



HIV/STI Surveillance Research
Center, and WHO Collaborating
Center for HIV Surveillance



Islamic Republic of Iran
Ministry of Health
and Medical Education



Kerman University
of Medical Sciences



Drug use patterns, injection risk behaviours and harm reduction service utilization among people who inject drugs in Iran: results from three consecutive bio-behavioral surveillance surveys

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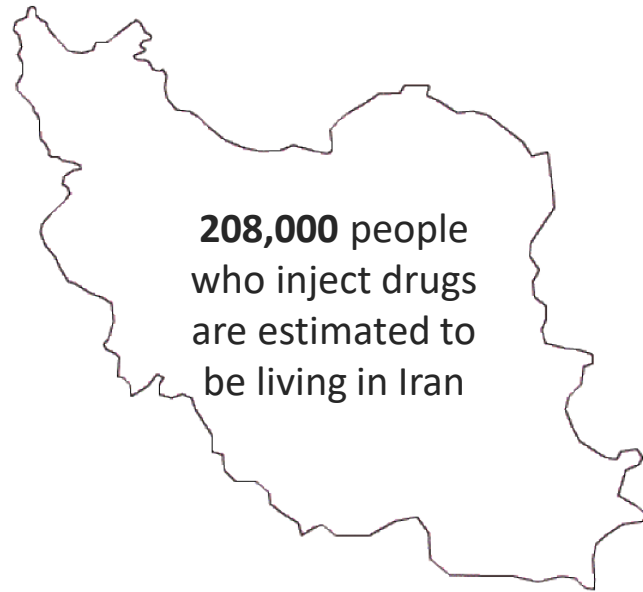
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Disclosure of Interest

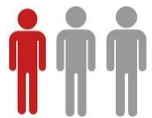
- Nothing to disclose



Background



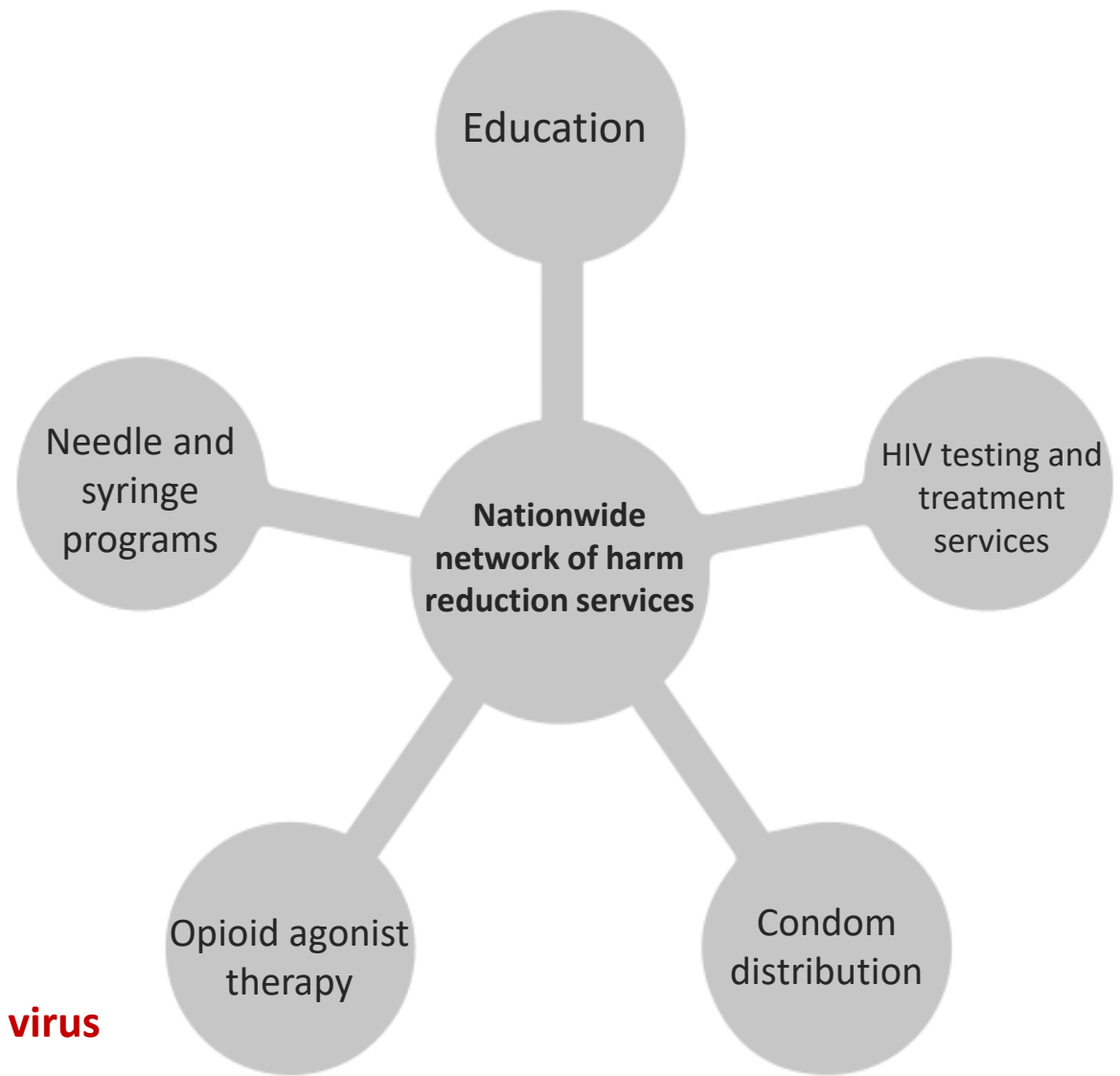
1 in 6 living with **HIV**



1 in 3 has active **hepatitis B virus**



1 in 2 is currently infected with **hepatitis C virus**



Monitoring changes in the patterns of drug use and high-risk injection practices can help policymakers identify and implement appropriate programs to minimize harms and ensure programs are targeted at those at greater risk



Objectives



1- To evaluate patterns of drug use, injection-related risk behaviours, and harm reduction service utilization among people who inject drugs during the last decade from 2010 to 2020

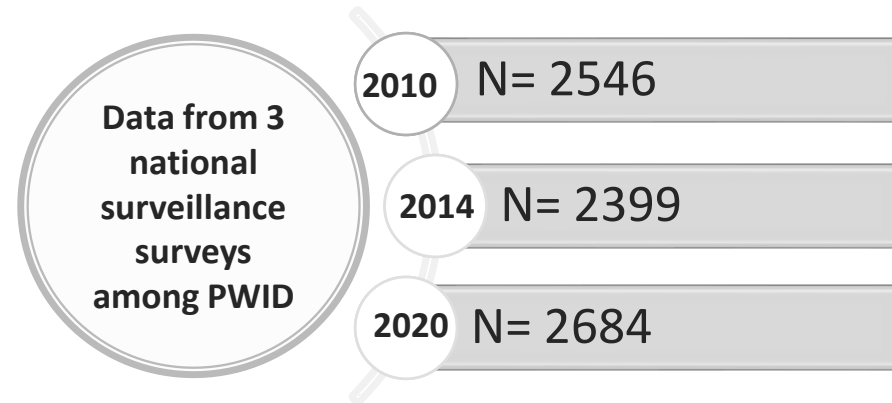


2- To assess the correlates of recent receptive sharing of needles and/or syringes (within the last 3 months) among people who inject drugs (2020)



Methods

In Iran, available data on drug use, injection risk behaviours, and harm reduction service uptake among people who inject drugs are mainly collected through bio-behavioural surveillance surveys.



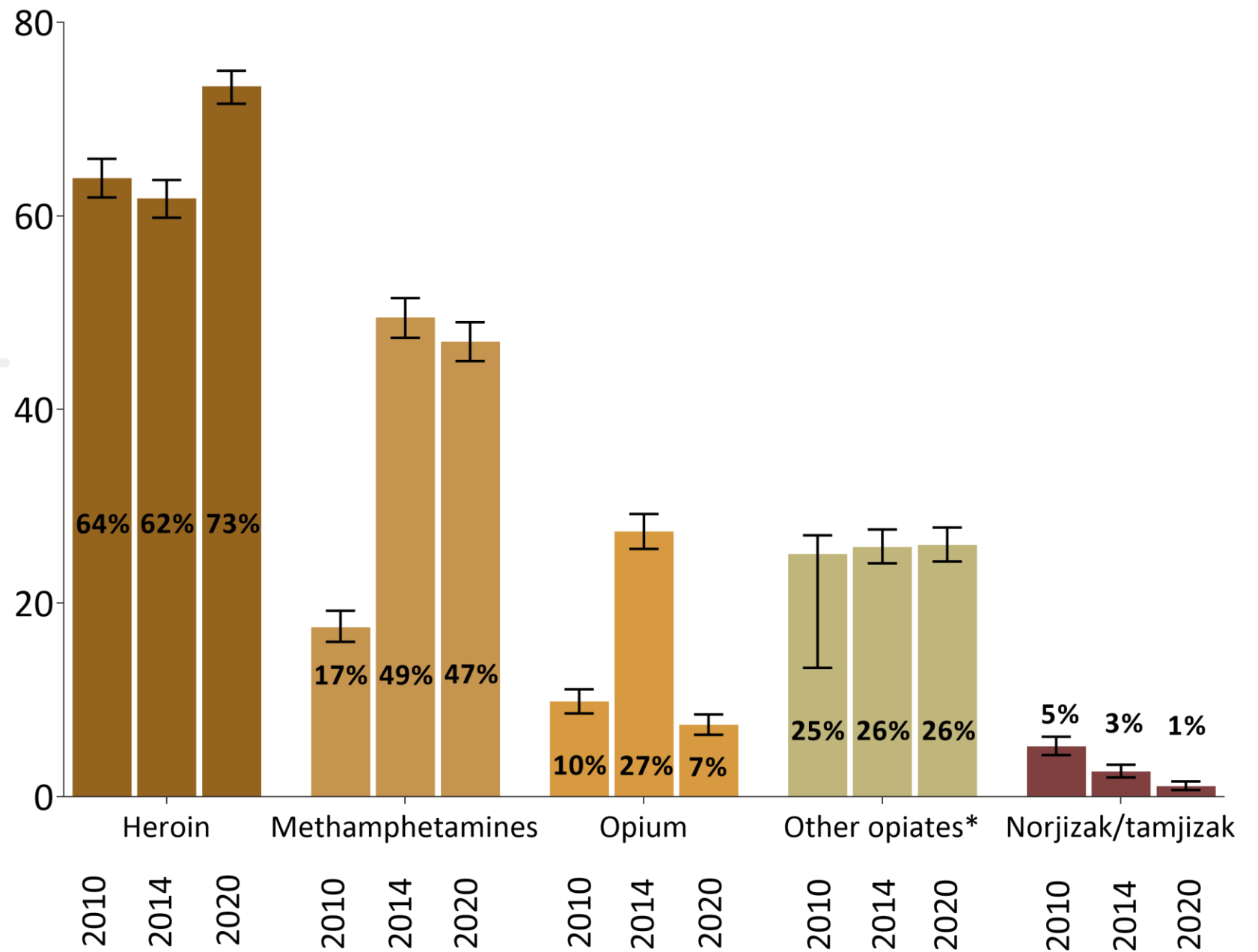
- Patterns of drug use, injection risk behaviours and harm reduction service utilization were identified and compared between years.
- We applied logistic regression models to evaluate factors associated with recent needle and/or syringe sharing in 2020.



Results



Drug use patterns

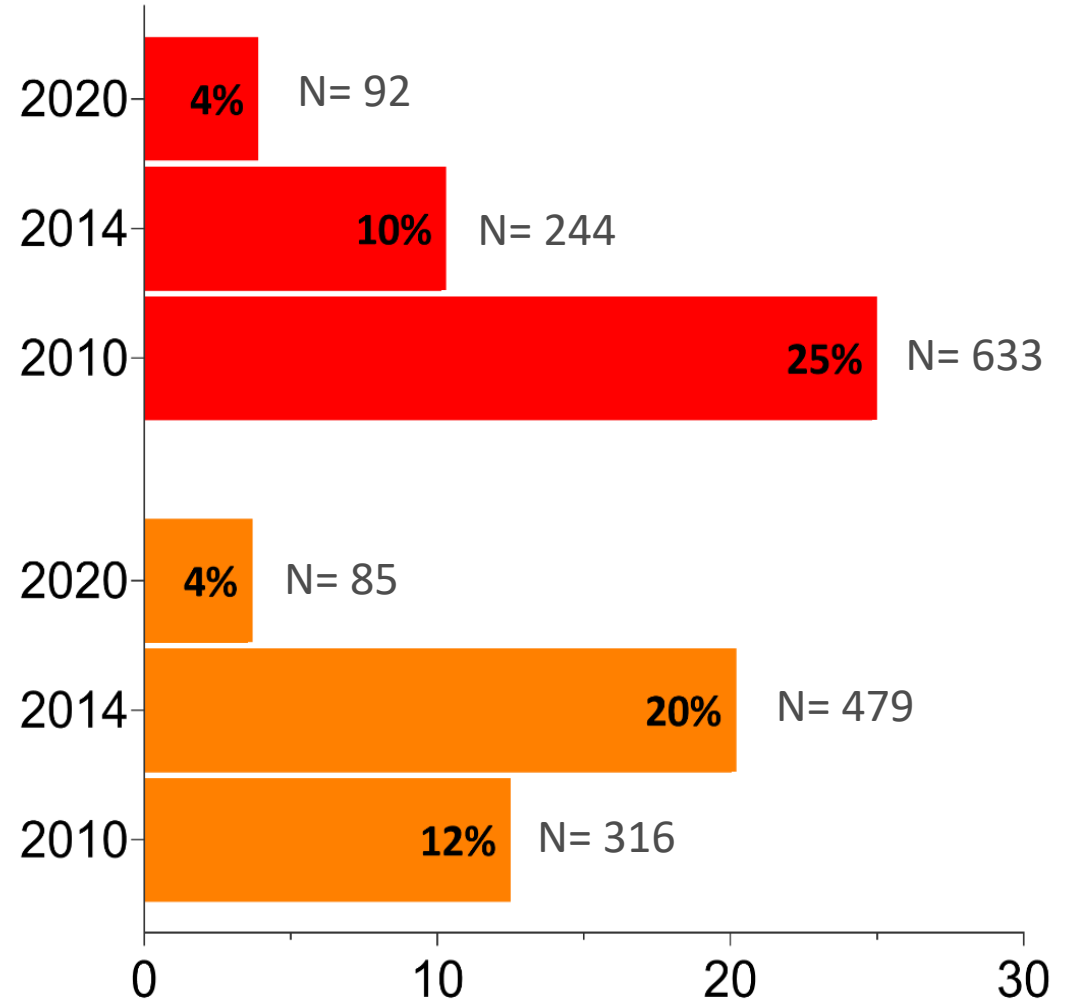


*Other opiates: Street methadone/buprenorphine, opium sap or syrup.

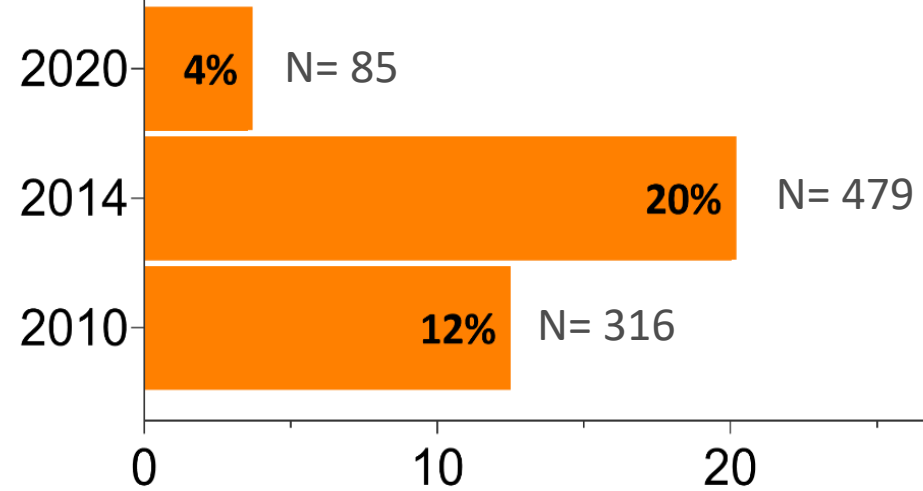


Injecting risk behaviours

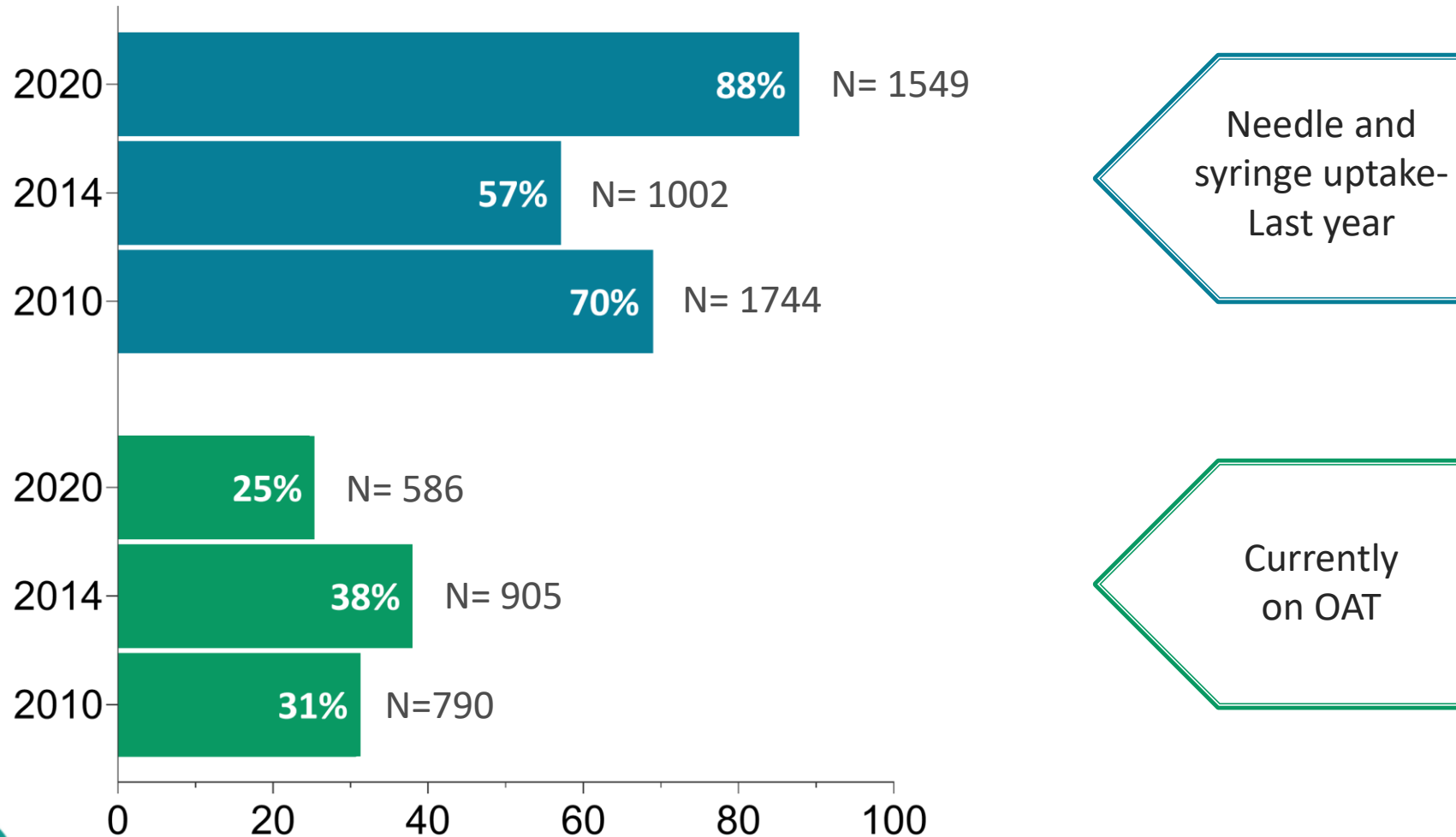
Recent needle
and syringe
sharing



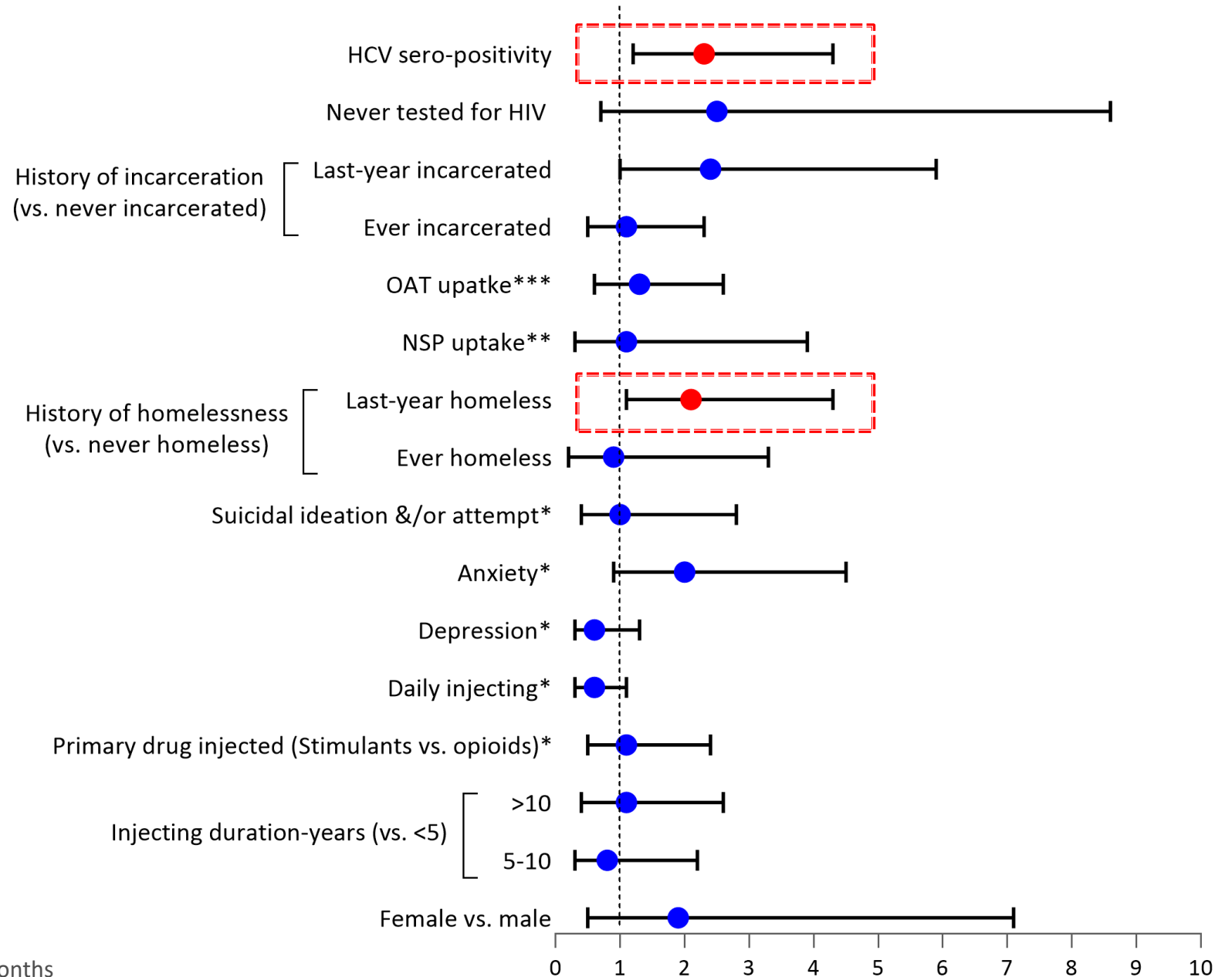
Recent sharing
of other
equipment



Harm reduction service utilization



Correlates of recent needle and syringe sharing in 2020



* In the last 3 months

**Free needle and/or syringe uptake in the last year

*** Currently on opioid agonist therapy





Conclusion

- ✓ Heroin remains the main drug consumed by people who inject drugs in Iran
- ✓ Considerable shifts from traditional use of opium to amphetamine-type drugs were observed
- ✓ Harm reduction services need to be tailored to target and respond to current changes in drug use in Iran
- ✓ An increase in needle and syringe uptake has recently occurred among people who inject drugs in Iran
- ✓ Recent needle and syringe sharing has substantially decreased
- ✓ Higher levels of injection risk among those with last-year homelessness and HCV seropositivity
- ✓ There is need for interventions addressing structural barriers among people who inject drugs to ensure safe injecting practices among this population



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