



Kirby Institute

High uptake of direct-acting antiviral therapy for HCV and reduction in population-level viremic prevalence: Progress toward achieving HCV elimination among people who inject drugs

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Funding Source / Disclosures

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Disclosures: none

Background/Aims

Background: Australia has had unrestricted government subsidised direct-acting antiviral therapy for HCV since March 2016.

Aims: Gauge the progress toward eliminating HCV among people who inject drugs by measuring

- **HCV treatment uptake**
- **Current HCV infection**

Methods:



ETHOS ENGAGE

ETHOS Engage- observational cohort study collecting baseline data on HCV treatment uptake and current prevalence

Location: opioid substitution treatment (OST) clinics, needle and syringe provision sites throughout Australia

Inclusion criteria:

- 18 years of age or older;
- Written informed consent;
- History of injecting drug use;
- Recent injecting drug use (previous 6 months) OR currently receiving OST.

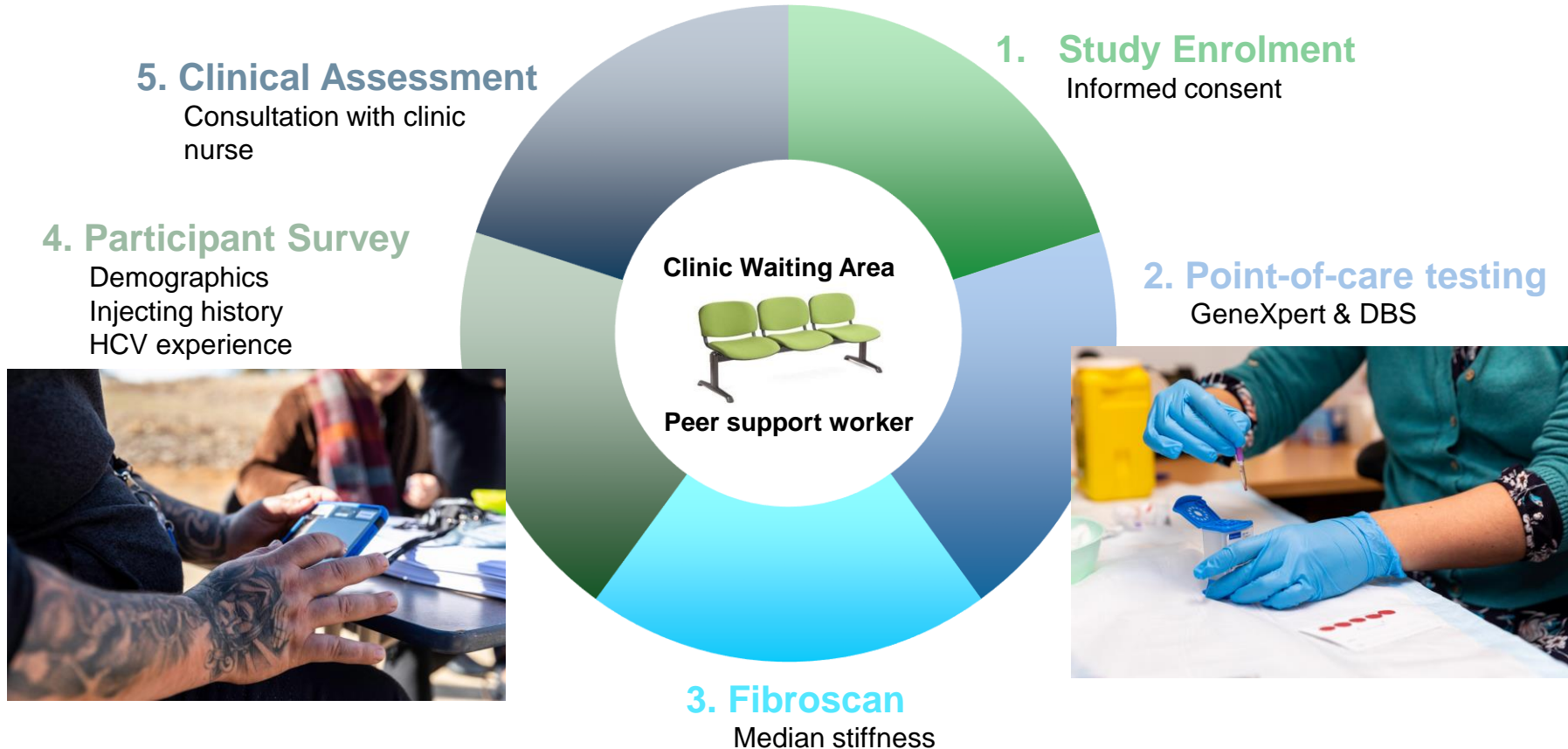
Exclusion criteria:

- Women who are pregnant

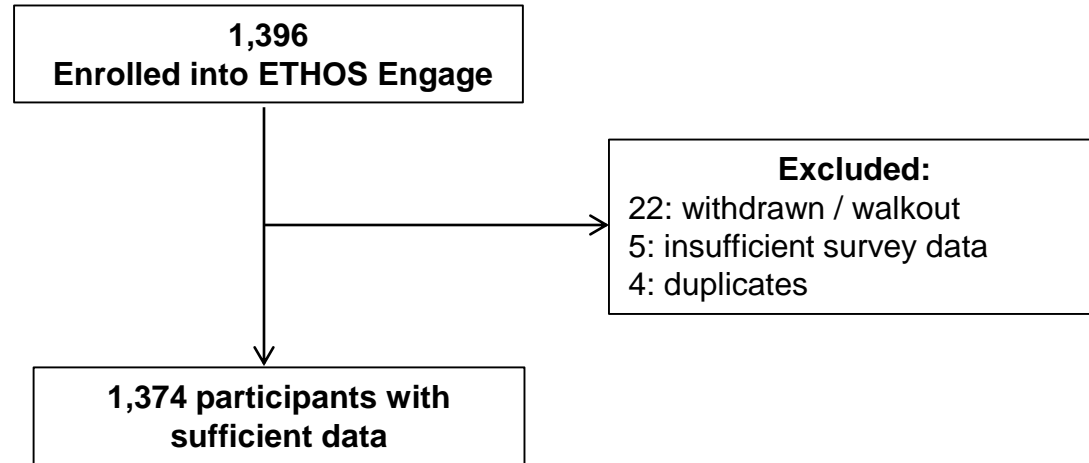
Campaign days: May 2018 – September 2019

Data to: 25 July 2019, 23/25 sites

Methods: ETHOS Engage campaign days



ETHOS Engage Results: Participant Disposition

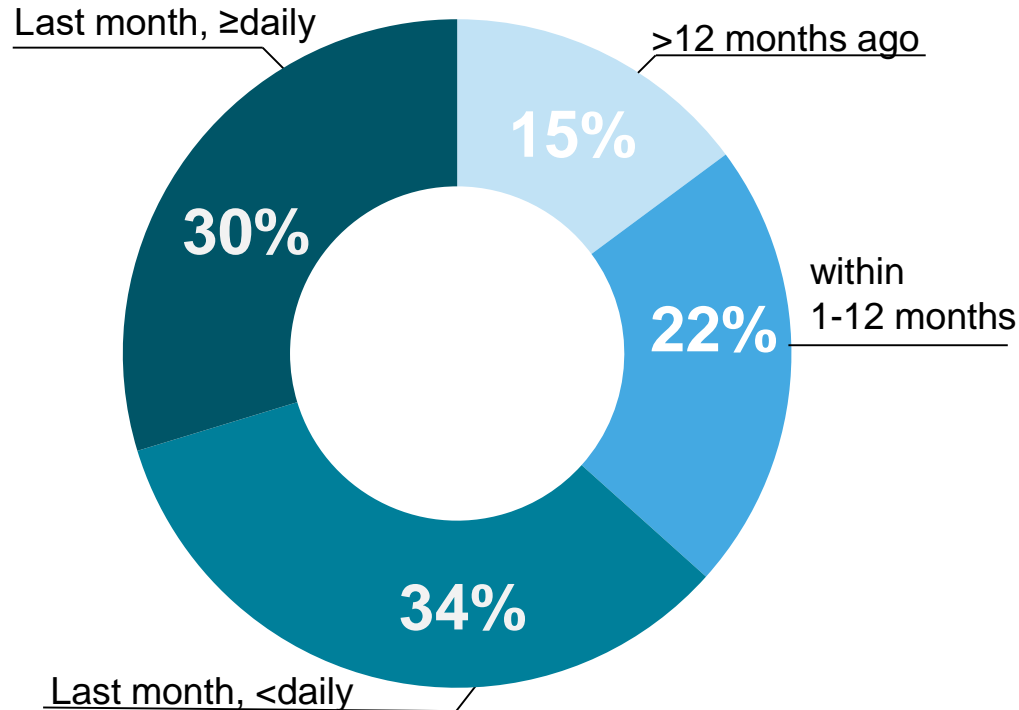


ETHOS Engage Results: Demographics

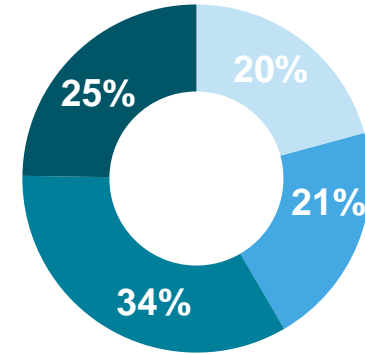
- ❖ 1,374 participants
Mean age: 43 (SD: 10); 64% male; 24% Indigenous ethnicity
- ❖ 155 (11%) currently **homeless**
- ❖ 941 (68%) ever **imprisoned**,
257 (19%) within last year
- ❖ 1010 (74%) currently receiving **opioid substitution therapy**
- ❖ 506 (37%) **excessive alcohol consumption**
as defined using AUDIT-C

ETHOS Engage Results: Injecting recency

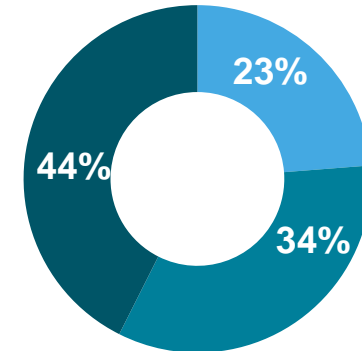
Total population:



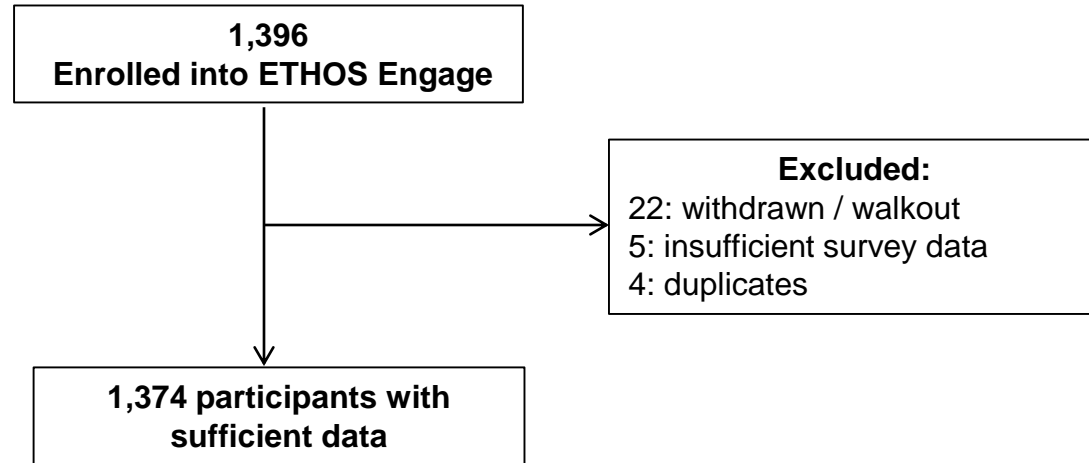
Current OST (n=1,010):



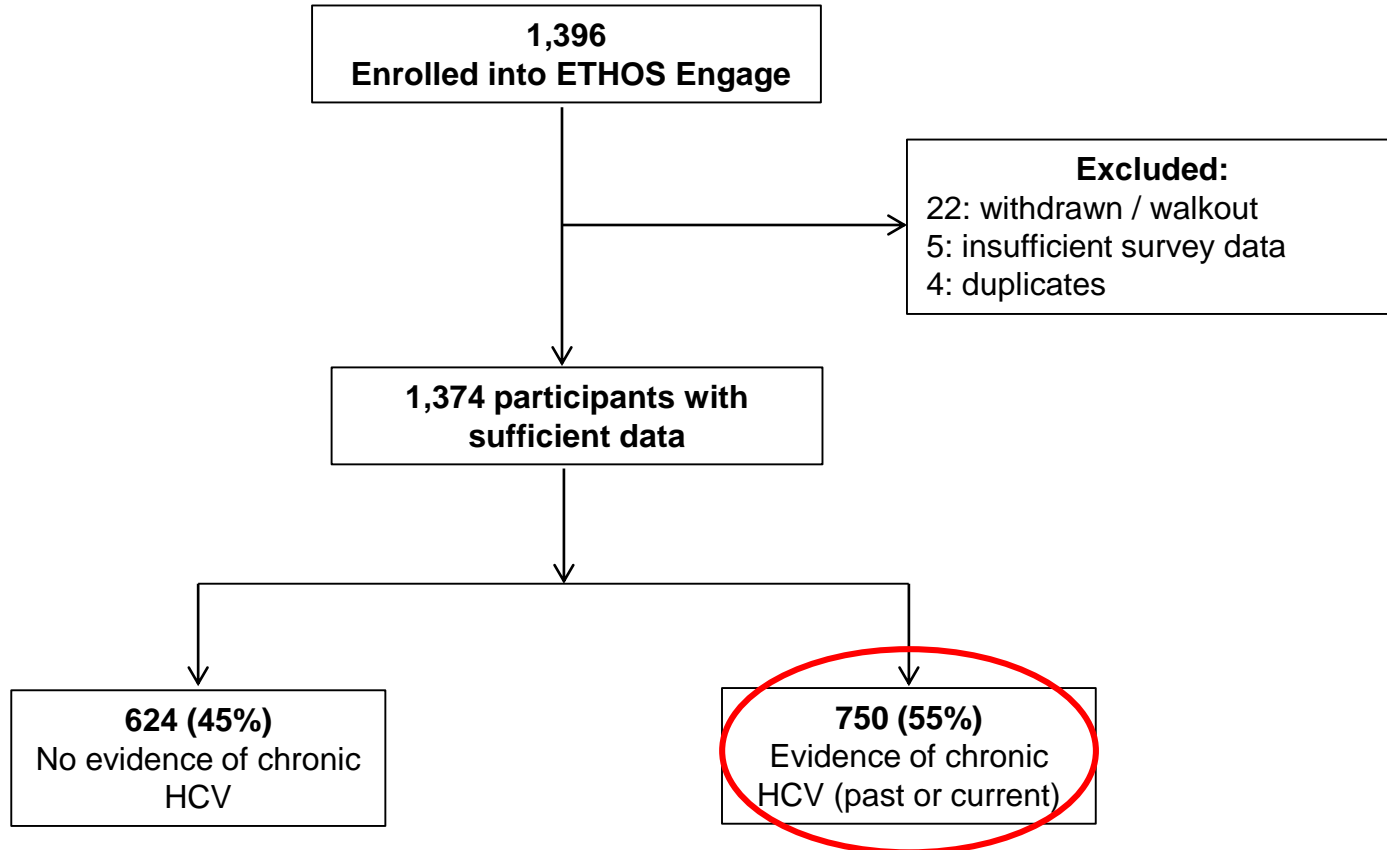
No current OST (n=364):



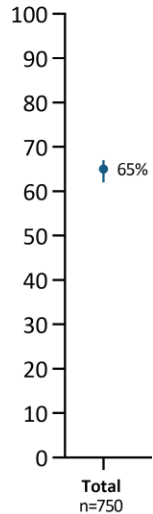
ETHOS Engage Results: Participant Disposition



ETHOS Engage Results: Participant Disposition



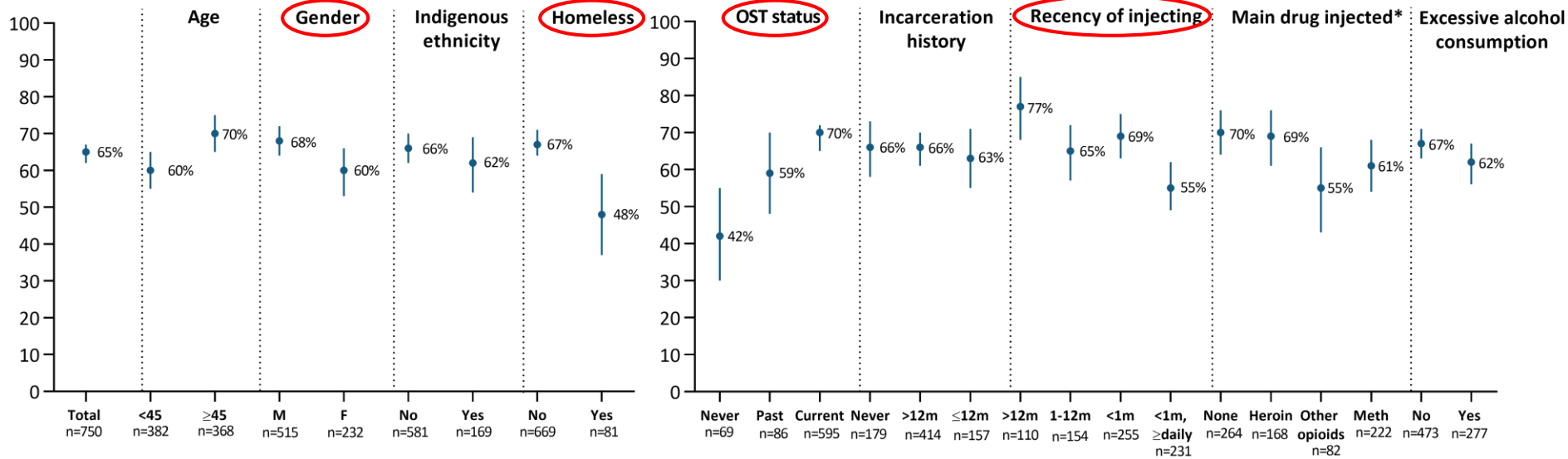
ETHOS Engage Results: HCV treatment uptake



Chronic HCV (ever) determined by combination of results obtained by point of care serology and self-reported HCV status

*Main drug injected in last month, excludes data for participants injecting other drugs (n=14); variable not used in adjusted analysis due to collinearity with recency of injecting

ETHOS Engage Results: HCV treatment uptake



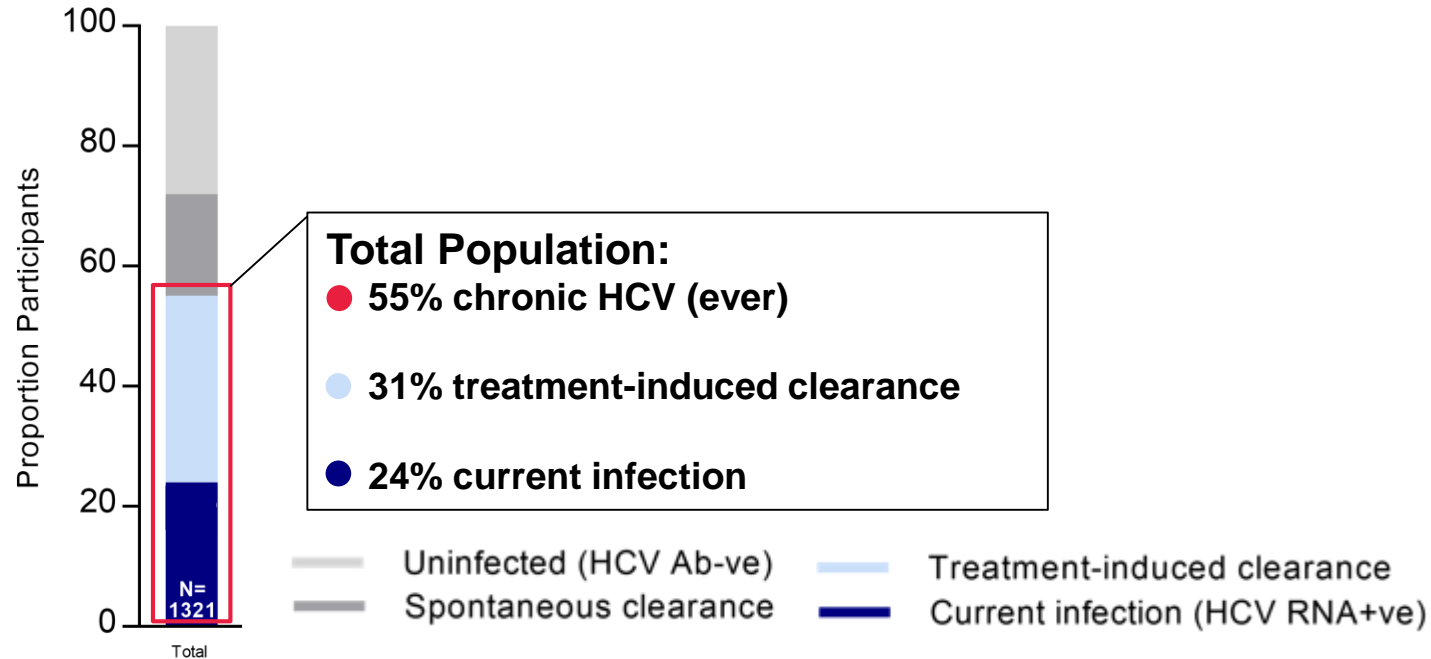
Factors associated with treatment uptake:

- **Female**, aOR: 0.67, 95%CI: 0.47 – 0.95
- **Homelessness**, aOR: 0.59, 95%CI: 0.38 – 0.96
- **Current OST**, aOR: 2.54, 95%CI: 1.48 – 4.39
- **≥Daily IDU**, aOR: 0.50, 95%CI: 0.29 – 0.86

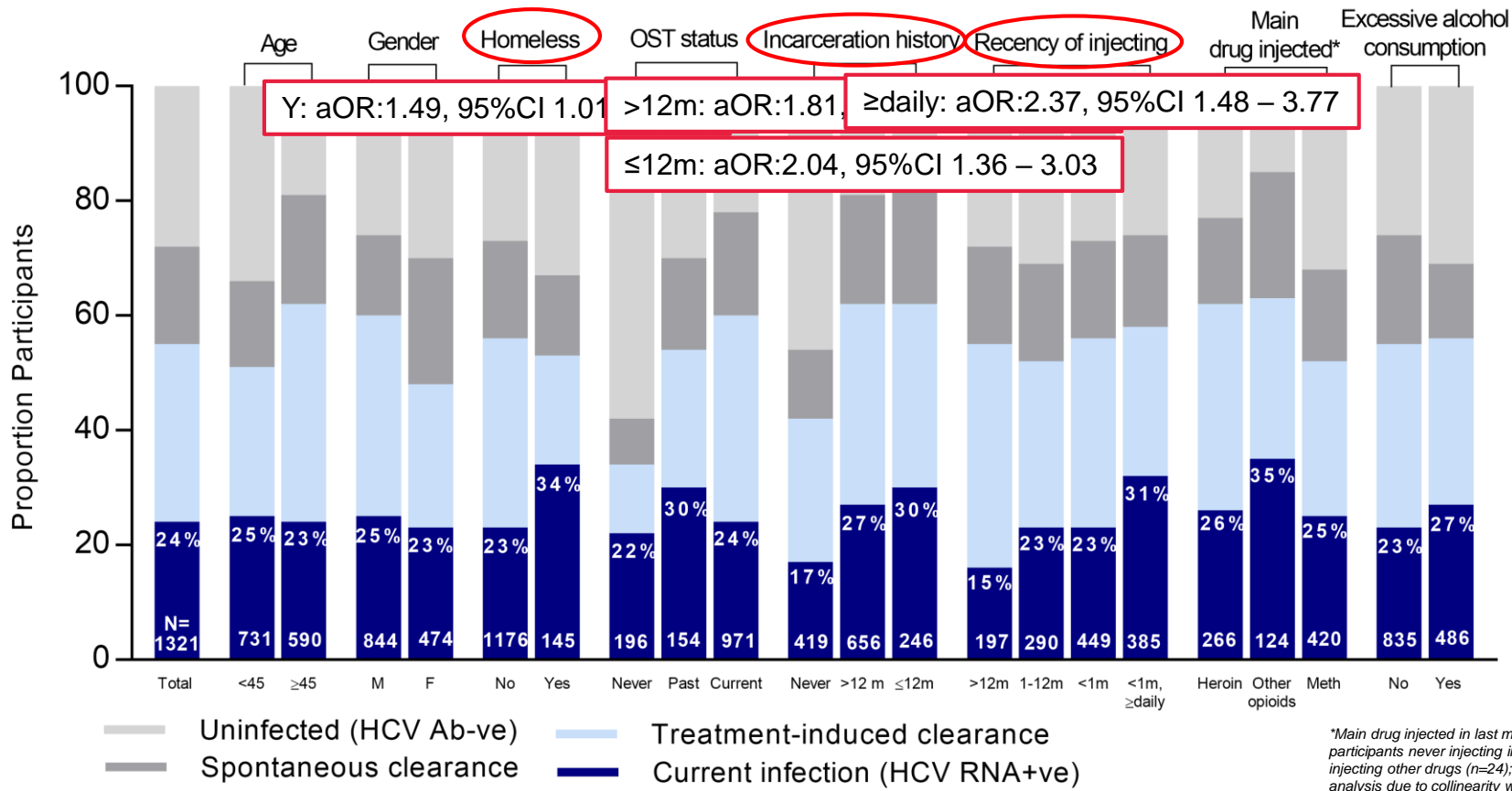
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ETHOS Engage Results: Current HCV prevalence



ETHOS Engage Results: Current HCV prevalence



Conclusions

- Unrestricted DAA access in Australia has produced high treatment uptake among people who inject drugs, across marginalised populations
- High treatment uptake has led to subsequent reduction of HCV viremic prevalence, with 56% of those ever chronically infected having evidence of treatment-induced clearance
- To maintain momentum toward HCV elimination and achieve targets, sub-populations with significantly higher viremia and those significantly less likely to initiate HCV therapy may require additional support to encourage engagement with HCV care

ETHOS Engage: Future direction



follow us:
@ETHOSII

Wave 1:

- **Complete!**
- Treatment uptake and outcomes assessed

Wave 2:

- Revisiting all sites
- POC RNA test results available same day
- Prescriber onsite



ETHOS ENGAGE



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