

Monitoring HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) uptake in Australia



Issue #15, September 2026

HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) was listed on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) on 1 April 2018. The PBS subsidises the cost of PrEP for people eligible for Medicare in Australia. The cost to the patient for 30 pills as of 2026 was \$25.00 for general patients and \$7.70 for concession card holders.

This report uses data from every PBS-subsidised PrEP prescription that was dispensed in Australia between 1 January 2021 and 30 June 2026. Data from earlier years between 1 April 2018 and 31 December 2020 can be found in previous issues of this report. The data are de-identified but incorporate unique codes so that data can be presented on the number of unique individuals receiving PrEP, and so that an individual's record of being dispensed PrEP over time can be constructed. Variables include patient details (age, sex, postcode of residence, concession status), information about dispensing (date of dispensing, quantity dispensed), and prescriber details (postcode, specialty).

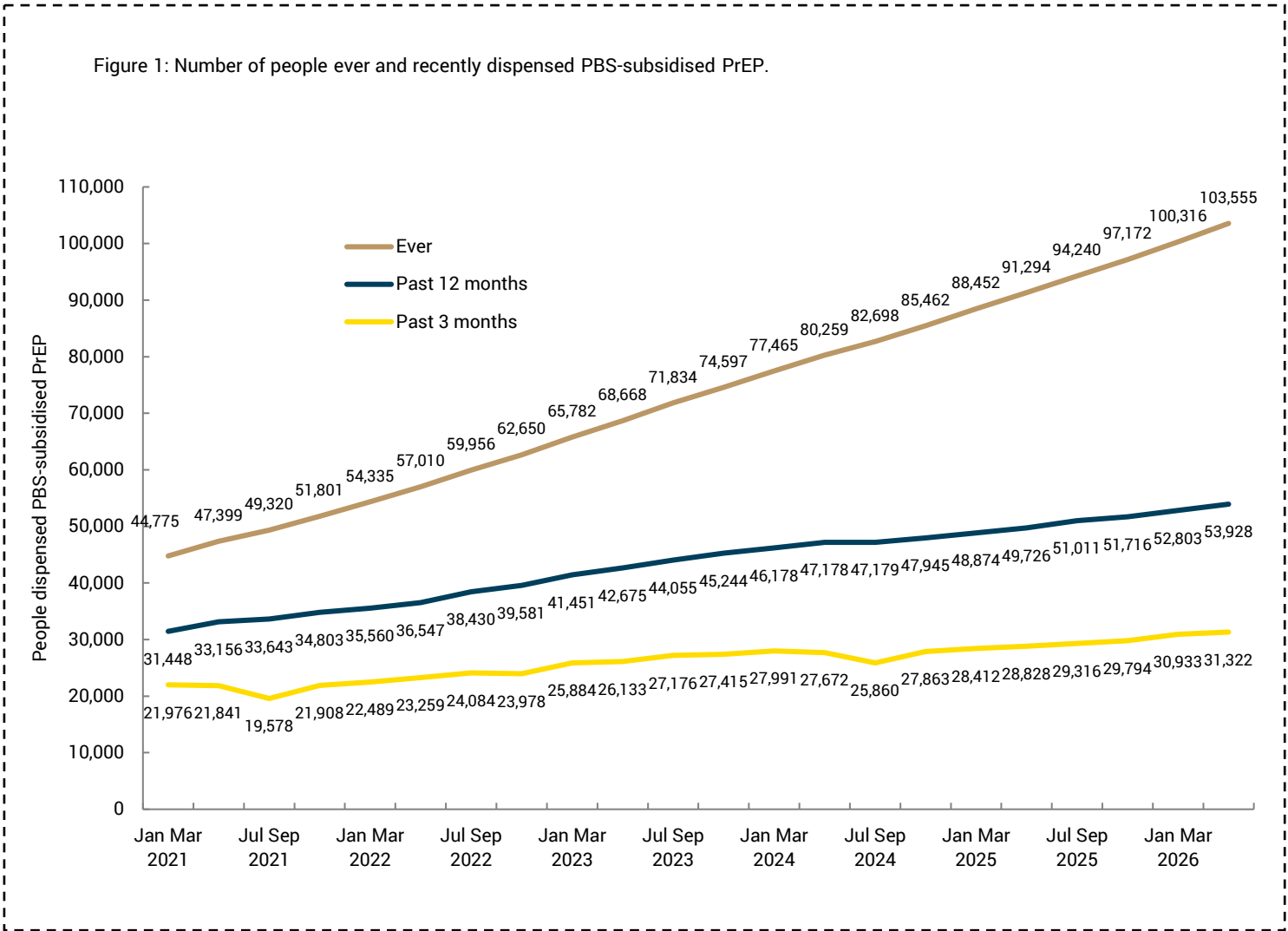
Data are presented on the total number of people who have ever initiated PBS-subsidised PrEP, as well as the number of people dispensed PrEP within each quarter, and within the past 12 months. These data are disaggregated by age, and by state or territory of patient residence, and presented as population rates.



Number of people ever and recently dispensed PrEP

Between 1 April 2018 and 30 June 2026, 103,555 people (96.4% male and 3.6% female) were dispensed PBS-subsidised PrEP at least once.

The number of individuals dispensed PrEP within the past 12 months increased to a new high of 53,928 in Q2 2026.



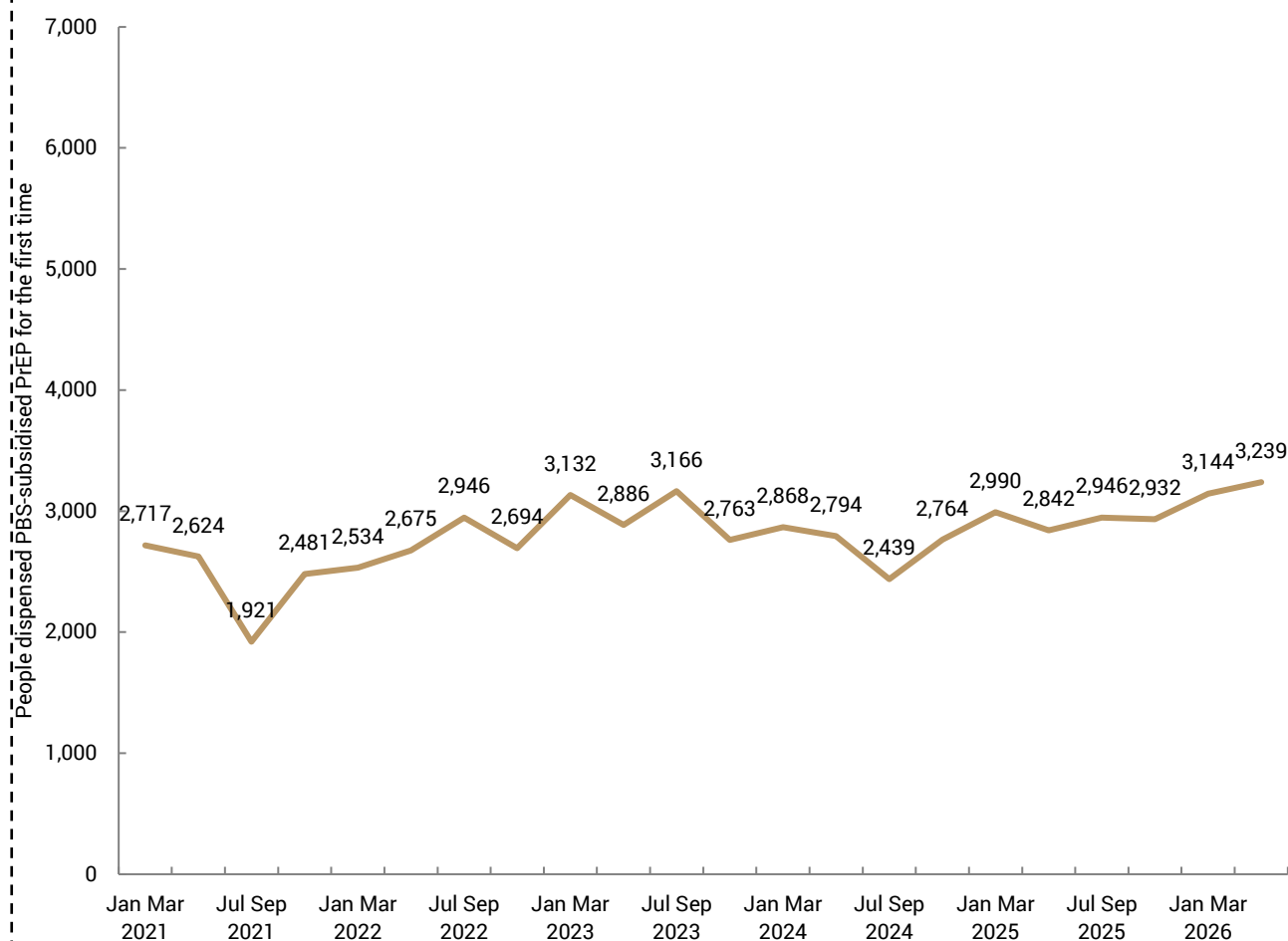


PrEP initiation and prescribers

Since Q1 2021, there has been a relatively consistent number of individuals receiving PrEP for the first time through the PBS.

The 103,555 people ever supplied were prescribed their first PBS-subsidised PrEP by 28,417 prescribers; 1.8% (n=514) of prescribers had caseloads of more than 100 PrEP patients. These high-caseload prescribers were responsible for prescribing 57.6% of patients (n=59,647) with their first supplies of PBS-subsidised PrEP.

Figure 2: Number of people dispensed PBS-subsidised PrEP for the first time each quarter





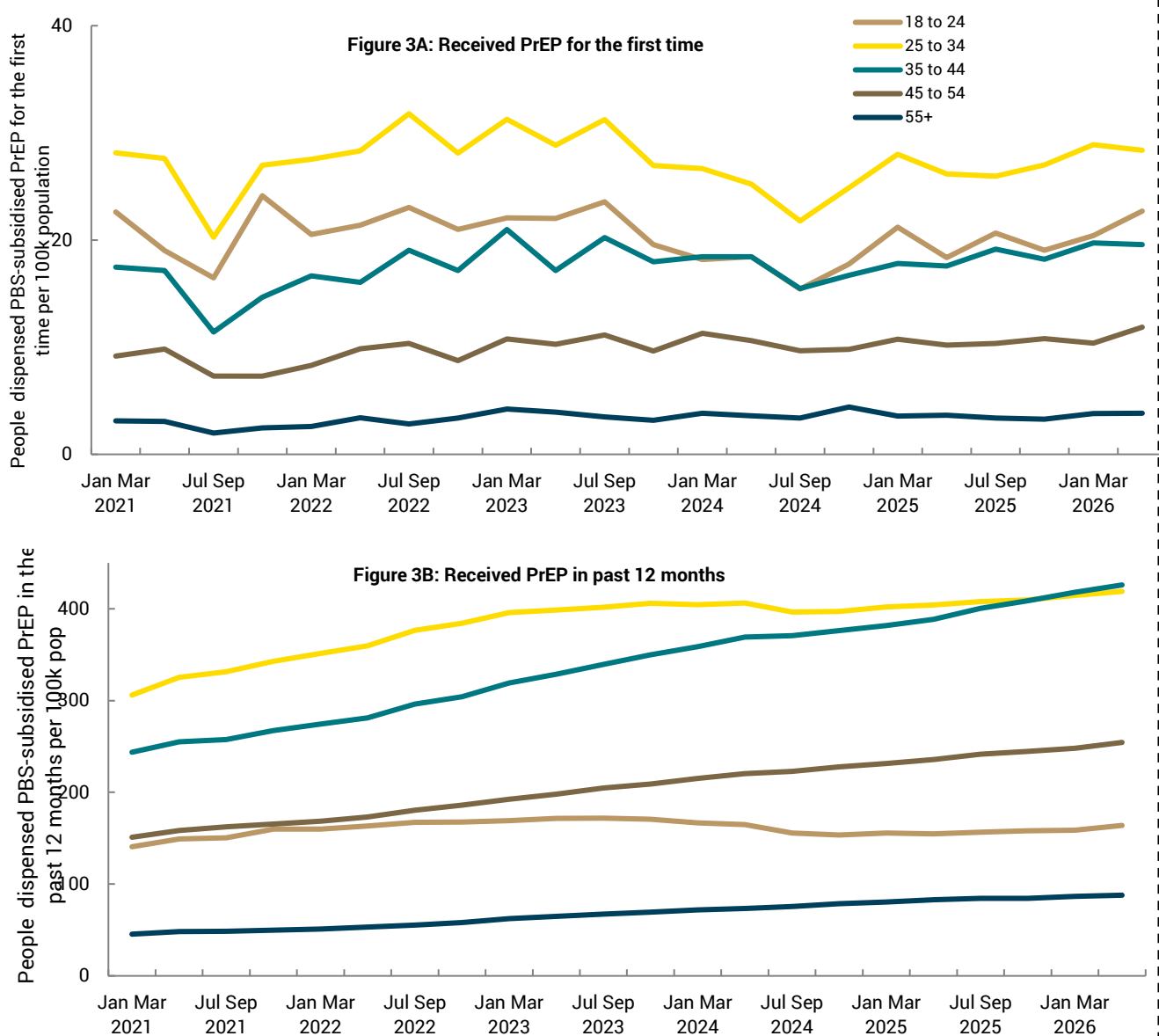
Age

Among people who ever used PBS-subsidised PrEP, 15.9% were 18 to 24, 38.0% were 25 to 34, 23.9% were 35 to 44, 12.9% were 45 to 54, and 9.2% were 55 or older when they received PBS-subsidised PrEP for the first time.

The rate per 100,000 population of accessing PBS-subsidised PrEP had previously been decreasing over time among all age groups except those aged 18 to 24 but has rebounded in Q3 and Q4 2024. (Figure 3A).

People aged 25 to 34 or 35 to 44 had the highest rates of recent dispensing per 100,000 population (Figure 3B). Rates are based on age group population not the population of people for whom PrEP may be suitable.

Figure 3: Rate of PrEP dispensing per 100,000 population for the first time (A) and in the past 12 months (B) by age group



Note. Population denominator is based on ABS quarterly estimated total Australian population within each age group.



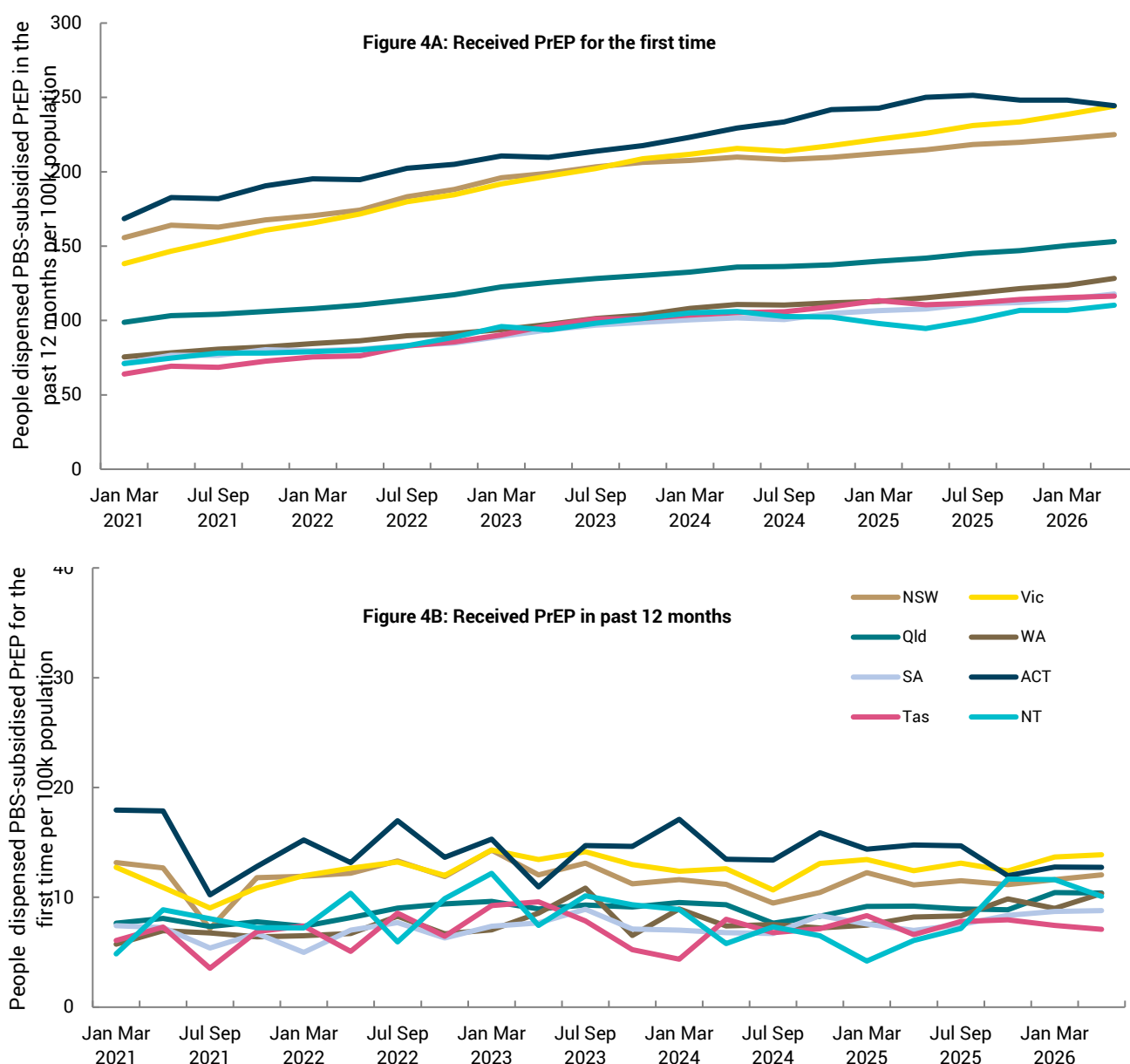
State and territory

Among people who ever accessed PBS-subsidised PrEP, 36.8% were in NSW, 29.8% in Vic, 16.9% in Qld, 7.4% in WA, 4.6% in SA, 2.4% in ACT, 1.4% in Tas, and 0.7% in NT when they first accessed it.

The number of people accessing PBS-subsidised PrEP for the first time have remained largely consistent since 2021 with some slight variation (Figure 4A).

ACT saw the highest rates per 100,000 population of first time and recent use, followed by Vic and NSW. Rates are based on total population not the population of people for whom PrEP could be suitable. Raw counts of dispensing by jurisdiction are shown in Appendix A.

Figure 4: Rate of PrEP dispensing per 100,000 population for the first time (A) and in the past 12 months (B) by state or territory



Note. Population denominator is based on ABS quarterly estimated total Australian population by state and territory.



Methods and notes on the dataset

The dataset is provided by the Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care. It contains de-identified linked data for all dispensed PrEP prescriptions subsidised by the PBS since 1 April 2018. Data are provided quarterly and can include retrospective updates, meaning numbers presented here could differ from previous editions. Each record corresponds to a single supply of PrEP and includes information about the date of prescription, date of supply, anonymised patient codes allowing linkage of supplies within patients, and anonymised prescriber codes allowing linkage of supplies within prescribers. The item codes were: 11276L, 11296M, 11306C, 12542D, 14636H.

The PBS dataset provides an underestimate of total PrEP purchasing in Australia. It does not include PrEP purchased outside of this scheme, either at full price from a pharmacy or online from overseas. In 2025, the GBQ+ Community Periodic Surveys found that 8.0% of gay and bisexual men who were using PrEP purchased it online from overseas pharmacies.¹ The estimates in this report also do not include PrEP provided to those without Medicare via federal funded programs that have been recently established in various states and jurisdictions across Australia. Overseas-born gay and bisexual men are becoming a growing focus of HIV prevention in Australia but people from that population who are not eligible for Medicare cannot purchase PBS-subsidised PrEP and are not accounted for in these data.

It is not possible to make conclusions about prevention-effective adherence from this dataset, that is, whether PrEP is being used during periods of HIV risk by individuals. It is also important to interpret dispensing patterns in the context of changing usage patterns. Community surveys of gay and bisexual men in 2025 found 40.0% used event-driven (on-demand; 2-1-1) PrEP.¹ A shift to more event-driven dosing means reduced frequency of refilling PrEP prescriptions without necessarily leading to a reduction in prevention-effective adherence.

The population rates presented in this report are based on the total population using ABS quarterly estimates for total persons (male and female). These rates are not based on a population of gay and bisexual men, or an estimate of people who might be suitable for PrEP. Any comparisons of population rates between jurisdictions or age groups should be interpreted with caution.

Report authors

Curtis Chan, Hamish McManus, Skye McGregor, Andrew E Grulich, Benjamin R Bavinton

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Publisher address

The Kirby Institute
Level 6, Wallace Wurth Building, UNSW Sydney
Kensington NSW 2052

Report contacts

Curtis Chan: cchan@kirby.unsw.edu.au
Benjamin Bavinton: bbavinton@kirby.unsw.edu.au

¹GBQ+ Community Periodic Surveys, 2025, CSRH, UNSW Sydney: <https://www.unsw.edu.au/research/csrh/our-projects/gbq-community-periodic-surveys>



Appendix A: Dispensing by jurisdiction

Table 1. Number of people dispensed PrEP in the past 12 months

Quarter	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	ACT	Tas	NT
2021 Q1	12,611	9,109	5,110	2,054	1,278	751	358	176
2021 Q2	13,279	9,626	5,350	2,136	1,373	818	389	185
2021 Q3	13,166	10,067	5,419	2,213	1,379	818	387	194
2021 Q4	13,569	10,518	5,537	2,263	1,448	862	412	194
2022 Q1	13,809	10,828	5,648	2,328	1,435	886	429	197
2022 Q2	14,142	11,241	5,794	2,388	1,459	888	434	201
2022 Q3	14,939	11,857	6,015	2,494	1,513	930	473	209
2022 Q4	15,385	12,205	6,230	2,551	1,549	946	490	225
2023 Q1	16,111	12,769	6,548	2,646	1,639	977	517	244
2023 Q2	16,452	13,212	6,750	2,766	1,725	977	554	239
2023 Q3	16,905	13,667	6,946	2,908	1,794	1,003	580	252
2023 Q4	17,248	14,192	7,105	2,994	1,836	1,026	582	261
2024 Q1	17,462	14,491	7,275	3,152	1,873	1,058	595	272
2024 Q2	17,714	14,840	7,498	3,252	1,905	1,089	605	275
2024 Q3	17,651	14,813	7,560	3,272	1,892	1,115	609	267
2024 Q4	17,805	15,127	7,658	3,331	1,972	1,157	628	267
2025 Q1	18,092	15,493	7,823	3,381	2,011	1,165	652	257
2025 Q2	18,332	15,817	7,978	3,472	2,037	1,203	638	249
2025 Q3	18,711	16,282	8,194	3,588	2,111	1,215	645	265
2025 Q4	18,892	16,511	8,334	3,702	2,131	1,203	659	284
2026 Q1	19,173	16,935	8,565	3,788	2,182	1,207	668	285
2026 Q2	19,442	17,383	8,744	3,948	2,251	1,191	674	295



Appendix A: Dispensing by jurisdiction

Table 2. Number of people dispensed PrEP for the first time each quarter

Quarter	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	ACT	Tas	NT
2021 Q1	1,067	839	396	156	133	80	34	<30
2021 Q2	1,026	716	419	190	130	80	41	<30
2021 Q3	579	592	382	185	97	46	<30	<30
2021 Q4	954	710	405	176	121	58	39	<30
2022 Q1	966	784	386	179	90	69	42	<30
2022 Q2	991	829	428	185	127	60	<30	<30
2022 Q3	1,086	871	477	230	140	78	49	<30
2022 Q4	973	794	500	187	115	63	37	<30
2023 Q1	1,176	953	515	198	135	71	53	31
2023 Q2	995	901	481	243	141	51	55	<30
2023 Q3	1,090	956	504	311	165	69	45	<30
2023 Q4	939	883	497	189	132	69	30	<30
2024 Q1	976	848	523	261	131	81	<30	<30
2024 Q2	944	867	514	217	127	64	46	<30
2024 Q3	804	739	425	223	126	64	39	<30
2024 Q4	887	909	462	215	157	76	41	<30
2025 Q1	1,044	938	513	224	143	69	48	<30
2025 Q2	950	871	517	247	132	71	38	<30
2025 Q3	987	924	505	252	143	71	45	<30
2025 Q4	958	877	503	300	159	58	46	31
2026 Q1	1,001	971	594	276	166	62	43	31
2026 Q2	1,040	989	594	318	168	62	41	<30