

# Flux Study COVID-19 Diary Report

Report 07: Reporting week ending 02 May 2021

Prepared by Daniel Storer

On behalf of the BRISE Reference Group for the Flux Study

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## Collaborating Organisations

COVID-19 Diary Study is a collaboration between the Kirby Institute, the National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre (NDARC), the Australian Research Centre in Sex Health and Society (ARCSHS), the Centre for Social Research in Health (CSRH), University of Auckland, Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations (AFAO), National LGBTI Health Alliance, ACON, and Thorne Harbour Health.

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## Executive summary

This is a report on the findings from the Flux Study COVID-19 Diary for the period 11<sup>th</sup> January 2021 to 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2021. The report is a summary of data collected during the COVID-19 pandemic in Australia among gay and bisexual men (GBM). Weekly data are collected on key sexual and other risk behaviours, and monthly data collected on health seeking practices and social connectedness in relation to COVID-19.

Between 413 and 456 GBM completed online diary entries at weekly intervals followed by an extended weekly diary at weeks 40, 44, 48 and 52.

### Summary of findings:

- Men in NSW continue to report higher partner numbers than men in other jurisdictions overall, with an average of 1.2 sexual partners over the reporting period.
- An average of 52% of men reported any type of sex each week over the reporting period, peaking at 58.9% in week 48.
- An average of 34.3% of men reported any sex with fuckbuddies/friends with benefits during the reporting period. This proportion peaked in week 48 at 41.4%.
- Among men reporting condomless anal intercourse with more than one fuckbuddy/friend with benefits/any casual partners the average proportion not protected by biomedical prevention for receptive CLAI was 16.2% and for insertive CLAI was 17.2%.
- Overall, the proportion of men in NSW that report sex with more than one fuckbuddy/friends with benefits/any casual partners continues to be higher than other jurisdictions in this reporting period.
- Reporting engagement in group sex in the reporting period peaked at one in seven men in week 48.
- PrEP use among non HIV-positive men remained stable over the reporting period and peaked in week 47 at 41.6%.

- Between 66.7% and 82.7% of non-HIV-positive men reporting CLAI with more than one fuckbuddy/friend with benefits/any casual partners were protected by PrEP in the reporting period.
- Recent (in the past seven days) testing for COVID-19 has been between 2.3-6.3% of participants over the reporting period.
- The proportion of men who indicated they were coping poorly with the current COVID-19 crisis over the reporting period has decreased slightly from approximately one in six men at week 37 and one in seven in week 52.
- During the reporting period, men in Victoria were more likely to indicate they were coping poorly and peaked at 33.3% in week 41, which may be due to a snap five-day lockdown at the time.
- Over the reporting period, the number of hours participants reported spending each day communicating with gay male friends has remained fairly consistent with an average of 5.3% reporting no contact with gay male friends.
- Over the reporting period, an average of one in five men indicated they had been tested for STIs or HIV.

## Previous reports

- [Flux Study COVID-19 Diary Monthly Report 06](#): 16 November 2020 to 10 January 2021
- [Flux Study COVID-19 Diary Monthly Report 05](#): 7 September 2020 to 15 November 2020
- [Flux Study COVID-19 Diary Monthly Report 04](#): 10 May 2020 to 6 September 2020
- [Flux Study COVID-19 Diary Monthly Report 03](#): 13 July 2020 to 9 August 2020
- [Flux Study COVID-19 Diary Monthly Report 02](#): 15 June 2020 to 12 July 2020
- [Flux Study COVID-19 Diary Monthly Report 01](#): 3 May 2020 to 14 June 2020

## Table of contents

Background .....	8
Changes in restriction by study week .....	8
Responses .....	16
Geographic distribution .....	18
Sample characteristics .....	19
Sexual Behaviour .....	21
PrEP and PEP use .....	30
COVID-19 Testing .....	34
Social connectedness .....	37
Health-seeking behaviour .....	43
Appendix A – Methods .....	44
Appendix B – Glossary .....	46

## List of figures

Figure 1. Onset of concern about COVID-19 by date and cumulative frequency .....	8
Figure 2. Number of respondents each week (by state and total)* .....	17

Figure 3. State of residence.....	18
Figure 4. Mean number of sexual partners by week of response .....	23
Figure 5a. Proportion of men engaging in sex by partner type.....	26
Figure 5b. Proportion of men in NSW, Victoria, Queensland and other jurisdictions engaging in sex with >1 FB/any CPs.....	27
Figure 5c. Proportion of men engaging in CLAI among men reporting sex with >1 FB/any CPs ..	28
Figure 6. Proportion of non HIV-positive men using PrEP.....	32
Figure 7. Proportion of men having CLAI with multiple non-relationship partners using PrEP .....	33
Figure 8. Proportion of men tested for COVID-19 in previous seven days.....	35
Figure 9. Proportion of men with no contact with gay male friends and coping poorly with COVID-19 .....	40
Figure 10. Time spent communicating with gay male friends.....	42

## List of tables

Table 1. Responses.....	16
Table 2. Geographic distribution of sample (*note: new enrolments began in Week 8).....	18
Table 3a. Sample characteristics .....	19
Table 3b. Employment status .....	20
Table 4. Weekly number of sexual partners .....	22
Table 5. Sex by partner type and CLAI for men reporting sex with multiple (>1) FB/any CP .....	24
Table 6. Sex within the household and description of partners as FBs/FWBs .....	29
Table 7. PrEP and PEP use among non HIV-positive men .....	30
Table 8. Proportion of men reporting testing for COVID-19 in the previous seven days .....	34
Table 9. COVID-19 test type .....	36
Table 10. Proportion of men having no contact with friends and family .....	37

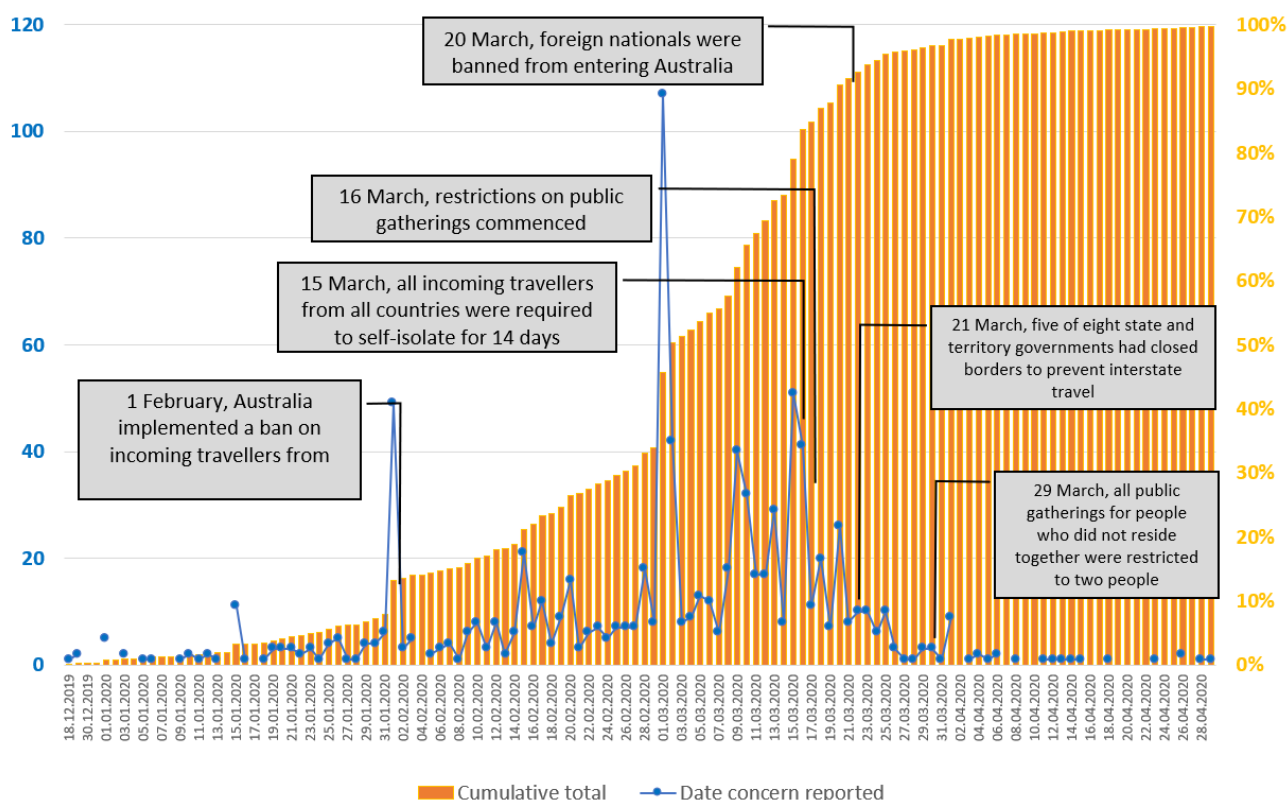
Table 11. Proportion of men coping poorly by jurisdiction and total.....39

Table 12. Time spent communicating with gay male friends among all respondents ..... 41

## Background

At baseline, gay and bisexual men reported the date they became concerned about the COVID-19 pandemic. Figure 1 details the cumulative percentage as men became concerned and the date concern started. This is accompanied by implementation of restrictions around the country.

Figure 1. Onset of concern about COVID-19 by date and cumulative frequency



## Changes in restriction by study week

The COVID-19 Diary Study commenced collecting weekly diary entries from participants on 10<sup>th</sup> May 2020. Each Sunday thereafter participants are asked to complete their diary entries within 48 hours of receiving an emailed invitation. Below are the details of changes in restrictions for NSW and lockdowns where they have occurred in specific jurisdictions across Australia and the easing restrictions once lockdowns end from Weeks 37-52 of the study.

### Week 37 (11-17 January 2021)

NSW: No changes.



Queensland: From 11 January, Greater Brisbane's strict lockdown ends. Masks must be worn in shopping centres, supermarkets, gyms, workplaces where social distancing is not possible, places of worship, libraries, public transport, taxis and ride share services. Businesses and venues are now allowed one person per four square metres inside and one person per two square metres outside, eating and drinking is only allowed if seated and smaller venues up to 200sqm can have up to 50 people subject to the one person per two square metre rule. Gatherings in households and public spaces allowed up to 20 people, weddings and funerals can have up to 100 people with no restriction on dancing at weddings, indoor concert venues and theatres can have 50% capacity or one person per four square metres whichever is greater, and outdoors can have 50% capacity with COVID-safe plans.

#### **Week 38 (18-24 January 2021)**

NSW: No changes.

#### **Week 39 (25-31 January 2021)**

NSW: From 29 January for the Greater Sydney region, including Wollongong, Central coast and the Blue Mountains: household visitors increase to 30; outdoors gatherings can have 50 people; weddings and funerals allowed 300 seated guests maximum subject to the one person per four square metre rule, no singing or dancing allowed except for 20 nominated people in the wedding party can dance; hospitality venues, places of worship, corporate event venues and all other venues are subject to the one person per four square metre rule, all guests must be seated and no singing or dancing is allowed; smaller hospitality venues are allowed at least 25 people; singing indoors is limited to five people; masks no longer mandated in retail venues but recommended, but remain compulsory for hospitality staff, when on public transport, in places of worship, hairdressers, beauticians and gaming rooms; and age care facilities and other health settings, including hospitals, received tailored advice from NSW Health concerning mask wearing.

WA: From 6pm 31 January. The Perth, Peel and South-West regions enter a five-day lockdown until 6pm 5 February. Residents in these regions are required to stay at home unless for the

following reasons: work, where this cannot be done from home; shopping for essential groceries, medicine and supplies; medical or healthcare needs including compassionate requirements and looking after the vulnerable; and exercise with one other person, limited to one hour per day within your neighbourhood and wearing a mask. Schools are also closed for the duration of the lockdown.

#### **Week 40 (1-7 February 2021)**

NSW: No changes.

WA: From 6pm 5 February, metropolitan Perth, Peel and the South-West region go into a five-day lockdown. Residents are required to stay at home unless for the following reasons: work if not able to be done from home or remotely; shopping for essential items; medical or health care needs including for compassionate reasons; and exercise with one other person, limited to an hour a day in the resident's neighbourhood and masks must be worn.

#### **Week 41 (8-14 February 2021)**

NSW: From 12 February for the Greater Sydney region including Wollongong, Central Coast and the Blue Mountains capacity limits at all venues, except gyms, can now be one person per two square metres. Weddings and funerals are still subject to a maximum capacity of 300 people. Masks are only mandatory on public transport but are strongly encouraged for indoor venues where social distancing is not possible.

Victoria: From 13 February, the entire state moves back to Stage 4 restrictions for five days, including masks to be whenever leaving home, indoors and outdoors. All non-essential retail closes, all schools return to online learning, gyms, pools, community centres, entertainment venues and libraries all close. Weddings must be postponed, and funerals can go ahead with 10 people.

WA: From 14 February, restrictions in Perth and Peel region will return to pre-lockdown. Contact registers are mandatory for businesses and venues, no required to continue to wear masks and no restriction on travel within WA.

#### **Week 42 (15-21 February 2021)**

NSW: No changes.

Victoria: From 18 February, return to largely restrictions as before with some changes. No more than five visitors allowed in a home per day, and public gatherings limited to 20 people. Visits to aged care homes and hospitals limited to one household per day visiting. Masks still required everywhere indoors except at home, and outdoors if physical distancing is not possible.

#### **Week 43 (22-28 February 2021) – vaccine rollout begins**

NSW: From 26 February: 50 visitors are allowed in homes; 30 people at a time allowed to dance at weddings, with rotation on and off the dancefloor; gyms allowed up to 50 people subject to the one person per four square metre rule; up to 30 singing performers indoors allowed, subject to physical distancing; singing by congregants allowed in places of worship if masks are worn and subject to one person per four square metre rule; and cinemas can increase to 100% capacity.

Victoria: From 27 February, the state returns to previous COVIDSafe settings. This includes: masks only required on public transport, rideshare and taxis, aged care facilities and in some larger retail settings; homes able to host up to 30 people per day; outdoor gatherings in public spaces increased to 100; office capacities increase to 75% across public and private sectors; density limits in hospitality venues, beauty services and retail businesses remain at one person per two square metres as long as QR codes are used for record keeping; funerals and weddings are subject to one person per two square metres; the same rules apply for nightclubs and community facilities; and gyms density limits remains at one person per four square metres, with exercise classes limited to 50 indoors and 100 outdoors.

#### **Week 44 (1-7 March 2021)**

NSW: No changes.

#### **Week 45 (8-14 March 2021)**

NSW: No changes.

Queensland: From 8 March, up to 200 people or one person per two square metres, whichever is greater, can attend a wedding or funeral.

#### **Week 46 (15-21 March 2021)**

NSW: No changes.

#### **Week 47 (22-28 March 2021)**

NSW: No changes.

#### **Week 48 (29 March-4 April 2021)**

NSW: From 29 March, the following changes to restrictions will apply: no caps on funerals and weddings; no restrictions on singing including places of worship; no restrictions on dancing including at weddings and in pubs and nightclubs; no cap on visitors in the home; 200 people allowed for personal outdoor public gatherings; all venues to move to one person per two square metre rule; 100% seated capacity at entertainment venues including stadiums and theatres; mask use including on public transport will move to 'strongly recommended'. From 31 March, the Byron, Ballina, Tweed and Lismore Local Government Areas are asked not to travel outside of these areas, masks in public indoor areas will be mandatory, people will have to remain seated in hospitality venues, and a maximum of 30 people will be allowed in homes.

Queensland: From 29 March, Greater Brisbane entered a three-day lockdown. The only reasons to leave home are to obtain essential goods or services, including healthcare; exercise; attending essential work or childcare; and assisting vulnerable persons. Face masks must be carried at all times and be worn in indoor spaces outside of the home. From 1 April, Greater Brisbane lockdown finishes with some restrictions remaining. Until 15 April, all Queenslanders must follow

the following restrictions: carry a face mask at all times when they leave home and masks must be worn in indoor settings; one person per two square metres in businesses; restaurants, cafes, bars and nightclubs can open for indoor eating and drinking whilst seated and outdoor eating and drinking whilst standing, and outdoor dancing; a maximum of 30 people allowed in households; up to 500 people can gather in outside public spaces; outdoor events with more than 500 people can continue with a COVID safe plan and masks must be worn if physical distancing not possible; no visitors allowed into aged care, hospitals, disability care or correctional facilities during the period except for end of life visits; and church services can proceed with 100% capacity with ticketed and allocated seating or adhere to one person per two square metres.

#### **Week 49 (5-11 April 2021)**

NSW: No changes.

#### **Week 50 (12-18 April 2021)**

NSW: No changes.

Queensland: From 15 April, masks now only mandatory in airports and on planes; hospital patients, aged care and disability accommodation residents and prison inmates can resume receiving visitors as normal; gatherings in private residences increase to 100; no restrictions on gatherings in public spaces; Retail food venues, entertainment venues and high-risk businesses can open for standing when eating and drinking for indoors and outdoors; all restrictions for outdoor based business and activities will be removed, except for dance and music festivals; and dancing is allowed under the one person per two square metre rule and physical distancing both indoors and outdoors.

#### **Week 51 (19-25 April 2021)**

NSW: Travellers entering NSW from WA and have been to a place of high concern since 24 April must follow entry restrictions based on category of place of concern and only NSW residents are able to enter.

WA: From 6pm 23 April, Perth and Peel regions enter three-day lockdown with masks mandatory in public. Residents are required to stay home unless for the following reasons: work where they are unable to from home or remotely; shopping for essential items; attend to medical or health care needs including compassionate care; and exercise with a maximum of four people for one hour a day and masks are to be worn except for vigorous exercise.

### **Week 52 (26 April – 2 May 2021)**

NSW: From 27 April, people travelling from WA no longer have to stay at home upon arrival but must complete a declaration form before entering the state and if they have been to a place of high concern must follow the public health advice for testing and self-isolation.

WA: From 27 April, Perth and Peel regions three-day lockdown ceases. The following restrictions are still in place: masks continue to be mandatory in public; 20 person limit private indoor and outdoor gatherings; one person per four square metre rule and maximum of 20 people for cafes, restaurants, bars, pubs (seated food and drink service only), beauty salons, hairdressers, barbers, entertainment venues, recreation centres, outdoor playgrounds, museums, swimming pools, and places of worship; no visitors to aged care and disability facilities and hospitals; weddings and funerals capped at 100 guests; professional and community sport, including training, can continue without spectators; travel outside the Perth and Peel regions permitted, with the exception of some remote Aboriginal communities, but masks must be worn; elective surgery can continue for category 1 and urgent category 2 procedures; and schools, childcare centres, TAFEs reopening with masks mandatory for all school staff and secondary students. From 1 May, the following eased restrictions are in place: masks only required outdoors where physical distancing not possible and still required at indoor public venues; anyone who has been to the Perth or Peel regions must wear a mask when in another region subject to Perth and Peel regions conditions; private gatherings increase to 30; nightclubs to reopen with one person per four square metre rule and masks mandatory; indoor and outdoor community sport can resume with spectators; indoor weddings and funerals can have up to 200 guests; outdoor gatherings can take place up to 500 people; patients in hospital or a person in aged care or disability

residential care can have one visitor per day; major stadiums can operate at 75% capacity; seated hospitality venues can provide seated service only up to 75% or the one person per two square metre rule whichever is greater; gyms, fitness centres, dance studios, beauty salons and hairdressers can open with one person per two square metre rule; public venues, including community centres, libraries, etc, can one with one person per two square metre rule; all businesses, workplaces and higher education can open; all elective surgeries can resume; places of worship, theatres, concert halls, cinemas, comedy lounges and performing arts centres can have up to 100% capacity; and the casino can reopen subject to the one person per two square metre rule.

## Responses

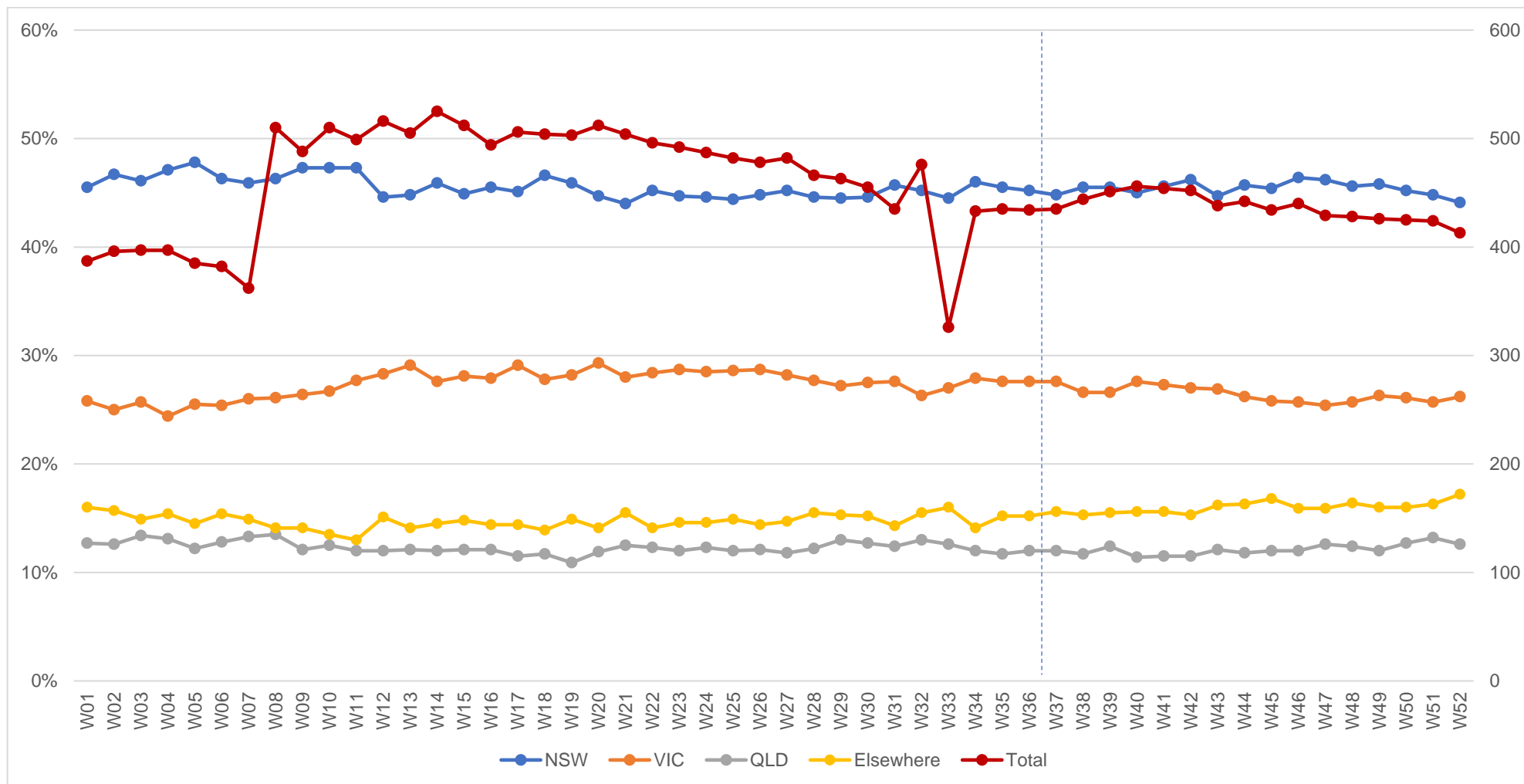
The proportion of men responding in each state and territories has remained stable in the reporting period, and indeed across the study period, with a gradual decline overall. The percentage of non-responders has increased from 38.3% to 45.9% over the reporting period. NSW has been the jurisdiction with consistently the largest proportion of responders at just under half the sample, this remained consistent over the reporting period and across the study.

Table 1. Responses

	W37	W38	W39	W40	W41	W42	W43	W44	W45	W46	W47	W48	W49	W50	W51	W52
NSW only	195 (44.8)	204 (45.9)	205 (45.5)	205 (45.0)	207 (45.6)	209 (46.2)	196 (44.7)	202 (45.7)	197 (45.4)	204 (46.4)	198 (46.2)	195 (45.6)	195 (45.8)	192 (45.2)	190 (44.8)	182 (44.1)
VIC only	120 (27.6)	120 (27.0)	120 (26.6)	126 (27.6)	124 (27.3)	121 (27.0)	118 (26.9)	116 (26.2)	112 (25.8)	113 (25.7)	109 (25.4)	110 (25.7)	112 (26.3)	111 (26.1)	109 (25.7)	108 (26.2)
QLD only	52 (12.0)	52 (11.7)	56 (12.4)	52 (11.4)	52 (11.5)	53 (11.5)	53 (12.1)	52 (11.8)	52 (12.0)	53 (12.0)	54 (12.6)	53 (12.4)	51 (12.0)	54 (12.7)	56 (13.2)	52 (12.6)
Other states/territories	68 (15.6)	68 (15.3)	70 (15.5)	73 (16.0)	71 (15.6)	69 (15.3)	71 (16.2)	72 (16.3)	73 (16.8)	70 (15.9)	68 (15.9)	70 (16.4)	68 (16.0)	68 (16.0)	69 (16.3)	71 (17.2)
<b>Total sample</b>	<b>435</b>	<b>444</b>	<b>451</b>	<b>456</b>	<b>454</b>	<b>452</b>	<b>438</b>	<b>442</b>	<b>434</b>	<b>440</b>	<b>429</b>	<b>428</b>	<b>426</b>	<b>425</b>	<b>424</b>	<b>413</b>
Initial enrolment	4	16	6	8	4	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Previous enrolment	431	428	445	448	450	451	437	441	434	440	429	428	426	425	424	413
Non-response	359	366	365	368	374	377	392	389	397	391	402	403	405	406	407	418
Cumulative total	794	826	816	824	828	829	830	831	831	831	831	831	831	831	831	831



Figure 2. Proportion of respondents by jurisdiction and total number of respondents each week\*



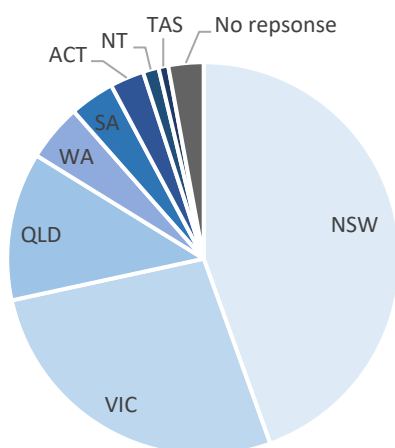
\*Note: weeks to the right of the dotted line in all figures indicates the period covered by this report in all figures

## Geographic distribution

Table 2. Geographic distribution of sample (\*note: new enrolments began in Week 8)

	Existing Flux cohort	Newly enrolled cohort*	Total
<b>State/Territory</b>			
New South Wales	275 (44.5)	95 (44.6)	370 (44.5)
Victoria	165 (26.7)	60 (28.2)	225 (27.1)
Queensland	87 (14.1)	14 (6.6)	101 (12.2)
Western Australia	33 (5.3)	6 (2.8)	39 (4.7)
South Australia	21 (3.4)	10 (4.7)	31 (3.7)
ACT	20 (3.2)	3 (1.4)	23 (2.8)
Northern Territory	9 (1.5)	2 (0.9)	11 (1.3)
Tasmania	4 (0.6)	3 (1.4)	7 (0.8)
Unknown	4 (0.6)	20 (9.4)	24 (2.9)
<b>Gay populated postcodes<sup>1</sup></b>			
>10%	127 (20.6)	8 (3.8)	135 (16.2)
5 to 9.9%	115 (18.6)	5 (2.3)	120 (14.4)
<5%	375 (60.7)	46 (21.6)	421 (50.7)
No response	1 (0.2)	154 (72.3)	155 (18.7)

Figure 3. State of residence



<sup>1</sup> We draw on Callander et al.'s work estimating the number and prevalence of adult gay men and lesbian women in Australian postcodes. 'Prevalence categories assigned relative to jurisdictionally specific percentiles: very sparse (1st percentile), moderately sparse (1st–50th percentile), moderately populated (50th–95th percentile), highly populated (95th–99th percentile), very highly populated (99th percentile).' Callander D, Mooney-Somers J, Keen P, Guy R, Duck T, Bavinton BR, Grulich AE, Holt M, Prestage G, 2020, 'Australian 'gayborhoods' and 'lesborhoods': a new method for estimating the number and prevalence of adult gay men and lesbian women living in each Australian postcode', *International Journal of Geographical Information Science*, pp. 1 - 17, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13658816.2019.1709973>

## Sample characteristics

Table 3a. Sample characteristics

		Existing Flux cohort	New enrolled cohort*	Total
Age				
	Mean (SD)	45.77 (13.61)	45.54 (14.92)	45.71 (13.93)
	Median	45.00	44.00	45.00
	Under 25	30 (4.9)	10 (4.7)	40 (4.8)
HIV Status				
	Positive	50 (8.1)	35 (16.4)	85 (10.2)
	Negative	551 (89.2)	152 (71.4)	703 (84.6)
	Unknown	17 (2.8)	26 (12.2)	43 (5.2)
Sexuality				
	Gay	565 (91.4)	175 (82.2)	740 (89.0)
	Bisexual	31 (5.0)	18 (8.5)	49 (5.9)
	Other/unknown	22 (3.6)	20 (9.4)	44 (5.3)
Country of birth				
	Australia	488 (79.0)	161 (75.6)	649 (78.1)
	Asia	32 (5.2)	7 (3.3)	39 (4.7)
	Other	98 (15.9)	45 (21.1)	143 (17.2)
Level of education				
	Less than year 12	20 (3.2)	6 (2.8)	26 (3.1)
	Completed year 12	61 (9.9)	24 (11.3)	85 (10.2)
	Trade certificate	78 (12.6)	23 (10.8)	99 (11.9)
	Undergraduate degree	225 (36.4)	66 (31.0)	291 (35.0)
	Postgraduate degree	232 (37.5)	85 (39.9)	317 (38.1)
	No response	4 (0.6)	9 (4.2)	13 (1.6)

\*Note: new enrolments began in week 8 and again in week 37

Table 3b. Employment status

	Week 40	Week 44	Week 48	Week 52
Laid off temporarily	7 (1.5)	3 (0.7)	2 (0.5)	2 (0.5)
Laid off completely	6 (1.3)	5 (1.1)	5 (1.1)	4 (1.0)
Reduced hours	19 (4.1)	14 (3.1)	12 (2.7)	11 (2.6)
Working from home	46 (9.9)	33 (7.3)	22 (5.0)	22 (5.2)
Redeployed due to COVID-19	1 (0.2)	2 (0.4)	1 (0.2)	2 (0.5)
Commenced new job	27 (5.8)	23 (5.1)	14 (3.2)	9 (2.1)
Returned to workplace	35 (7.5)	37 (8.2)	32 (7.3)	32 (7.6)
Increased hours	20 (4.3)	22 (4.9)	16 (3.6)	22 (5.2)
Began taking payment for sex	0 (0.0)	1 (0.2)	0 (0.0)	4 (1.0)
No changes	337 (72.8)	331 (73.7)	350 (79.4)	326 (77.6)

† Items are not mutually exclusive

## Sexual Behaviour

### *Number of sexual partners*

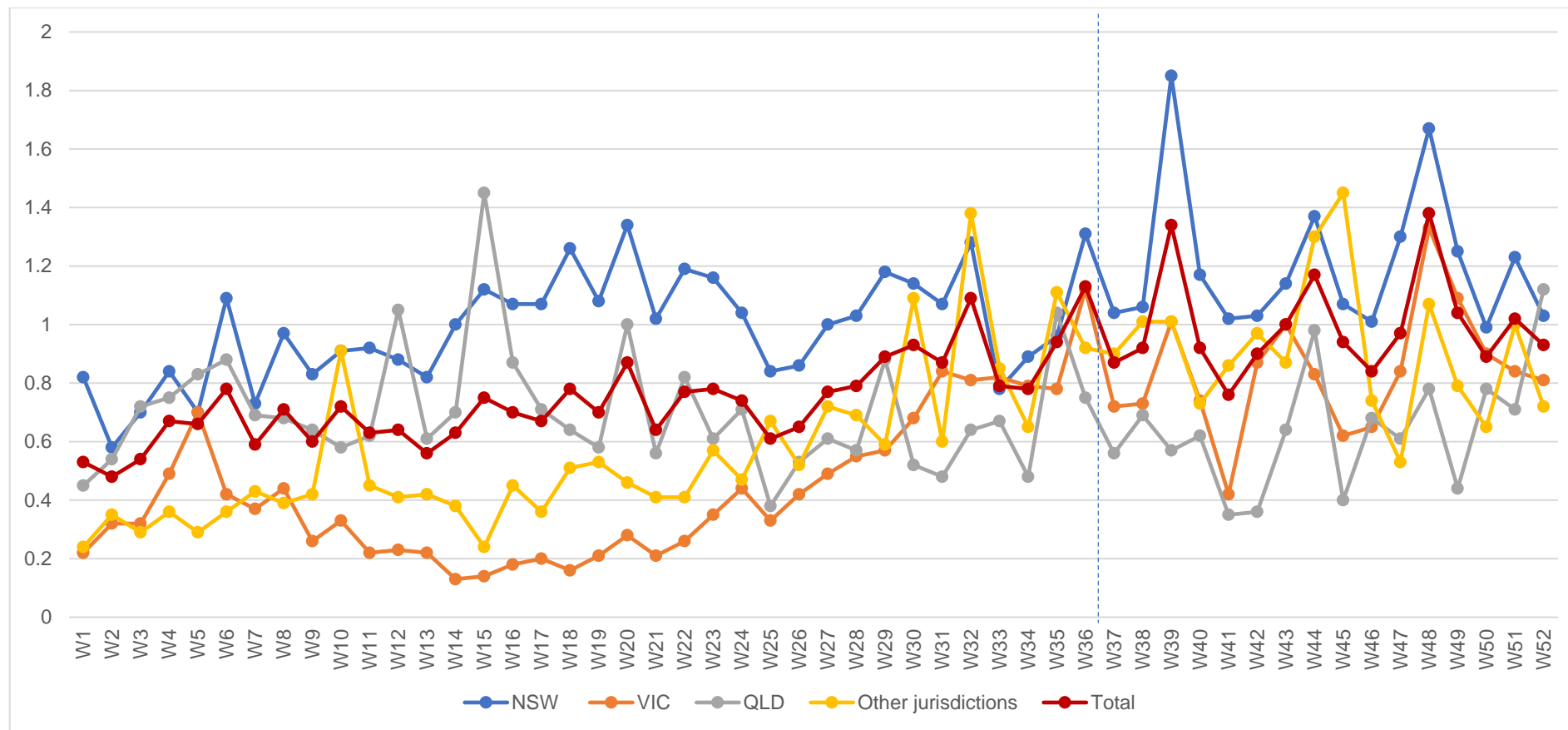
In previous reporting periods, mean number of sexual partners in the previous seven days ranged from the lowest reported in week 2 (0.75) to the highest reported in week 30 (1.35). In this reporting period, mean number of sexual partners ranged from 0.76 in week 41 to 1.38 in week 48. Among Victorian men, the mean number of sexual partners has fluctuated week on week and ranged from 0.42 in week 41 to 1.33 in week 48 over the reporting period. Men in NSW continue to report a higher mean number of partners compared to men in other jurisdictions in each week over the reporting period, except in in weeks 46 and 52 where men in Other jurisdictions and Queensland reported a higher mean number of partners, respectively.

Table 4. Weekly number of sexual partners

Mean (SD)	W37	W38	W39	W40	W41	W42	W43	W44	W45	W46	W47	W48	W49	W50	W51	W52
NSW	1.04 (2.64)	1.06 (1.84)	1.85 (12.06)	1.17 (3.07)	1.02 (2.33)	1.03 (2.11)	1.14 (2.73)	1.37 (3.14)	1.07 (1.92)	1.01 (1.85)	1.30 (2.52)	1.67 (3.46)	1.25 (2.95)	0.99 (2.03)	1.23 (3.01)	1.03 (1.98)
Victoria	0.72 (1.90)	0.73 (1.61)	1.01 (2.66)	0.74 (1.67)	0.42 (0.98)	0.87 (2.19)	1.00 (2.85)	0.83 (2.02)	0.62 (1.47)	0.65 (1.37)	0.84 (1.73)	1.33 (4.37)	1.09 (3.81)	0.90 (2.51)	0.84 (2.36)	0.81 (2.13)
QLD	0.56 (1.38)	0.69 (1.38)	0.57 (1.08)	0.62 (1.27)	0.35 (0.71)	0.36 (0.76)	0.64 (1.63)	0.98 (2.50)	0.40 (0.72)	0.68 (1.75)	0.61 (1.12)	0.78 (1.08)	0.44 (1.00)	0.78 (1.83)	0.71 (1.46)	1.12 (2.42)
Other jurisdictions	0.90 (2.62)	1.01 (3.78)	1.01 (2.04)	0.73 (1.62)	0.86 (1.94)	0.97 (2.53)	0.87 (2.43)	1.30 (3.17)	1.45 (5.61)	0.74 (1.46)	0.53 (1.31)	1.07 (1.96)	0.79 (1.62)	0.65 (1.67)	1.00 (2.38)	0.72 (1.56)
Total sample	0.87 (2.33)	0.92 (2.16)	1.34 (8.30)	0.92 (2.37)	0.76 (1.86)	0.90 (2.10)	1.00 (2.60)	1.17 (2.82)	0.94 (2.76)	0.84 (1.67)	0.97 (2.05)	1.38 (3.36)	1.04 (2.89)	0.89 (2.09)	1.02 (2.59)	0.93 (2.02)
Median	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Among trends in mean number of sexual partners among all participants over the reporting period, we observed fluctuations week on week, with one to three week increases followed by the similar weeks in decreases. The same pattern can be found across the jurisdictions, except Queensland where the pattern is less consistent. Due to the smaller numbers of participants in Queensland and other jurisdictions, caution should be exercised when interpreting these trends.

Figure 4. Mean number of sexual partners by week of response



*Non-relationship partners and condomless anal intercourse (CLAI)*

In this reporting period, the proportion of men reporting any type of sex has stayed around half of the participants with a peak in week 48 at 58.9%. During this reporting period, around a quarter of men reported engaging in sex with more than one fuckbuddy/friend with benefits or any casual partners. Consistent with the previous reporting period, most men who engaged in CLAI were protected by biomedical prevention. The proportion of biomedically unprotected receptive CLAI in this reporting period is approximately 16% and 17% for insertive CLAI.

Table 5. Sex by partner type and CLAI for men reporting sex with multiple (>1) FB/any CP

	W37	W38	W39	W40	W41	W42	W43	W44	W45	W46	W47	W48	W49	W50	W51	W52
Any sex	222 (50.9)	230 (51.8)	241 (53.4)	239 (52.9)	219 (48.2)	228 (50.4)	222 (50.7)	227 (52.2)	234 (53.8)	220 (50.0)	228 (53.1)	249 (58.9)	221 (51.8)	215 (50.5)	215 (50.7)	215 (52.6)
Sex with 1 partner only	134 (30.7)	132 (29.7)	138 (30.6)	142 (31.3)	127 (28.0)	133 (29.4)	128 (29.2)	127 (29.2)	144 (33.1)	124 (28.2)	137 (31.9)	133 (31.4)	126 (29.5)	132 (31.0)	129 (30.4)	128 (31.3)
Any sex with FB/FWB	140 (32.1)	149 (33.6)	164 (36.4)	157 (34.7)	133 (29.3)	153 (33.8)	146 (33.3)	151 (34.7)	154 (35.4)	145 (33.0)	158 (36.8)	175 (41.4)	147 (34.4)	137 (32.2)	140 (33.0)	140 (34.2)
Any sex with >1 FB/any CP	110 (25.3)	124 (27.9)	124 (27.5)	102 (22.4)	105 (23.1)	113 (25.0)	112 (25.6)	105 (23.8)	119 (27.4)	117 (26.6)	124 (28.9)	121 (28.3)	115 (27.0)	107 (25.2)	104 (24.5)	96 (23.2)
Any receptive CLAI	48	51	50	44	45	39	39	53	46	48	49	59	46	44	41	40
No biomedical protection	7 (14.6)	7 (13.7)	7 (14.0)	7 (15.9)	8 (17.8)	7 (17.9)	10 (25.6)	10 (18.9)	4 (8.7)	3 (6.3)	8 (16.3)	10 (16.9)	8 (17.4)	8 (18.2)	8 (19.5)	7 (17.5)
Used TasP	4 (8.3)	4 (7.8)	5 (10.0)	7 (15.9)	4 (8.9)	5 (12.8)	5 (12.8)	4 (7.5)	4 (8.7)	4 (8.3)	7 (14.3)	10 (16.9)	6 (13.0)	6 (13.6)	1 (2.4)	2 (5.0)

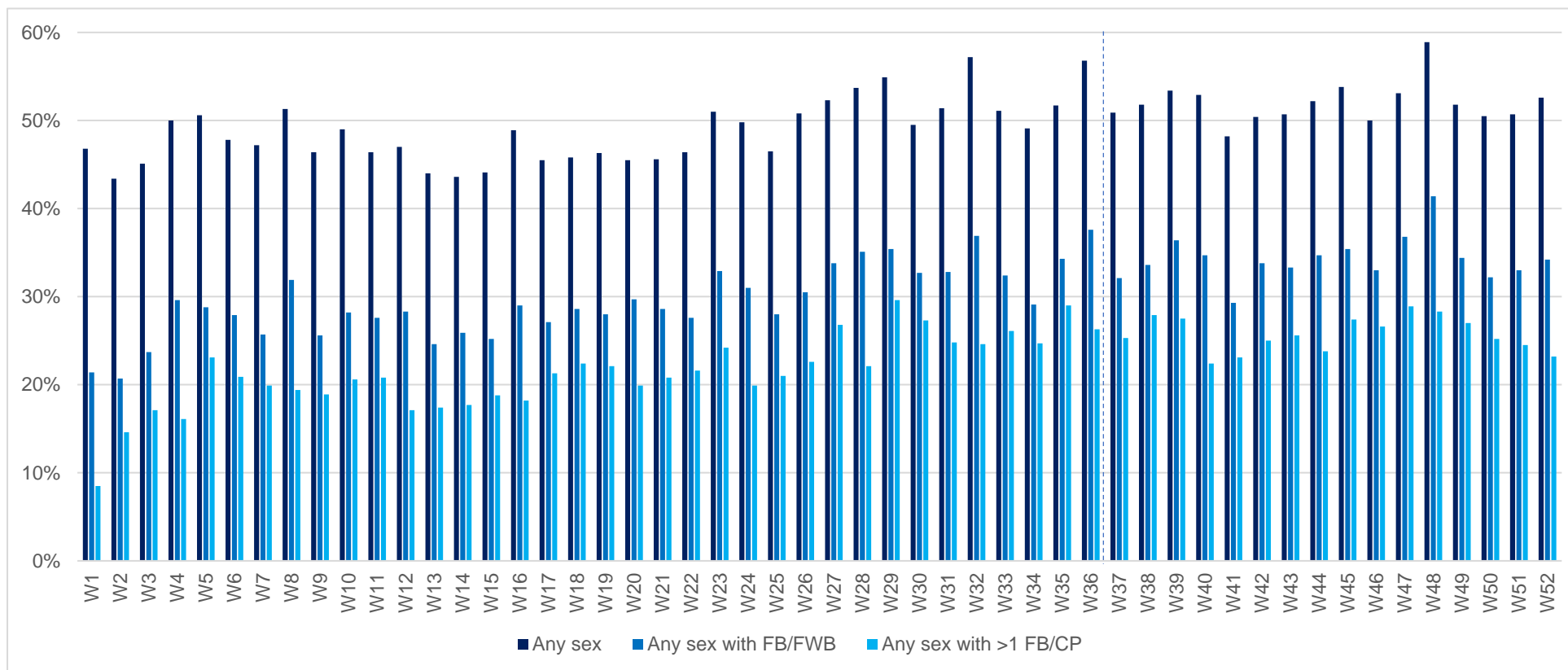


Used PrEP	37 (77.1)	40 (78.4)	38 (76.0)	30 (68.2)	33 (73.3)	27 (69.2)	24 (61.5)	39 (73.6)	38 (82.6)	41 (85.4)	34 (69.4)	39 (66.1)	32 (69.6)	30 (68.2)	32 (78.0)	31 (77.5)
Any insertive CLAI	57	59	63	56	56	62	54	65	53	58	52	69	50	55	49	53
No biomedical protection	11 (19.3)	11 (18.6)	10 (15.9)	10 (17.9)	11 (19.6)	12 (19.4)	8 (14.8)	13 (20.0)	7 (13.2)	7 (12.1)	9 (17.3)	12 (17.4)	11 (22.0)	9 (16.4)	8 (16.3)	8 (15.1)
Used TasP	4 (7.0)	5 (8.5)	6 (9.5)	7 (12.5)	4 (7.1)	4 (6.5)	6 (11.1)	4 (6.2)	5 (9.4)	5 (8.6)	7 (13.5)	9 (13.0)	7 (14.0)	6 (10.9)	2 (4.1)	2 (3.8)
Used PrEP	72 (73.7)	43 (72.9)	47 (74.6)	39 (69.6)	41 (73.2)	46 (74.2)	40 (74.1)	48 (73.8)	41 (77.4)	46 (79.3)	36 (69.2)	48 (69.6)	32 (64.0)	40 (72.7)	39 (79.6)	43 (81.1)

\*Note: CLAI is reported specifically among men who had sex with >1 FB/any CP.

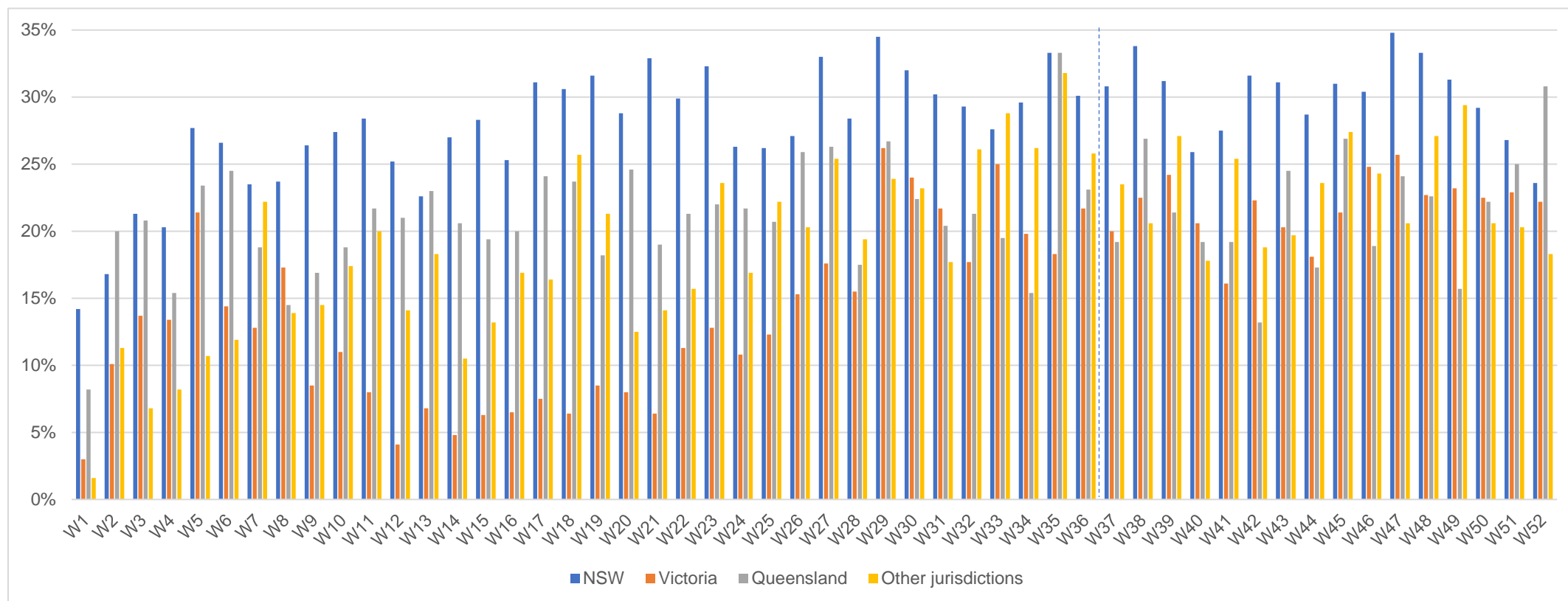
\*\*Note: PrEP/TasP coverage is reported specifically among men who reported CLAI and had sex with >1 FB/any CP.

Figure 5a. Proportion of men engaging in sex by partner type



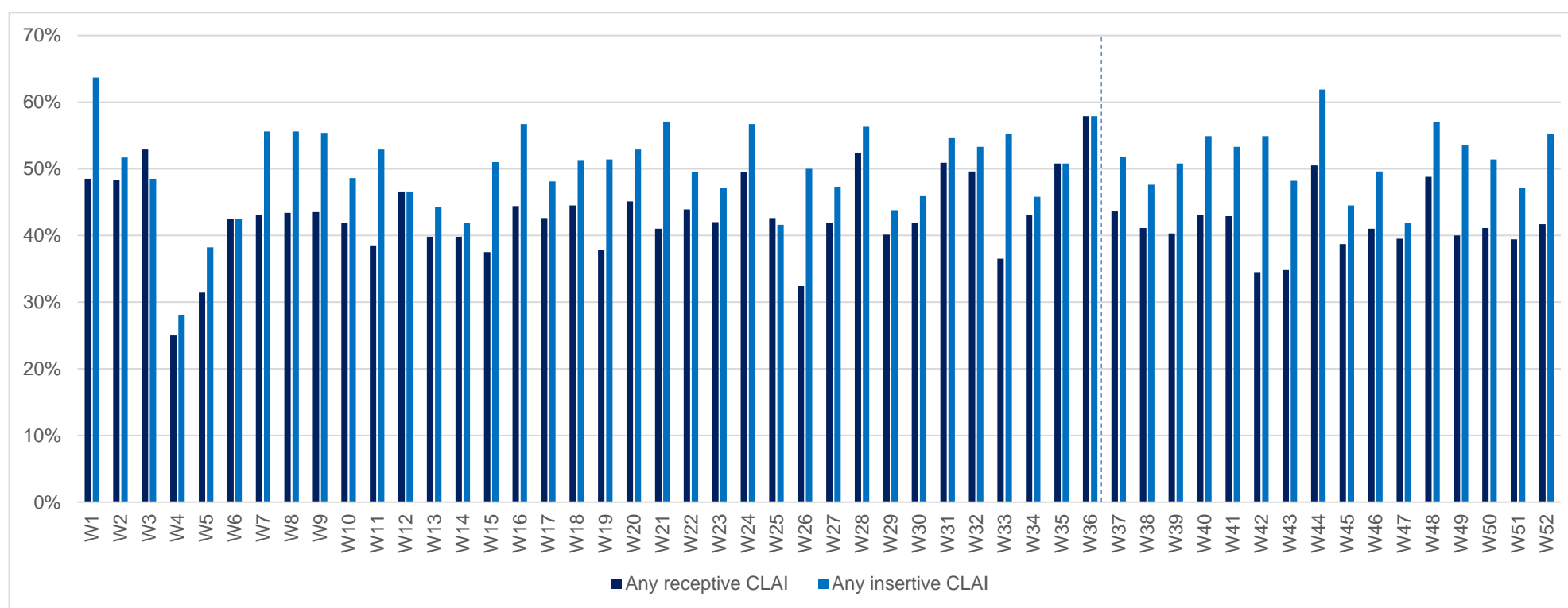
NSW respondents continue to report higher proportions of sex with more than one fuckbuddy/friend with benefits or any casual partners compared to other jurisdictions, except for Queensland in week 52 of the reporting period. For participants in Victoria, men reporting sex with more than one fuckbuddy/friend with benefits or any casual partners increased slightly over the reporting period.

Figure 5b. Proportion of men in NSW, Victoria, Queensland and other jurisdictions engaging in sex with >1 FB/any CPs



Trends in men reporting receptive and insertive CLAI with >1 FB/any CPs have remained fairly stable over the reporting period. Insertive CLAI with >1 FB/any CPs has been consistently higher than receptive CLAI with these types of partners over the reporting period and over the study period. Week 3 was the only week over the study period where the proportion of men reporting receptive CLAI was higher than men reporting insertive CLAI.

Figure 5c. Proportion of men engaging in CLAI among men reporting sex with >1 FB/any CPs



## Group sex

Approximately one in 11 men reported group sex in the previous four weeks in weeks 40 and 52, one in eight men in week 44 and peaking at one in seven men in week 48. This peak at week 48 is the highest proportion of men reporting engagement in group sex in the previous four week over the study period.

## Sex within the household and with fuckbuddies/casual partners

The median number of men who indicated they lived with all the men with whom they had sex has increased from an average of 0 during the last reporting period to around 1 during this reporting period. Similar to previous weeks, almost all sex was conducted with men outside of the participant's household. The proportion of men who reported living with all their sex partners has remained small throughout the study period. IN the reporting period, this peaked at 3.6% at week 43. The proportion of men reporting that all sexual partners in the previous seven days were FB/FWBs was around one in nine men for the reporting period.

**Table 6. Sex within the household and description of partners as FBs/FWBs**

	W37	W38	W39	W40	W41	W42	W43	W44	W45	W46	W47	W48	W49	W50	W51	W52
	N=	N=	N=	N=	N=	N=	N=	N=	N=	N=	N=	N=	N=	N=	N=	N=
	110*	124*	124*	102*	105*	113*	112*	105*	119*	117*	124*	121*	115*	107*	104*	96*
<b>Live with all sexual partners</b>	1 (0.9)	1 (0.8)	0 (0.0)	1 (1.0)	1 (1.0)	0 (0.0)	4 (3.6)	0 (0.0)	1 (0.8)	1 (0.9)	1 (0.8)	4 (3.3)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
<b>All partners described as FB/FWB</b>	15 (13.6)	15 (12.1)	12 (9.7)	12 (11.8)	15 (14.3)	16 (14.2)	12 (10.7)	11 (10.5)	16 (13.4)	16 (13.7)	11 (8.9)	11 (9.1)	11 (9.6)	13 (12.1)	14 (13.5)	9 (9.4)

\*N = men each week who reported having >1 fuckbuddy/any casual partner

## PrEP and PEP use

An average of 37.7% of non HIV-positive men reporting PrEP use over the period. Mean number of PrEP pills remaining during the reporting period fluctuated from 26.7 in week 51 to 44.5 at week 44. PEP use during the reporting period remains low at 1.0% to 1.7%.

Almost all men reporting >1 FB/any CP using PrEP reported using a minimum of 4 or more pills per week.

Table 7. PrEP and PEP use among non HIV-positive men

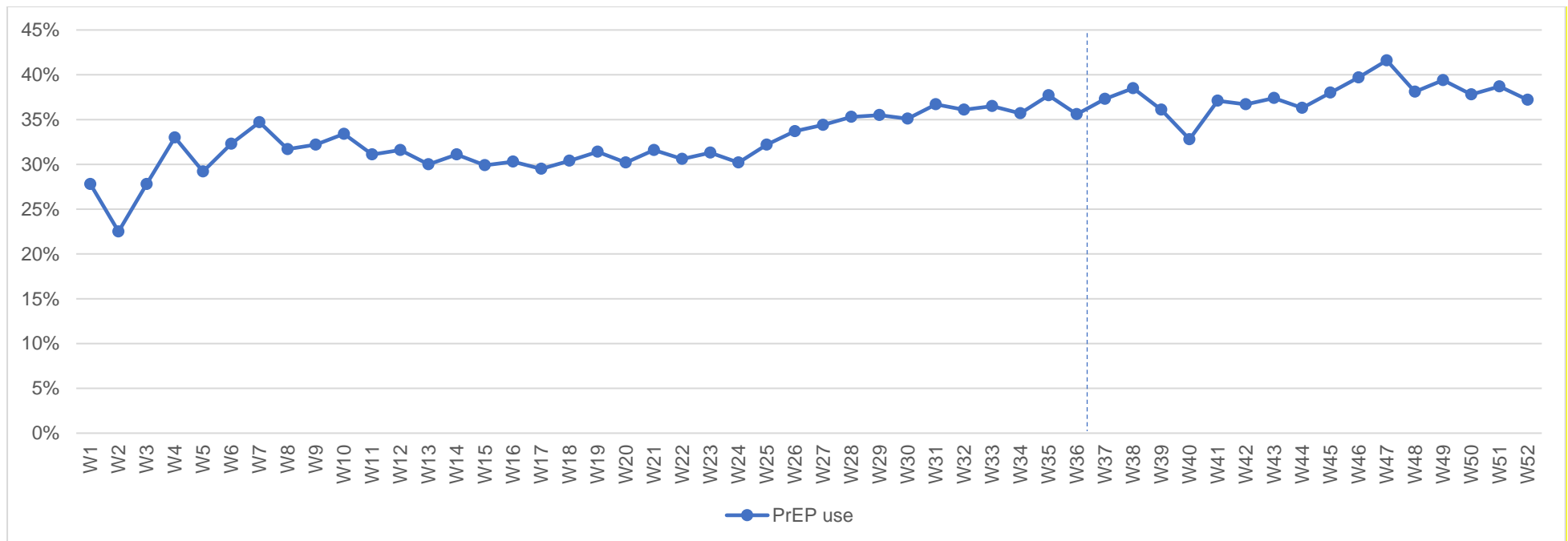
	W37	W38	W39	W40	W41	W42	W43	W44	W45	W46	W47	W48	W49	W50	W51	W52
No use	250 (62.7)	249 (61.5)	264 (63.9)	285 (67.2)	259 (62.9)	259 (63.3)	249 (62.6)	258 (63.7)	245 (62.0)	240 (60.3)	227 (28.4)	240 (61.9)	234 (60.6)	240 (62.2)	236 (61.3)	243 (62.8)
*PrEP use	149 (37.3)	156 (38.5)	149 (36.1)	139 (32.8)	153 (37.1)	150 (36.7)	149 (37.4)	147 (36.3)	150 (38.0)	158 (39.7)	162 (41.6)	148 (38.1)	152 (39.4)	146 (37.8)	149 (38.7)	144 (37.2)
Mean (SD) PrEP pills remaining	41.4 (31.5)	28.8 (30.3)	28.5 (31.8)	38.3 (30.5)	28.7 (31.5)	30.6 (32.3)	36.6 (86.6)	44.5 (32.2)	30.7 (35.6)	30.0 (30.9)	31.0 (32.9)	40.4 (29.3)	29.3 (32.9)	29.5 (37.8)	26.7 (29.0)	40.8 (33.0)
Median	30.5	21.0	20.0	30.0	20.0	22.5	21.5	36.0	20.0	23.0	22.0	32.0	22.0	21.0	20.0	30.0
*PEP use				7 (1.7)				7 (1.7)				4 (1.0)				4 (1.0)
Sex with >1 FB/any CP	110	124	124	102	105	113	112	105	119	117	124	121	115	107	104	96
PrEP use among men reporting sex with >1 FB/any CP	70 (63.6)	77 (62.1)	78 (62.9)	62 (60.8)	67 (63.8)	68 (60.2)	66 (58.9)	69 (65.7)	75 (63.0)	79 (67.5)	82 (66.1)	79 (65.3)	65 (71.4)	66 (61.7)	69 (66.3)	62 (64.6)
Any CLAI with >1 FB/any CP	76	78	80	69	72	72	66	81	76	75	77	92	70	71	67	65

PrEP use among men reporting CLAI with >1 FB/any CP	55 (72.4)	57 (73.1)	61 (76.3)	46 (66.7)	55 (76.4)	52 (72.2)	46 (69.7)	59 (72.8)	61 (80.3)	62 (82.7)	57 (74.0)	63 (68.5)	50 (71.4)	52 (73.2)	55 (82.1)	51 (78.5)
4+ days/week PrEP use when reporting CLAI with >1 FB/any CP	49 (64.4)	52 (66.7)	58 (72.6)	42 (60.9)	53 (73.6)	50 (65.8)	41 (62.1)	55 (67.9)	56 (73.6)	56 (74.7)	53 (68.8)	54 (58.7)	47 (67.1)	50 (70.4)	48 (71.6)	44 (67.7)

\* Items not mutually exclusive

After initial declines, PrEP use has remained stable between week 13 and 23, then started to increase in week 24 up to week 38. During this study period, prevalence of PrEP use has continued to increase and peaked at week 47 with 41.6% non-HIV positive men reporting its use. There has been a slight decline since the peak in week 47.

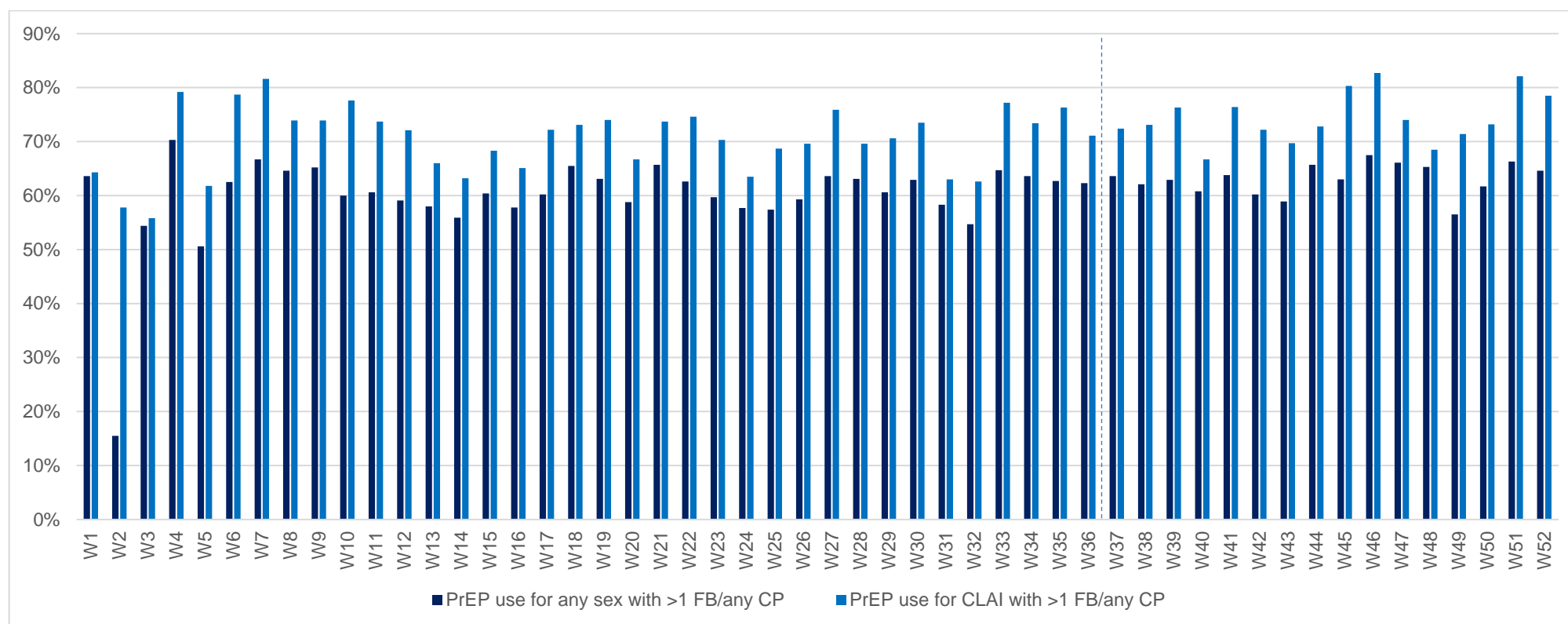
Figure 6. Proportion of non HIV-positive men using PrEP





The majority of non HIV-positive men who reported CLAI with more than >1 FB/any CPs remained protected by PrEP and this proportion has remained stable, with a slight increase overall compared to the last reporting period. This peaked at week 47 with 93% of men reporting CLAI with >1FB/any CP also reporting being protected by PrEP.

Figure 7. Proportion of men having CLAI with multiple non-relationship partners using PrEP



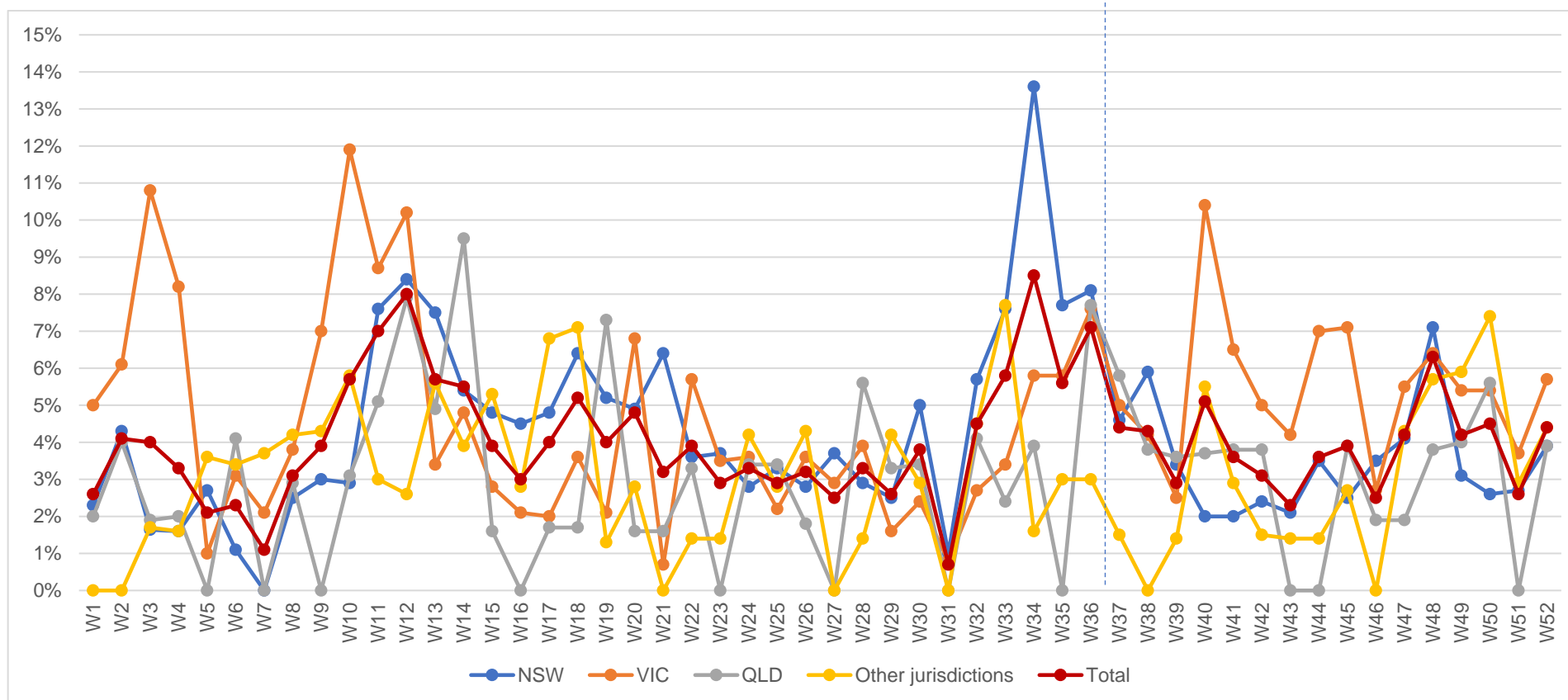
## COVID-19 Testing

Recent (in the past 7 days) testing for COVID-19 has been the most consistent over the study period, ranging from 2.3% to 6.3%, with testing peaking at week 48 in this reporting period. Victorian men reported the highest proportion tested for COVID-19 in the reporting period (10.2%, week 40), this is likely due to a COVID-19 outbreak from hotel quarantine that led to a snap five-day lockdown the following week.

Table 8. Proportion of men reporting testing for COVID-19 in the previous seven days

	Week 37	Week 38	Week 39	Week 40	Week 41	Week 42	Week 43	Week 44	Week 45	Week 46	Week 47	Week 48	Week 49	Week 50	Week 51	Week 52
NSW	9 (4.6)	12 (5.9)	8 (3.9)	3 (1.5)	4 (1.9)	5 (2.4)	4 (2.0)	7 (3.5)	5 (2.5)	7 (3.6)	8 (4.1)	14 (7.1)	6 (3.1)	5 (2.6)	5 (2.7)	7 (3.9)
VIC	6 (4.9)	5 (4.1)	3 (2.5)	13 (10.2)	8 (6.4)	6 (4.9)	5 (4.2)	8 (6.9)	9 (7.9)	3 (2.6)	6 (5.5)	7 (6.3)	6 (5.4)	6 (5.4)	4 (3.6)	6 (5.5)
QLD	3 (5.9)	2 (3.9)	1 (1.8)	2 (3.7)	2 (3.9)	2 (3.8)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	2 (3.9)	1 (1.9)	1 (1.9)	2 (3.8)	2 (4.1)	3 (5.8)	0 (0.0)	2 (4.1)
Other Jurisdictions	1 (1.5)	0 (0.0)	1 (1.4)	5 (6.9)	2 (2.9)	1 (1.5)	1 (1.4)	1 (1.4)	1 (1.4)	0 (0.0)	3 (4.4)	4 (5.8)	4 (5.9)	5 (7.2)	2 (2.9)	3 (4.5)
Total tested in previous week	19 (4.4)	19 (4.3)	13 (2.9)	23 (5.1)	16 (3.6)	14 (3.1)	10 (2.3)	16 (3.6)	17 (3.9)	11 (2.5)	18 (4.2)	27 (6.3)	18 (4.2)	19 (4.5)	11 (2.6)	18 (4.4)

Figure 8. Proportion of men tested for COVID-19 in previous seven days



Nose and throat swabs remain the most common form of testing for COVID-19 with either one or no participants having blood tests to test for COVID-19 infection. No participants have tested positive to COVID-19 throughout the study.

Table 9. COVID-19 test type

	W37	W38	W39	W40	W41	W42	W43	W44	W45	W46	W47	W48	W49	W50	W51	W52
Blood test	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	1 (6.3) (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	1 (5.6) (0.0)	1 (3.7) (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
Nose/throat swab	19 (100)	19 (100)	13 (100)	22 (100)	16 (100)	14 (100)	10 (100)	15 (93.8)	17 (100)	11 (100)	17 (94.4)	26 (96.3)	18 (100)	19 (100)	11 (100)	18 (100)
Other	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0) (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0) (0.0)	0 (0.0) (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
Unknown result	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	1 (4.3)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	2 (12.5)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0) (0.0)	0 (0.0) (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
Positive result	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0) (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0) (0.0)	0 (0.0) (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)

## Social connectedness

Proportions of men reporting no contact with gay male friends has remained fairly stable since the last reporting period, with fewer than one in ten reporting no contact. On average over the reporting period, 3.9% of men had no contact with friends (other than gay male friends) or family.

Table 10. Proportion of men having no contact with friends and family

	W37	W38	W39	W40	W41	W42	W43	W44	W45	W46	W47	W48	W49	W50	W51	W52
No contact with gay male friends in the past 7 days (total)	26 (6.0)	33 (7.4)	23 (5.1)	41 (9.6)	37 (8.2)	38 (8.4)	29 (6.7)	38 (9.1)	35 (8.1)	29 (6.6)	31 (7.2)	40 (9.8)	31 (7.3)	35 (8.3)	23 (5.5)	31 (8.0)
NSW	13 (6.7)	12 (5.9)	10 (4.9)	13 (6.7)	12 (5.8)	14 (6.7)	10 (5.1)	9 (4.6)	13 (6.6)	12 (5.9)	15 (7.6)	18 (9.4)	11 (5.6)	12 (6.3)	8 (4.3)	10 (5.6)
VIC	4 (3.3)	7 (5.7)	7 (5.8)	11 (9.3)	10 (8.0)	10 (8.3)	9 (7.6)	11 (9.9)	7 (6.3)	7 (6.2)	4 (3.6)	9 (8.7)	7 (6.3)	8 (7.3)	6 (5.6)	8 (7.8)
QLD	7 (13.7)	9 (17.6)	3 (5.5)	8 (17.4)	10 (19.6)	10 (19.2)	7 (13.7)	10 (20.8)	9 (17.6)	7 (13.5)	6 (11.3)	7 (14.3)	8 (16.0)	10 (19.2)	4 (7.1)	7 (17.1)
Other jurisdictions	2 (3.0)	5 (7.5)	3 (4.3)	9 (12.9)	5 (7.2)	4 (5.9)	3 (4.2)	8 (12.1)	6 (8.5)	3 (4.3)	6 (8.8)	6 (9.1)	5 (7.5)	5 (7.4)	5 (7.4)	6 (9.2)
No contact with other friends or family in the past 7 days (total)				23 (5.0)				17 (3.8)				18 (4.1)				13 (3.2)
NSW				9 (4.4)				5 (2.5)				7 (3.5)				5 (2.7)

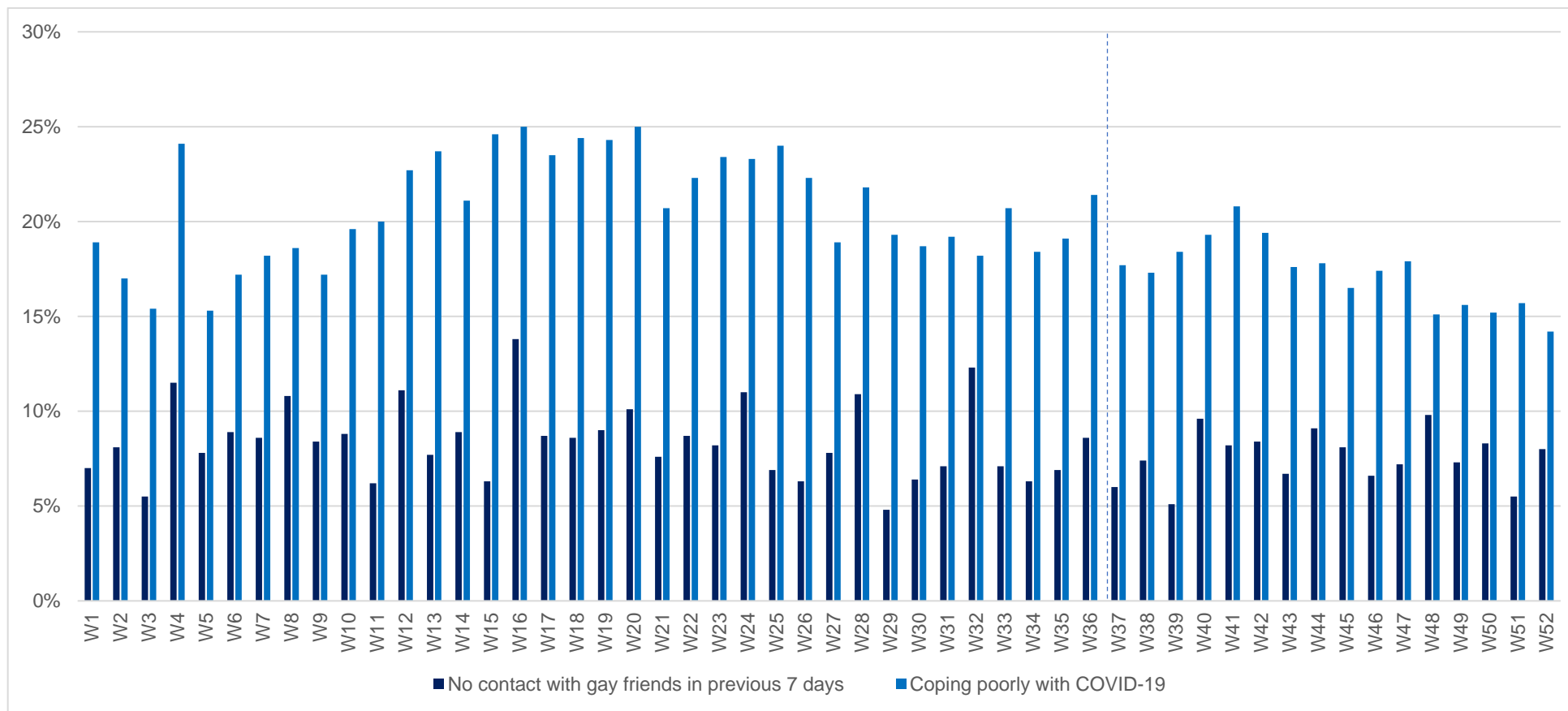
VIC		9 (7.1)		6 (5.0)		5 (4.5)		5 (4.5)
QLD		3 (5.5)		3 (5.7)		2 (3.6)		1 (2.0)
Other jurisdictions		2 (2.7)		3 (4.3)		4 (5.9)		2 (2.9)

Compared to the previous reporting period, men were slightly less likely to report they were coping poorly during this reporting period. On average, about one in six men indicated that they felt they were coping poorly during this reporting period. Victorian men consistently reported higher proportions of coping poorly, except in week 50 where the proportion of men in NSW was slightly higher proportion. The proportion of men coping poorly in Victoria peaked in weeks 41 and 42, in line with a snap five-day lockdown due to a COVID-19 outbreak from hotel quarantine. At week 52 the proportion of men overall indicating that they felt they were coping poorly reached the lowest point over the study period. There has been a steady decline since week 19 of the study. Coping was measured on a six-point scale from 'Very well' to 'Very poorly'.

Table 11. Proportion of men coping poorly by jurisdiction and total

	W37	W38	W39	W40	W41	W42	W43	W44	W45	W46	W47	W48	W49	W50	W51	W52
NSW	38 (19.6)	37 (18.1)	40 (19.8)	41 (20.1)	39 (18.8)	38 (18.3)	34 (17.6)	33 (16.6)	32 (16.4)	34 (16.9)	38 (19.3)	31 (16.1)	30 (15.4)	32 (16.8)	28 (15.0)	25 (13.7)
VIC	26 (21.1)	25 (20.5)	25 (20.7)	29 (22.8)	42 (33.3)	33 (27.0)	26 (22.2)	29 (24.8)	23 (20.4)	26 (22.8)	22 (19.8)	21 (19.1)	20 (18.2)	15 (16.2)	21 (19.3)	20 (18.2)
QLD	7 (13.7)	8 (15.7)	7 (12.7)	7 (13.5)	6 (11.8)	6 (11.8)	8 (15.7)	5 (9.8)	8 (15.7)	8 (15.1)	10 (18.9)	5 (9.6)	7 (14.0)	7 (13.5)	6 (10.7)	7 (14.3)
Other jurisdictions	6 (9.0)	7 (10.4)	11 (15.7)	11 (15.3)	7 (10.1)	10 (14.7)	8 (11.3)	11 (15.7)	8 (11.3)	8 (11.4)	7 (10.3)	7 (10.1)	9 (13.2)	7 (10.3)	11 (15.9)	6 (8.8)
<b>Total</b>	<b>77 (17.7)</b>	<b>77 (17.3)</b>	<b>83 (18.4)</b>	<b>88 (19.3)</b>	<b>94 (20.8)</b>	<b>87 (19.4)</b>	<b>76 (17.6)</b>	<b>78 (17.8)</b>	<b>71 (16.5)</b>	<b>76 (17.4)</b>	<b>77 (17.9)</b>	<b>64 (15.1)</b>	<b>66 (15.6)</b>	<b>64 (15.2)</b>	<b>66 (15.7)</b>	<b>58 (14.2)</b>

Figure 9. Proportion of men with no contact with gay male friends and coping poorly with COVID-19





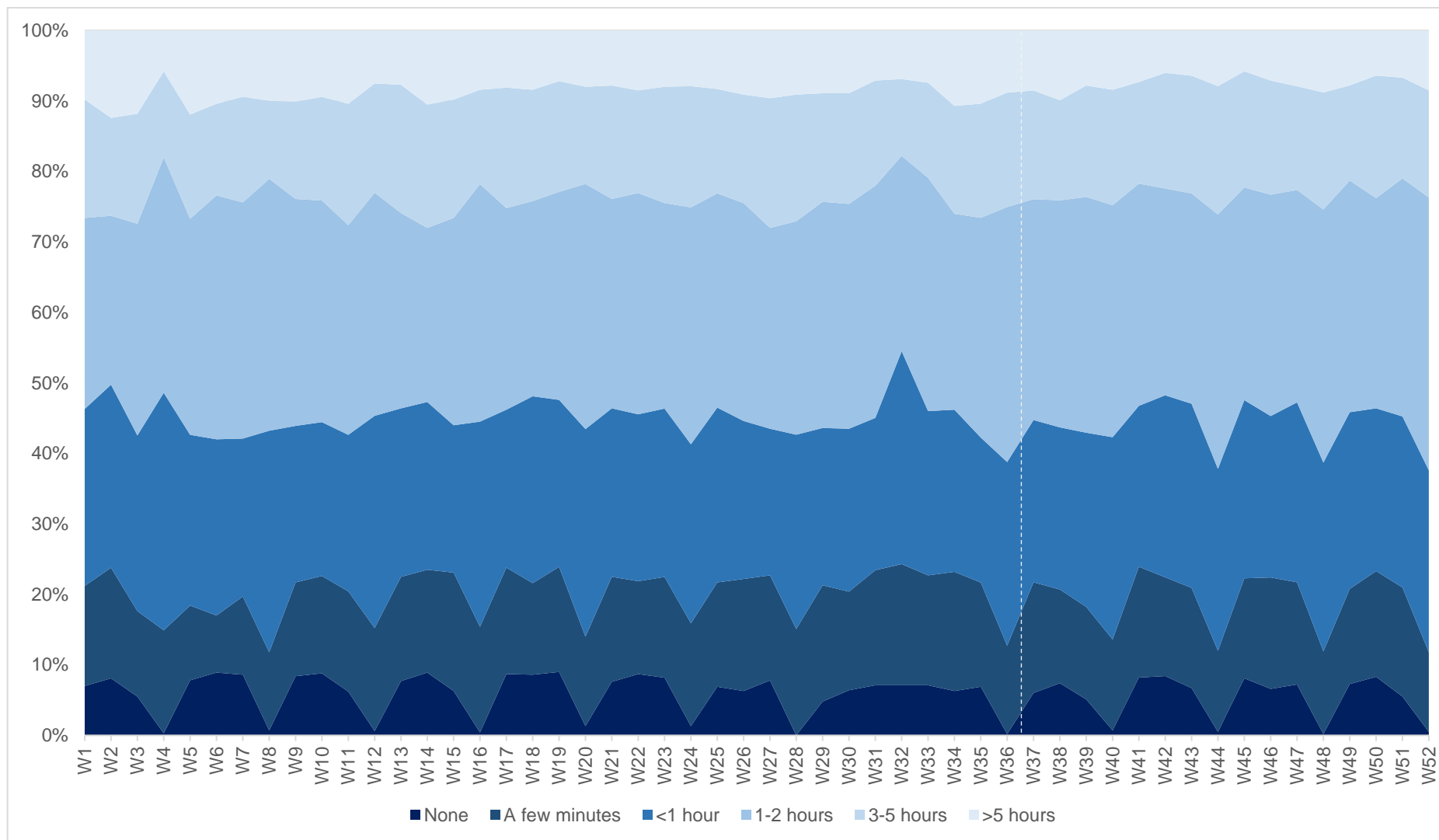
### *Time spent communicating with gay male friends*

Despite some fluctuations, communication, in person, by phone or online, with gay male friends was fairly consistent during the reporting period. During this reporting period, over half the sample consistently spent an hour or more each day communicating with gay male friends. The proportion of men not engaging in daily communication with gay male friends remained low over the reporting period, between 0.2% to 8.4%.

Table 12. Time spent communicating with gay male friends among all respondents

	W37	W38	W39	W40	W41	W42	W43	W44	W45	W46	W47	W48	W49	W50	W51	W52
None	26 (6.0)	33 (7.4)	23 (5.1)	3 (0.7)	37 (8.2)	38 (8.4)	29 (6.7)	2 (0.5)	35 (8.1)	29 (6.6)	31 (7.2)	1 (0.2)	31 (7.3)	35 (8.3)	23 (3.0)	2 (0.5)
A few minutes	68 (15.7)	59 (13.3)	59 (13.1)	55 (12.9)	71 (15.7)	63 (14.0)	62 (14.2)	48 (11.5)	61 (14.2)	69 (15.8)	62 (14.5)	48 (11.7)	57 (13.5)	63 (15.0)	65 (15.5)	44 (11.3)
<1 hour	100 (23.0)	102 (23.0)	111 (24.7)	123 (28.7)	103 (22.8)	116 (25.8)	114 (26.1)	108 (25.8)	109 (25.3)	100 (22.9)	109 (25.5)	110 (26.8)	106 (25.1)	97 (23.1)	102 (24.3)	100 (25.8)
1-2 hours	136 (31.3)	143 (32.2)	150 (33.4)	141 (32.9)	142 (31.5)	132 (29.3)	130 (29.8)	151 (36.1)	130 (30.2)	137 (31.4)	129 (30.1)	147 (35.9)	139 (32.9)	125 (29.8)	142 (33.8)	150 (38.7)
3-5 hours	67 (15.4)	63 (14.2)	71 (15.8)	70 (16.4)	65 (14.4)	74 (16.4)	73 (16.7)	76 (18.2)	71 (16.5)	71 (16.2)	63 (14.7)	68 (16.6)	57 (13.5)	73 (17.4)	60 (14.3)	59 (15.2)
>5 hours	37 (8.5)	44 (9.9)	35 (7.8)	36 (8.4)	33 (7.3)	27 (6.0)	28 (6.4)	33 (7.9)	25 (5.8)	31 (7.1)	34 (7.9)	36 (8.8)	33 (7.8)	27 (6.4)	28 (6.7)	33 (8.5)

Figure 10. Time spent communicating with gay male friends



## Health-seeking behaviour

### *Influenza vaccine uptake*

At week 40, there was little change in the proportion of men that had received the 2020 seasonal influenza vaccine compared to Report 01-06. Around three quarters of men indicated they had received the 2020 seasonal influenza vaccine. From week 44 we asked about whether men had received the current (2021) seasonal influenza vaccine, and just under a third of men reporting having received the vaccine. At week 48 around one in seven reported having the vaccine and at week 52 around one in three had received the vaccine.

### *STI/HIV testing*

Over this reporting period on average, one in five men indicated they had been tested for STIs or HIV. During this period, positive STI results were low: on average 2.8% of men indicated they tested positive for chlamydia, 1.4% had tested positive for gonorrhoea, and less than 1.1% for syphilis.

On average in this reporting period, most men reported being HIV negative (around 88%), around one in 12 as HIV positive and around 4% reported an unknown HIV status. On average over the reporting period, most (77.9%) HIV positive men indicated they had an undetectable viral load.

# Appendix A – Methods

## Data collection

The Flux Study COVID-19 Diary leverages the existing Flux cohort study infrastructure to investigate the experiences of the coronavirus (COVID-19) and its impact on pre-existing epidemics among GBM. Individual follow occurs systematically among consenting GBM every week for an initial three-month period, to be revisited at the end of each three-month period for up to a maximum of one year to collect specific information about sexual and other risk behaviours and direct impacts of COVID-19.

**Baseline questionnaires** are completed by newly enrolling participants to establish the characteristics, behaviours, and beliefs required to assess changes over time, during the COVID-19 pandemic. Additional information collected includes associated harms, health-seeking, social connectedness, COVID-19 physical distancing behaviours, mental health, and relevant personal characteristics.

**Weekly diary questionnaires** collect specific limited information on sexual behaviour, PrEP use, and COVID-19 health-seeking practices, to enable measurement of changes in behaviours against the rapid changes in physical distancing regulations as they are enforced, or relaxed. Every four weeks, a slightly expanded questionnaire will also collect specific information on physical distancing and social connections, drug use, and access to services.

**Six-monthly follow-up questionnaires** monitor changes in characteristics, behaviours, and beliefs over time, throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, required to assess changes over time as specified in the study aims.

## Data analysis

SPSS<sup>TM</sup>, Version 26 (IBM Corporation) was used to analyse data. Percentage values exclude the proportion of respondents who did not answer the question and may not add

to 100 because of rounding. Data may change slightly over time due to minor error checking.

Ethical approval for data collection was obtained from UNSW Human Research Ethic.

## Appendix B – Glossary

**CLAI** – condomless anal intercourse

**COVID-19** – the disease caused by the novel coronavirus SARS-CoV-2

**Fuckbuddy/Friend with benefits** – a regular sexual partner with whom ongoing sexual contact occurs, generally in the absence of romantic attachment

**GBM** – gay and bisexual men

**HIV** – human immunodeficiency virus

**HIV status** – a person's antibody status established by HIV testing (e.g. HIV-negative, HIV-positive, or unknown [untested])

**Non-relationship partner** – a sexual partner that is not a boyfriend or husband with whom participants are in an ongoing romantic relationship, but characterised as a fuckbuddy, friend with benefits or casual partner

**PEP** – post-exposure prophylaxis; for the purpose of this report, it refers to the use of antiretroviral drugs by HIV-negative people to reduce the risk of HIV infection after a potential exposure has occurred

**PrEP** – pre-exposure prophylaxis; for the purpose of this report, it refers to the use of antiretroviral drugs by HIV-negative