



WHAT CAN TRENDS IN PRIOR ABORTION TELL US ABOUT ABORTION ACCESS IN VICTORIA?

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Introduction

In Australia one in four women have an abortion, however, there is a lack of quality data on trends and characteristics of women having them. This impedes public health responses to improve women's reproductive agency.

Aim

To estimate the prevalence of a history of induced abortion among individuals giving birth in Victoria, and to describe changes by time and socio-demographic characteristics.

Methods

Secondary analysis of cross-sectional population-based perinatal data comprising all women experiencing childbirth in Victoria years 2010 to 2019 (n=766,488). Analyses included descriptive statistics and logistic regression analyses.



Result A

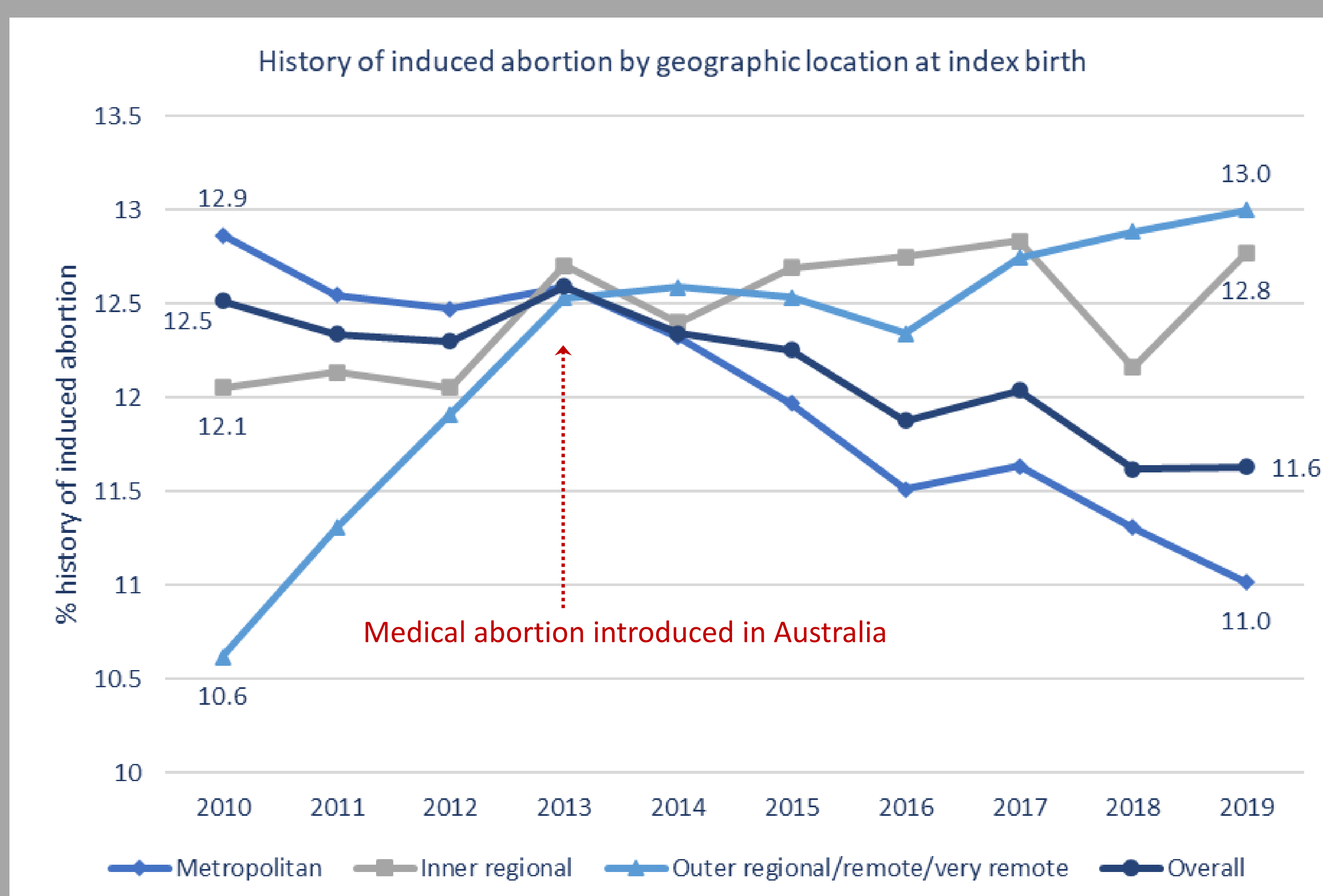
10.9% of primiparous women and 12.2% of all childbearing women reported a history of abortion.

Result B

Women in non-urban areas were less likely to report a history of abortion, however, there was a shift in trends that coincided with the introduction of medical abortion in Australia (figure below).

Result C

Overseas-born women were less likely to report a history of abortion, while unpartnered women and those of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin were more likely to report this experience.



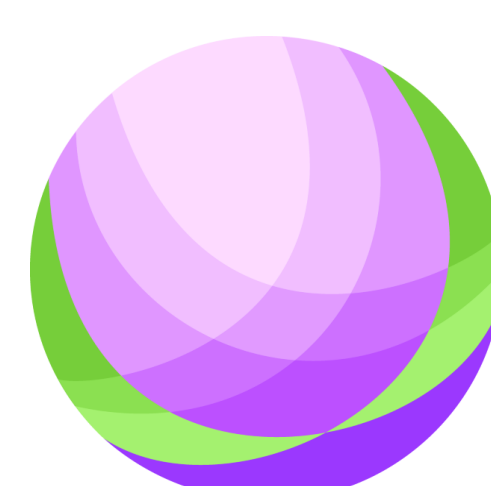
Conclusion

The increasing trend in prevalence in non-metropolitan areas may indicate improvements in access to abortion care.

Finding of disparities in abortion trends highlights a need to understand and address potential barriers to abortion access and uptake of contraception.



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