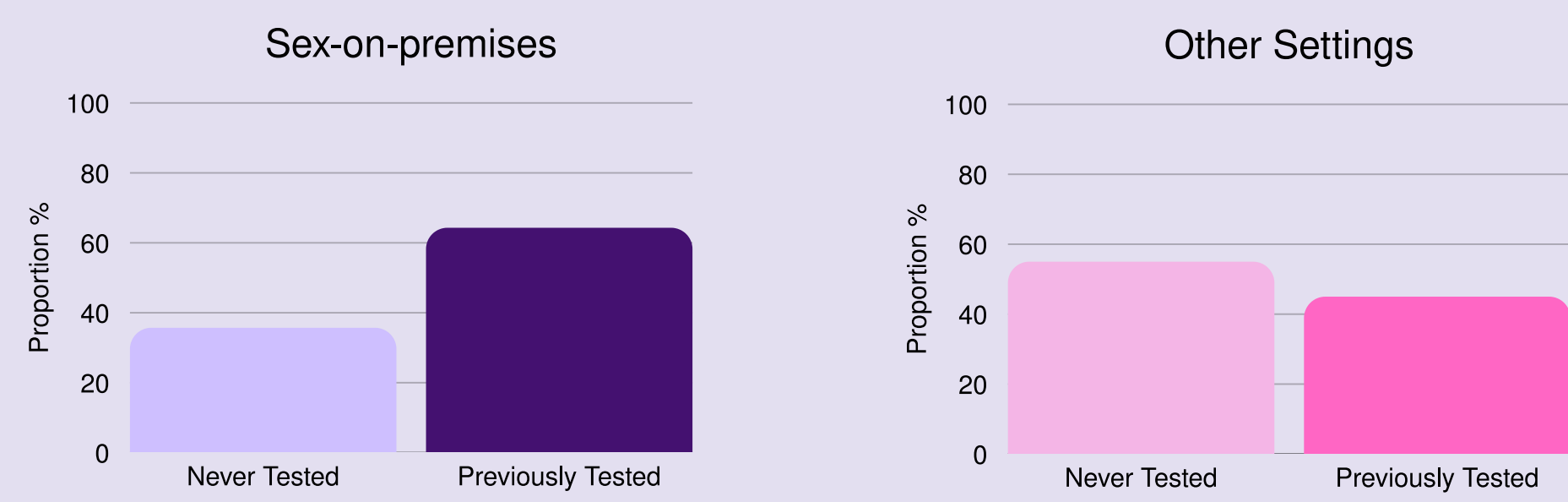
Testing History by Country of Birth:

Among 1,230 clients who provided details of their HIV testing history and country of birth, 62.6% were overseas born. The proportion who had never been tested for HIV was significantly higher among Australian-born clients (50.9%) compared to overseas-born clients (43.8%; $p=0.016$).



Testing History by Vending Machine Location:

Testing history varied significantly by vending machine location. Among 568 clients who accessed machines located in sex-on-premises venues, 35.7% had never tested, compared to 55.0% among 699 who accessed machines in other settings ($p<0.001$). While a higher proportion of clients who accessed machines at SOPVs had previously tested than elsewhere, it is notable that more than one third had never previously tested.



Testing History by NSW Area of Residence:

Testing history varied significantly by area of residence. Among 319 clients who lived in Greater Western Sydney, 55.8% had never tested, compared to 43.2% among 836 clients who lived in other areas ($p<0.001$).

PrEP use and Acceptability:

Among 118 clients who completed follow-up surveys, 22.2% reported current PrEP use. Survey responses indicate strong acceptability of the MyTest service: 92.3% found the registration process easy, 72.2% preferred to collect an HIVST from a vending machine for their next test, and 100% reported feeling encouraged to test more often, and said they would recommend MyTest to others.

What's next?

MyTest, is a first-of-its-kind-project in NSW and has demonstrated that vending-machine distribution of HIV self-test kits can increase testing uptake among untested, at-risk people, with significant public health benefits. Following the success of the pilot, marked by strong community uptake and high levels of user satisfaction, the MyTest program will transition from a pilot to business as usual. It will continue operating across NSW to reduce late HIV diagnoses and support earlier engagement in care.

Disclosure of Interest Statement:

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Visit the MyTest website



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