SACENDU

SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNITY EPIDEMIOLOGY NETWORK ON DRUG USE

Treatment Demand Data • Service Quality Measures (SQM)
• Community-Based Harm Reduction Services

60TH SYMPOSIUM

GAUTENG REGION

TREATMENT DATA

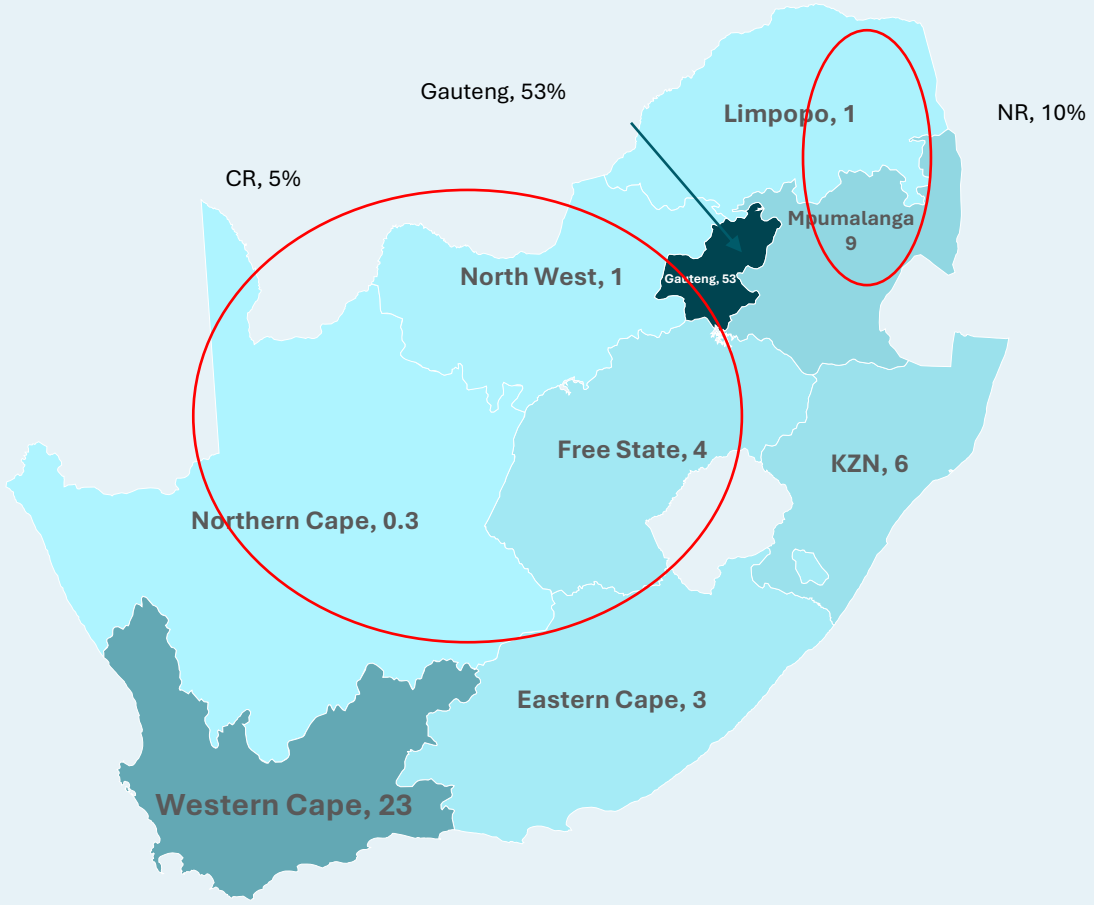
CELEBRATING OUR 60TH SACENDU SYMPOSIUM

MS JODILEE ERASMUS & MS NANCY HORNSBY

Phase 60 (26a)| Jan-Jun 2026

saMRC advancinglife

Gauteng accounts for 53% of treatment admissions nationally



Admissions rose to 5,206 in Jan–Jun 2026

PERIOD CHANGE

+46%

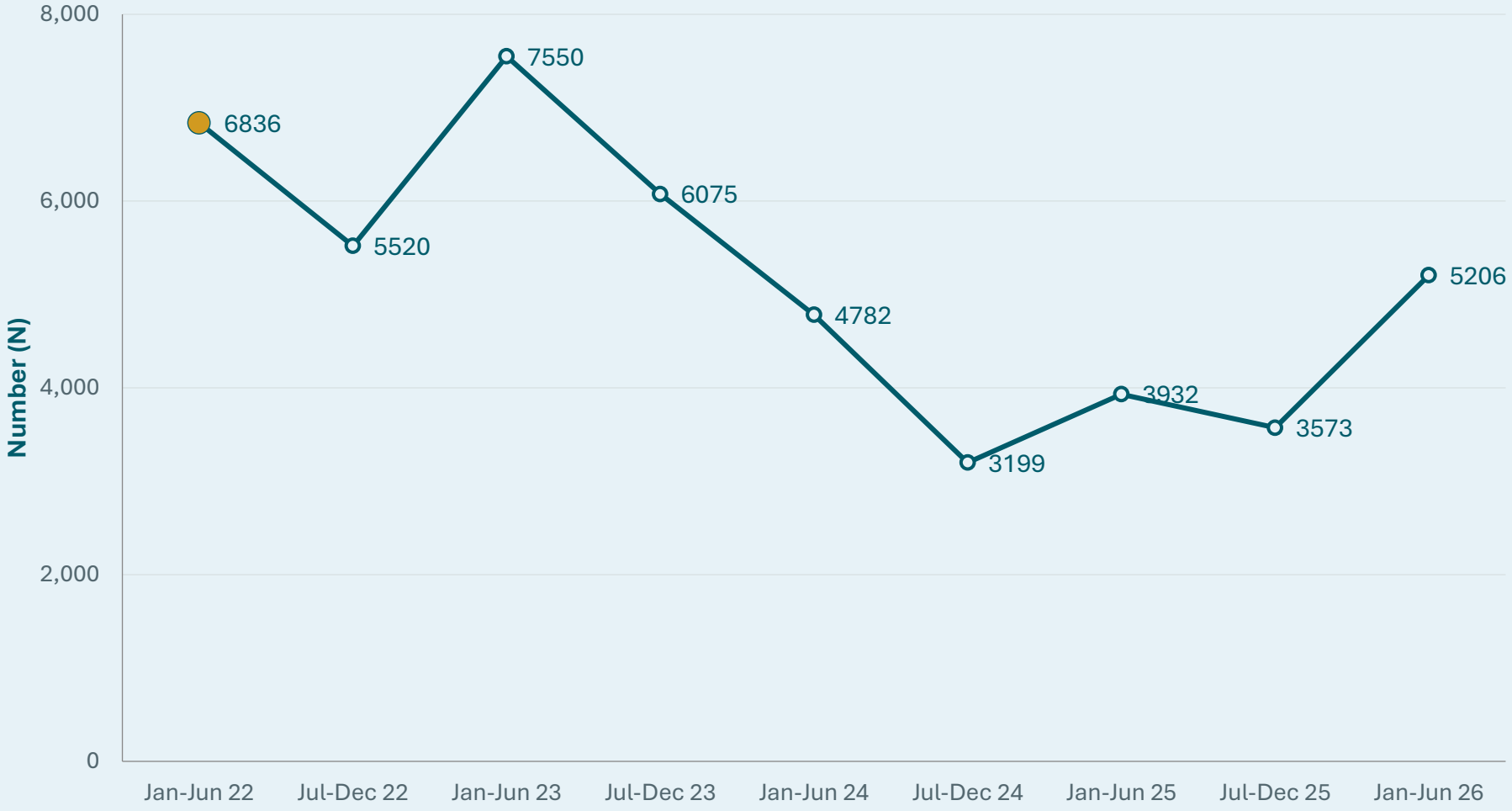
(95% CI: +39.6% to +52.0%)

OVERALL CHANGE

-24%

(95% CI: -26.5% to -21.0%)

6,836 in Jan–Jun 2022
5,206 in Jan–Jun 2026



Men comprise 85% of treatment admissions

85%

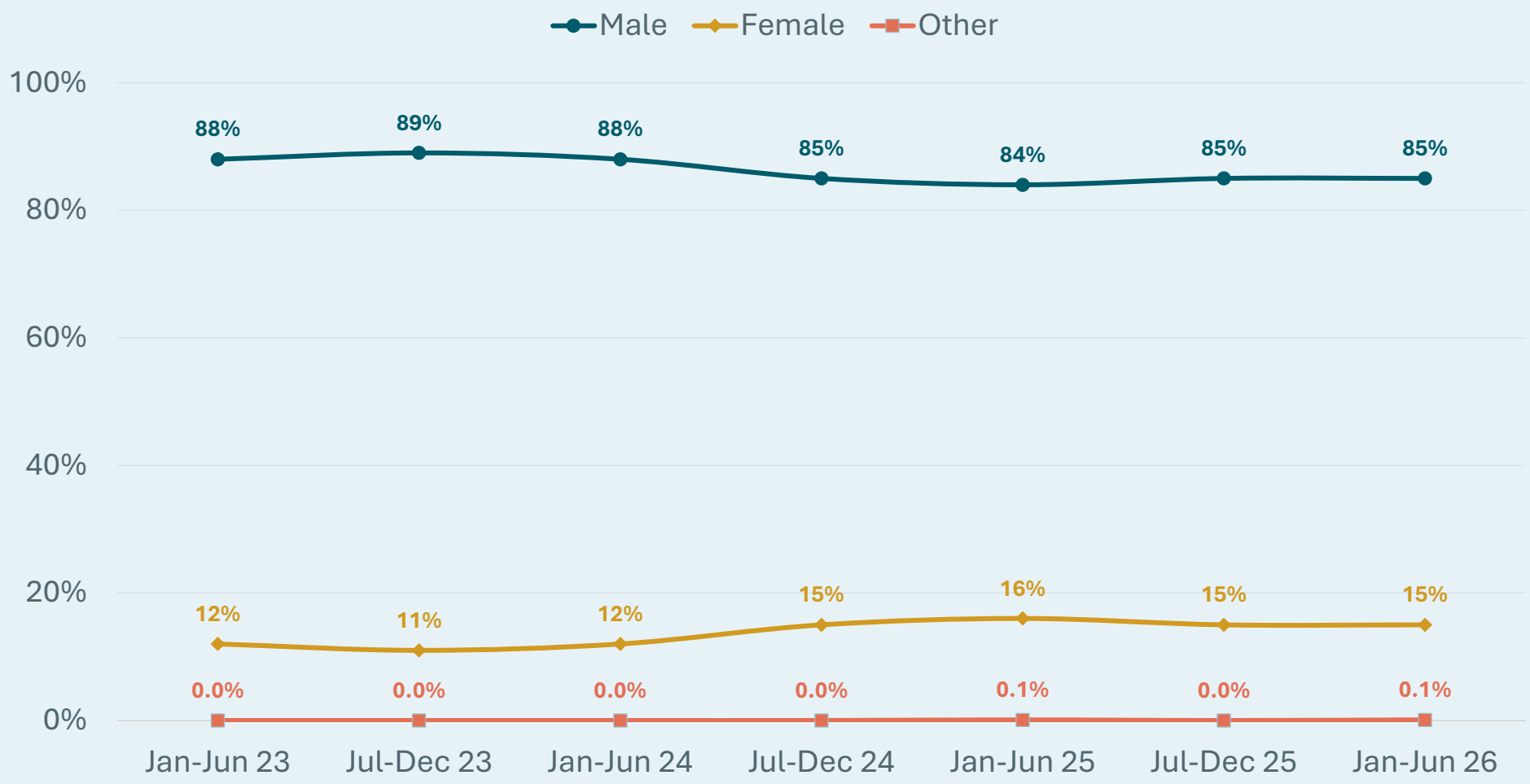
95% CI: [83.6-85.6]

male service users

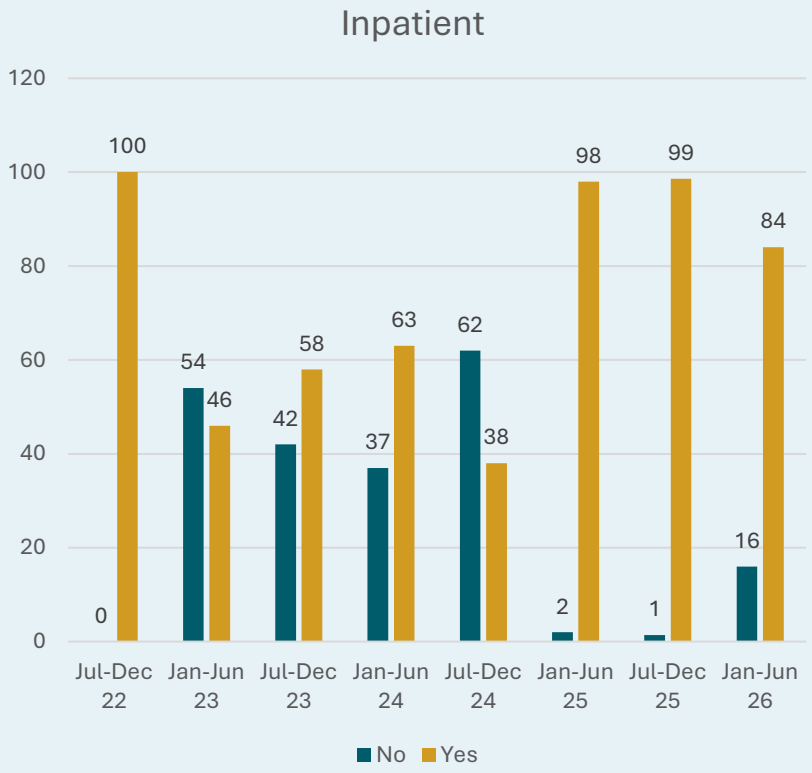
15%

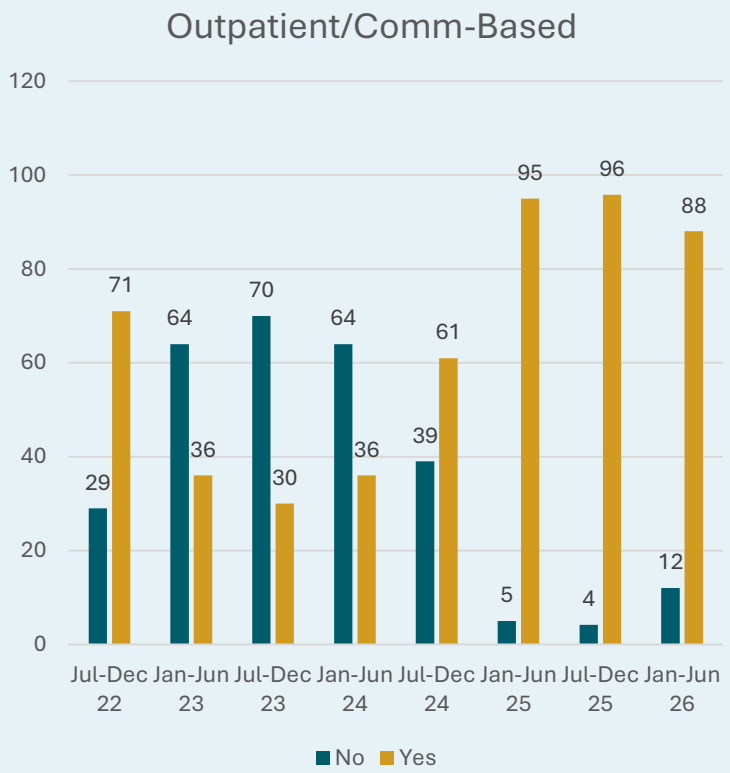
95% CI: [14.3-16.3]

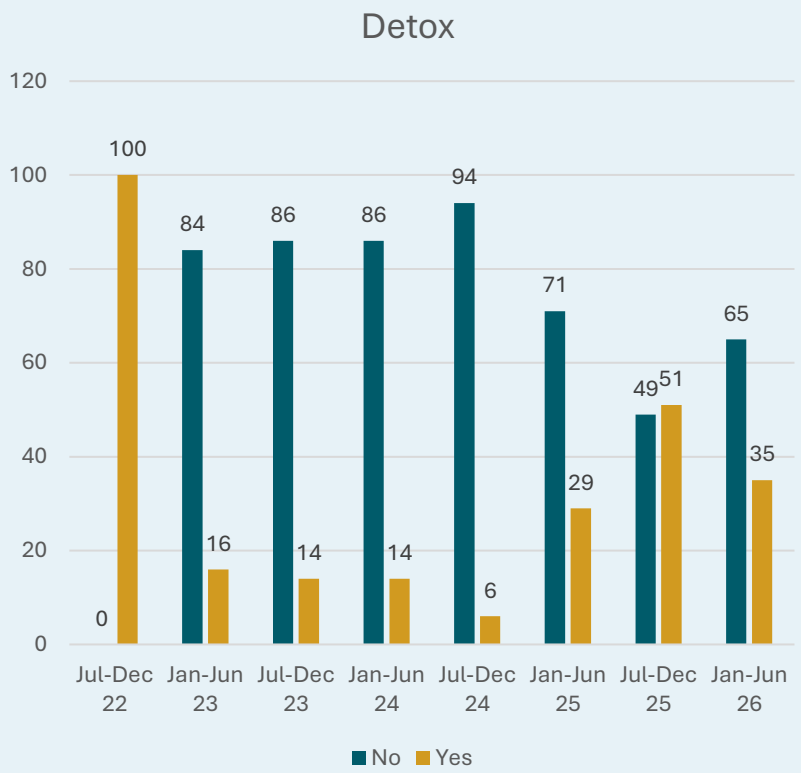
female service users



Treatment settings and detox access







JUL–DEC 2025 TO JAN–JUN 2026

Latest: inpatient 84%, outpatient 88%, detox 35%

Grade 8–12 is the most common education level

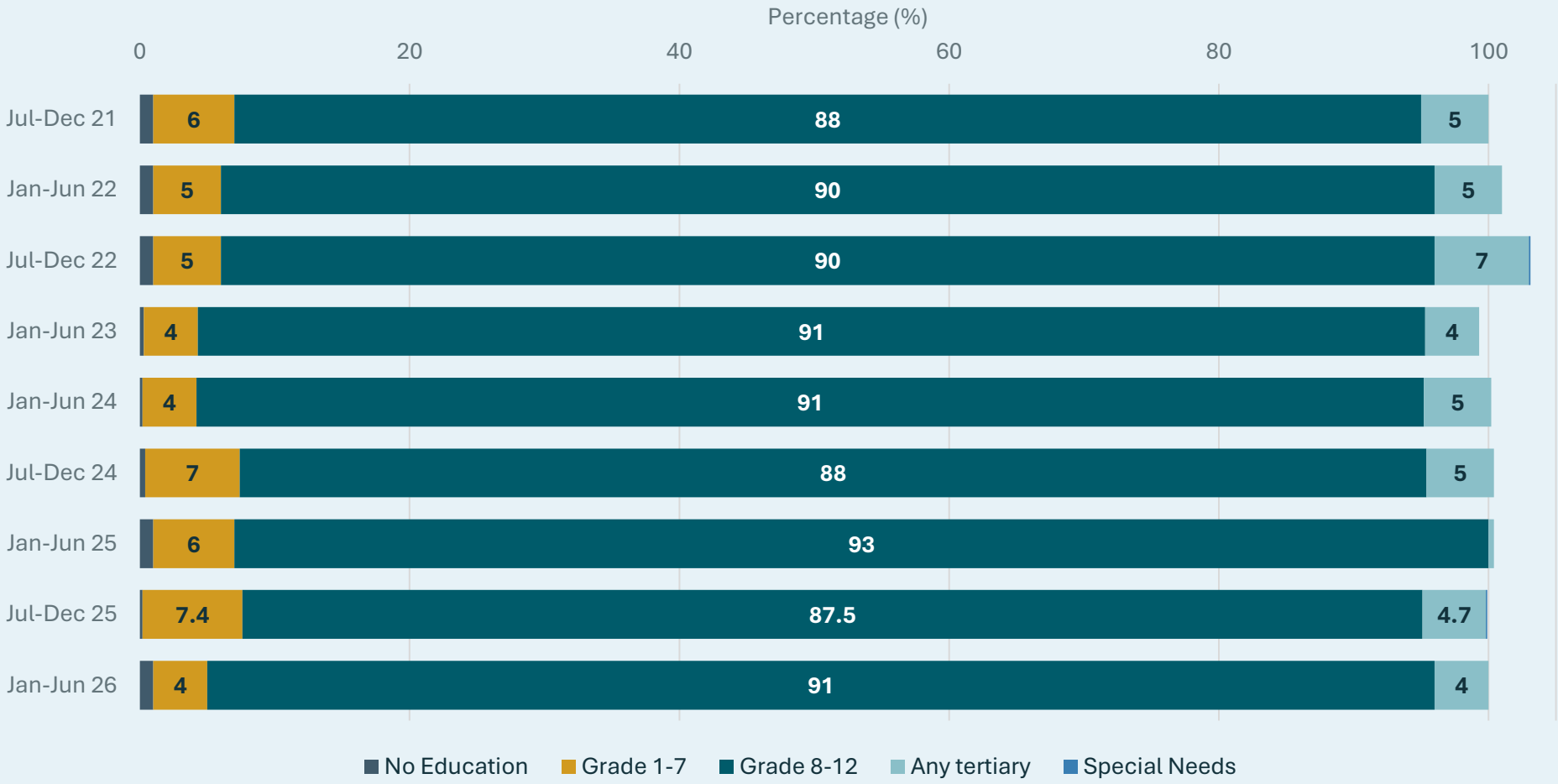
91%

95% CI: [90.1-91.7]

Grade 8–12

KEY TAKEAWAY

Grade 8–12 accounts for 87.5–93% of service users across the periods shown.

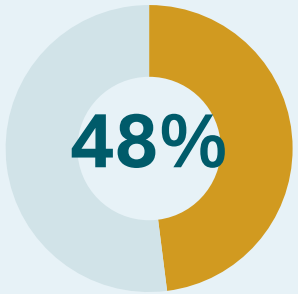


School learners and students make up 31%

56%

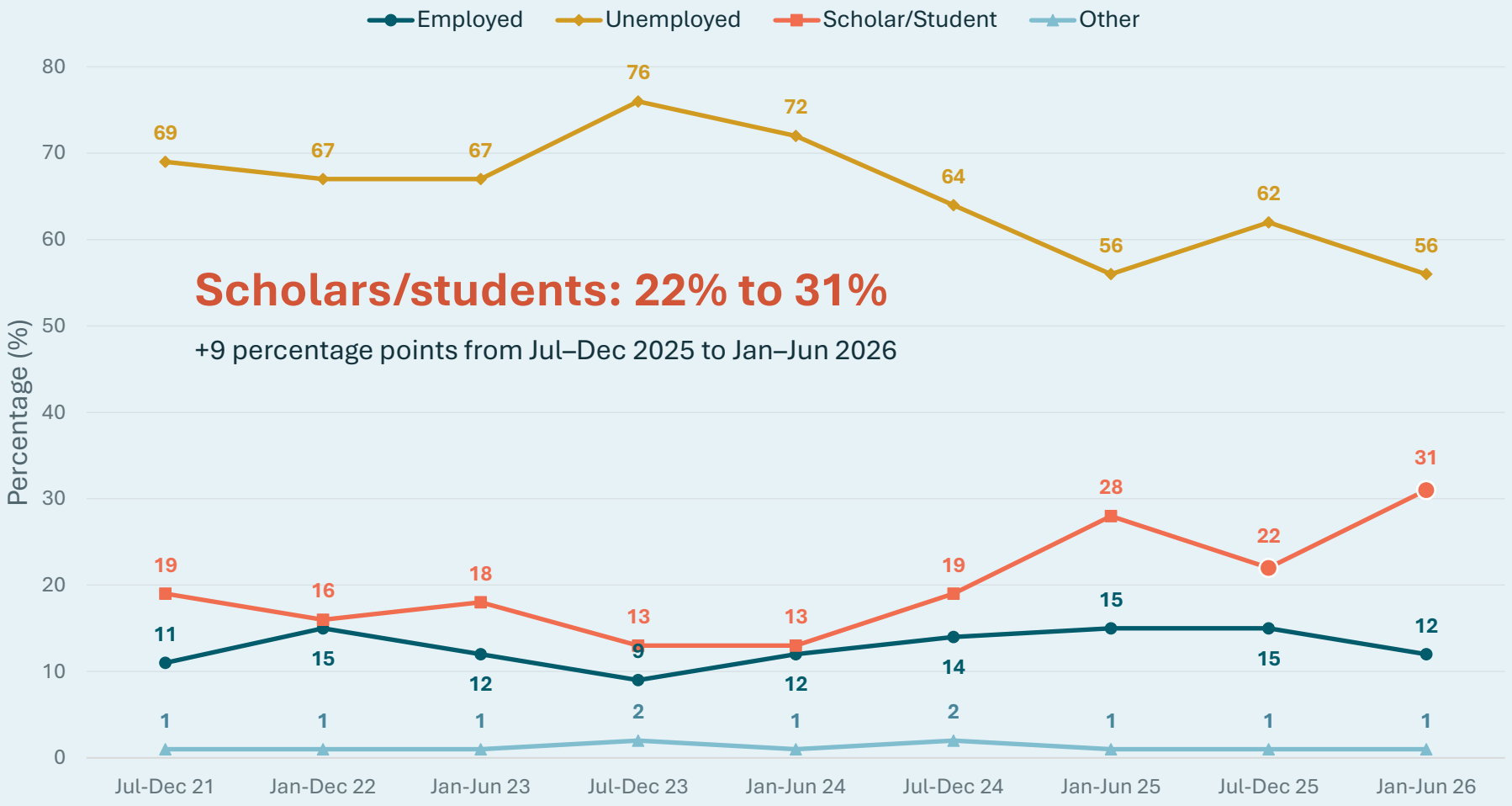
95% CI: [54.5-57.2]

Unemployed



Unemployed >6 months

Jan–Jun 2026



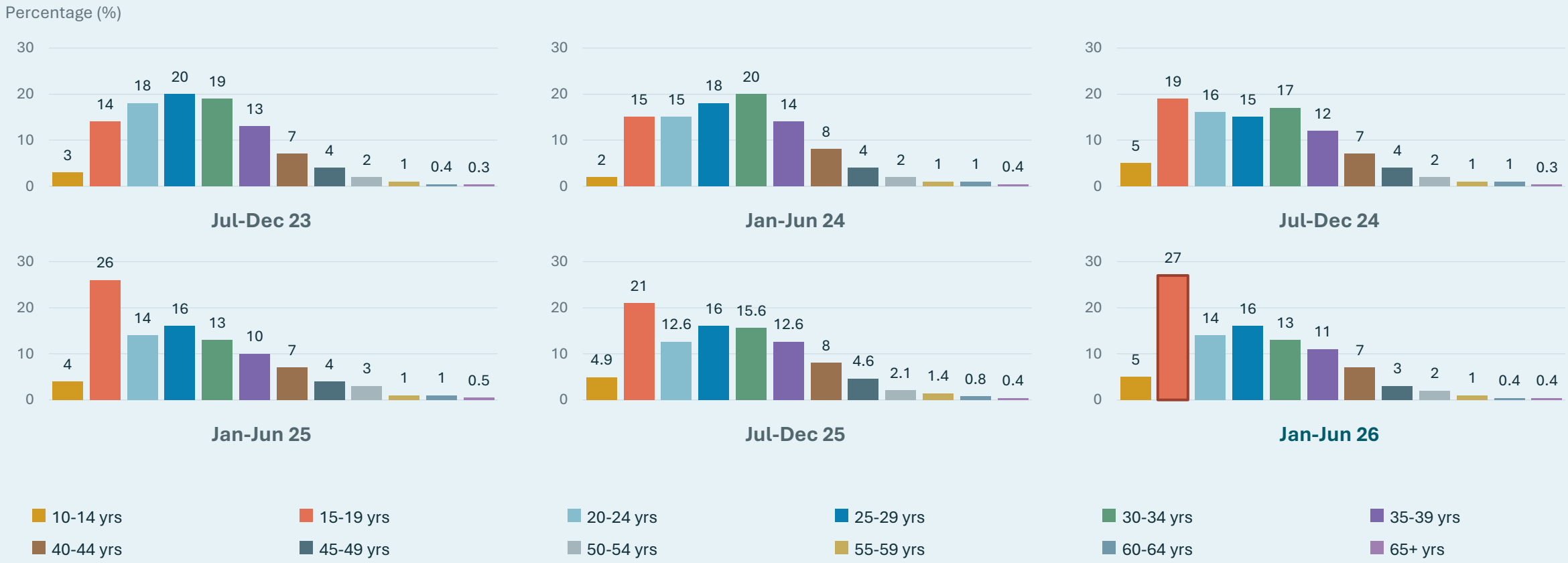
CI requires exact counts and the valid employment-status denominator.

15–19 years lead at 27% in Jan–Jun 2026

Change from Jul–Dec 2025 to Jan–Jun 2026

Percentage-point changes

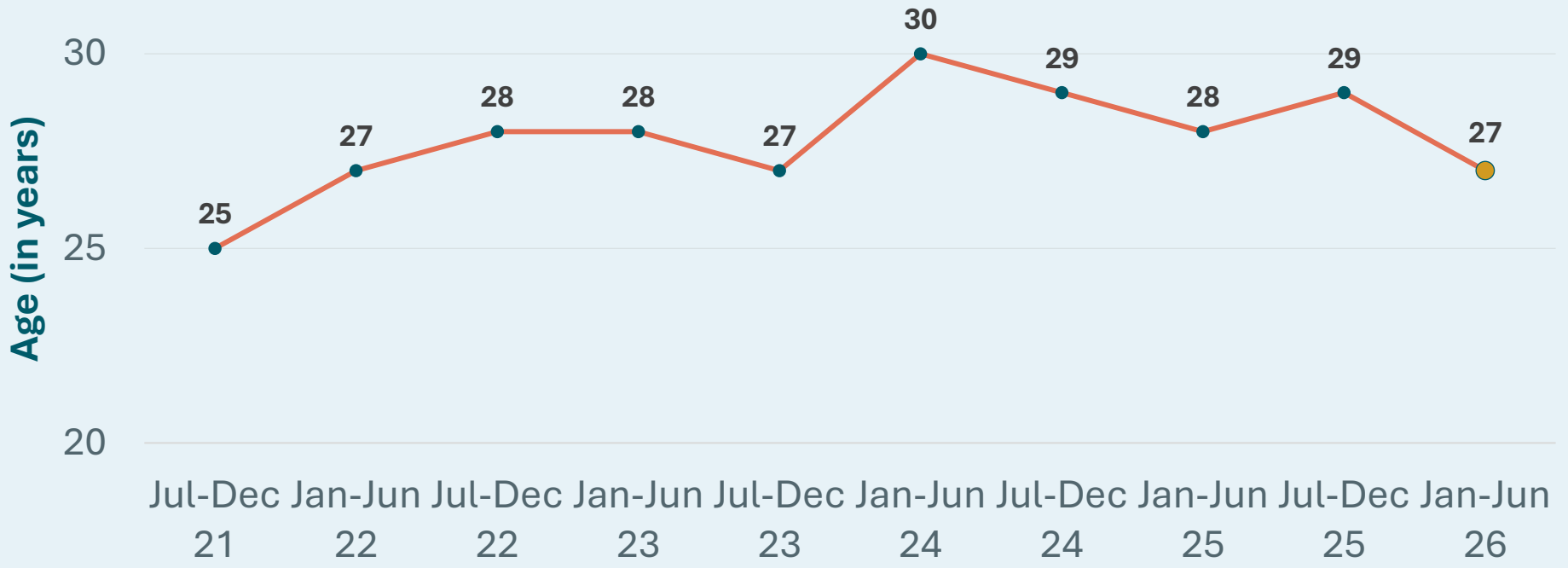
Age group	Change	Approx. 95% CI (pp)
15–19 years	**+6.0 pp**	+4.22 to +7.78
10–14 years	**+0.1 pp**	−0.81 to +1.01
30–34 years	**−2.6 pp**	−4.08 to −1.12
35–39 years	**−1.6 pp**	−2.97 to −0.23



Mean age at admission

27

years, mean age



JUL–DEC 2025 TO JAN–JUN 2026

Mean age: 29 to 27 years

Self-referrals lead, followed by schools

Jul–Dec 2025 to Jan–Jun 2026

33%

Self-referrals

46% to 33% (−13 pp)
CI (pp): −15.1 to −10.9

22%

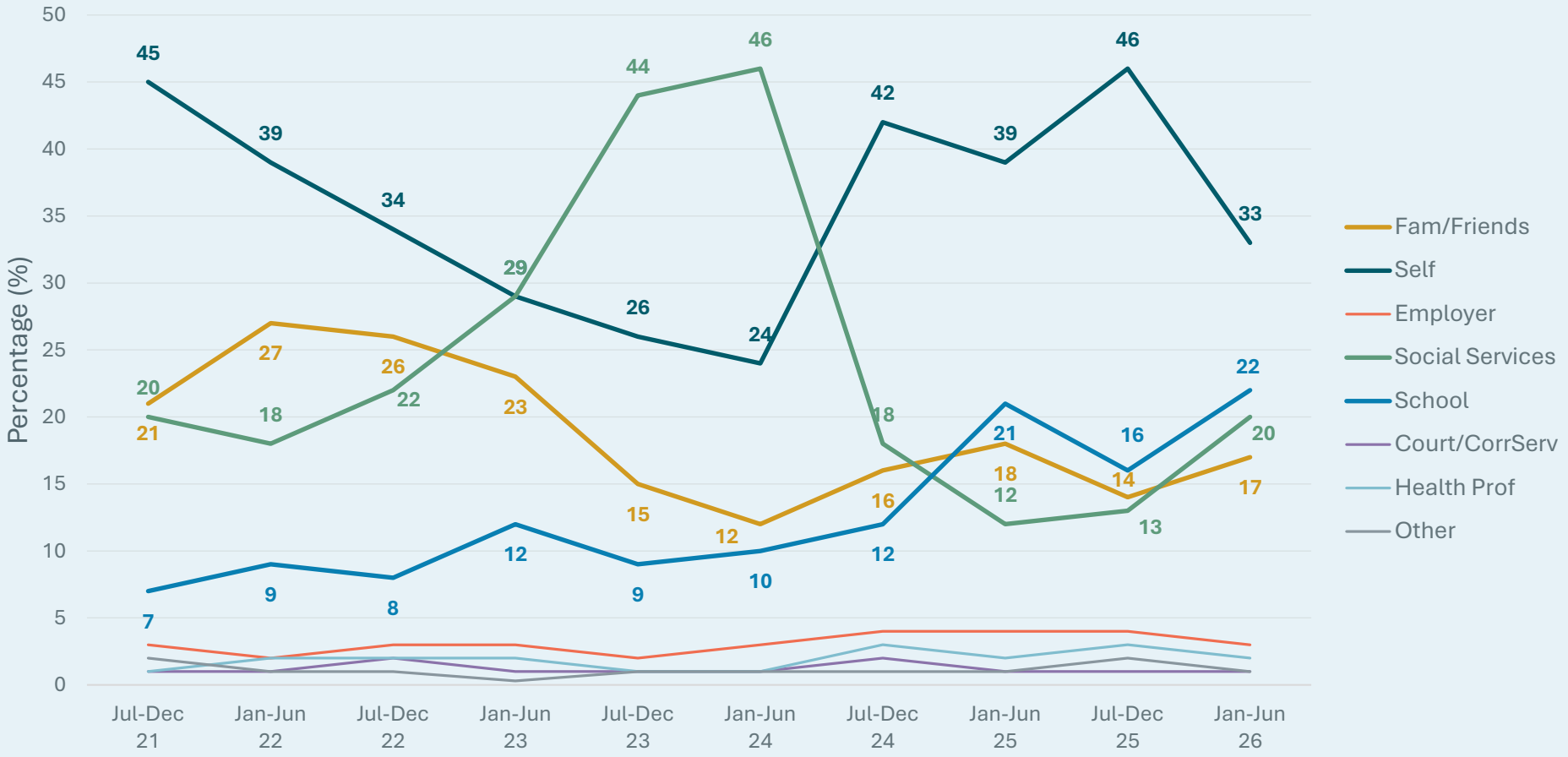
School referrals

16% to 22% (+6 pp)

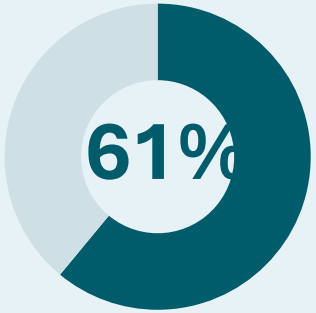
20%

Social services

13% to 20% (+7 pp)

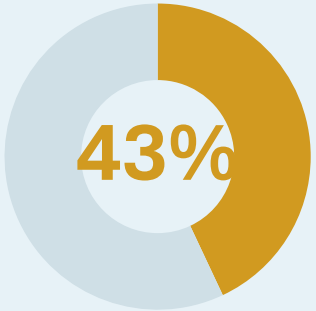


61% report previous HIV testing

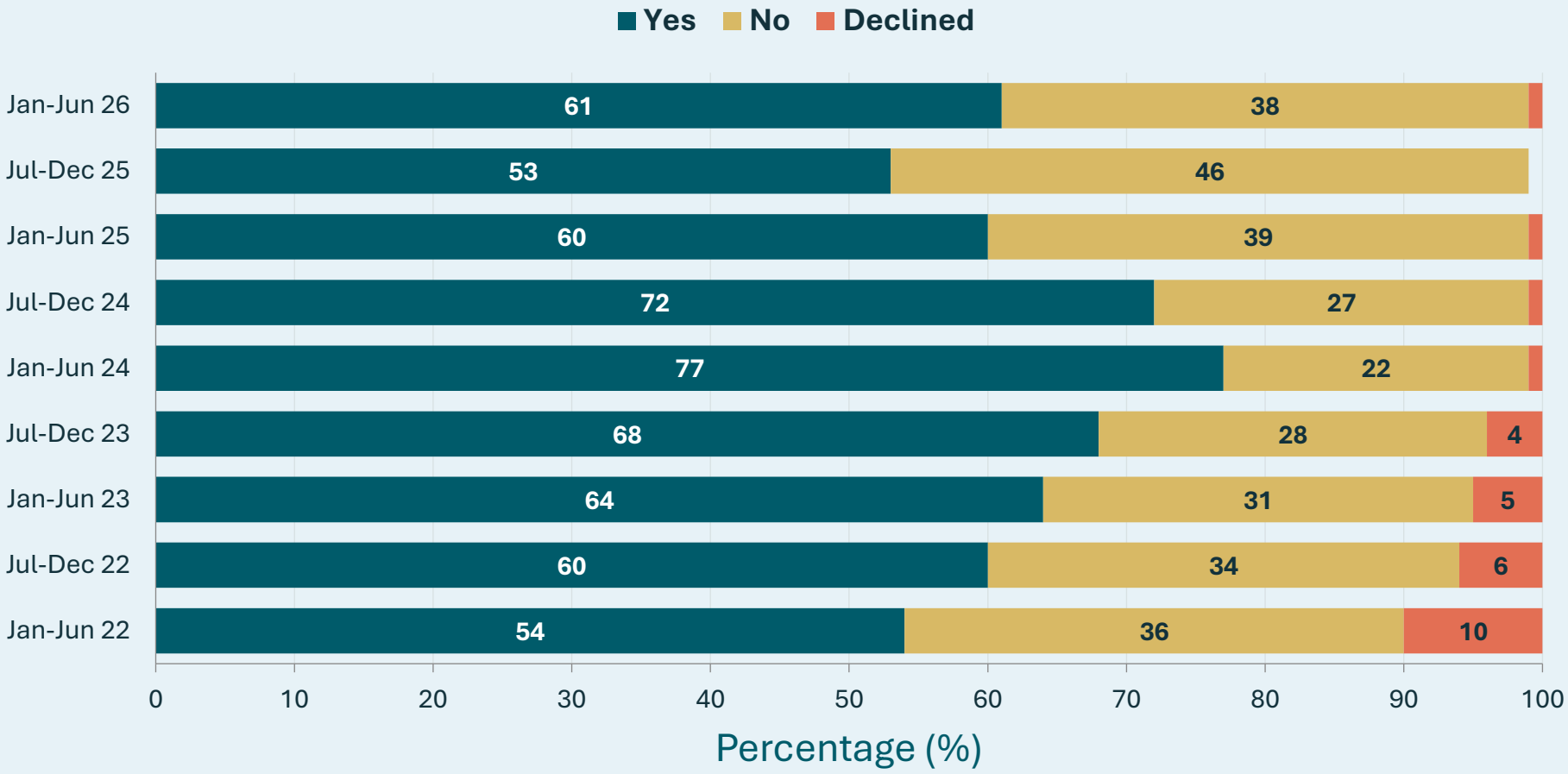


95% CI: [59.3%-62.0%]

Previously tested for HIV



Tested within the past 12 months



Previously tested: 53% to 61% (+8 pp). Not tested in the past 12 months: 17%.

37% of service users report willingness to test for HIV

36.8%

Mean willingness across 8 periods

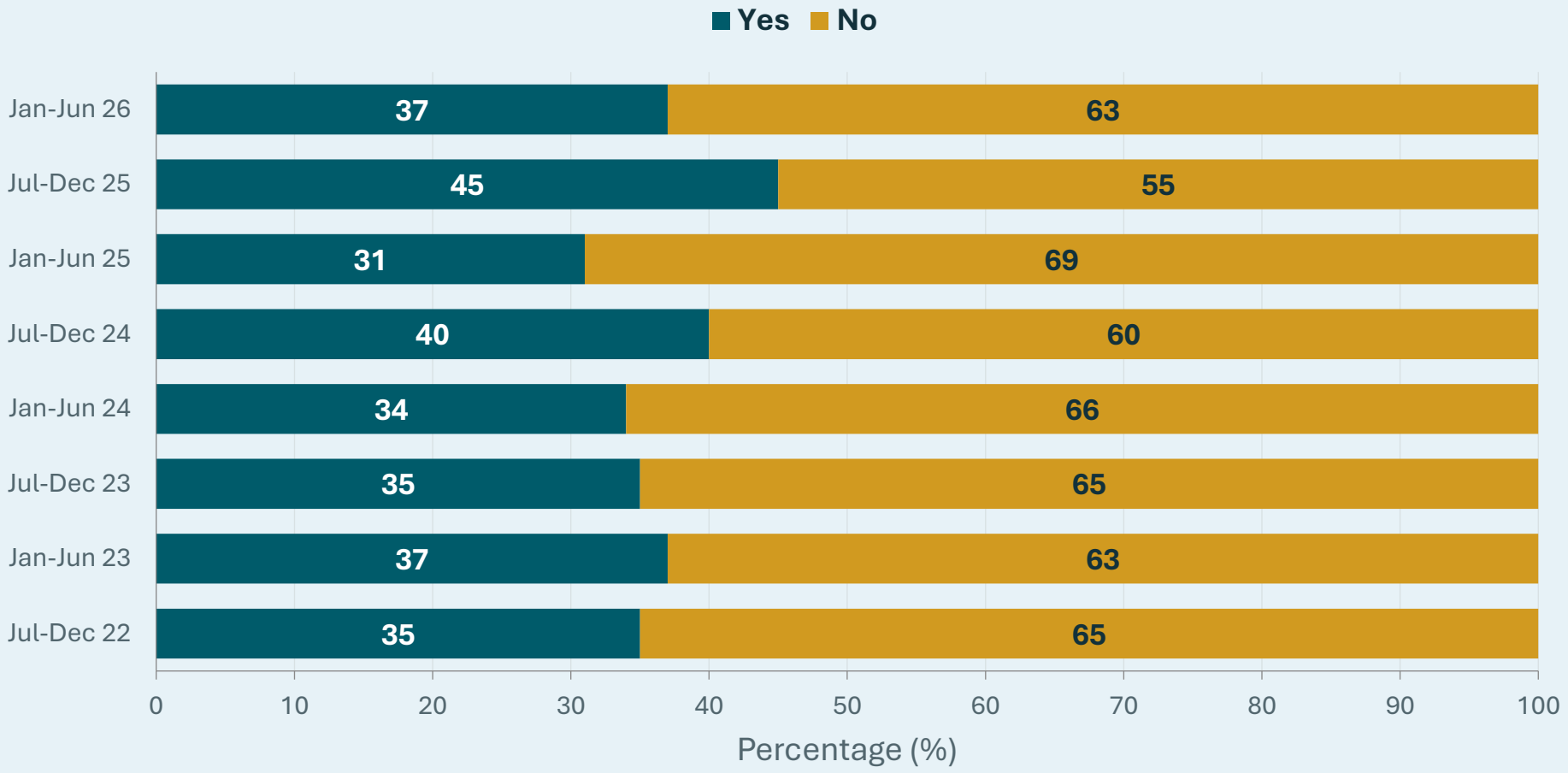
Unweighted average

Peak: 45%
Jul–Dec 2025

Latest: 37%
Jan–Jun 2026

+2 pp

First to last period
35% to 37%



87% of service users have a permanent abode

OVERALL TRENDS

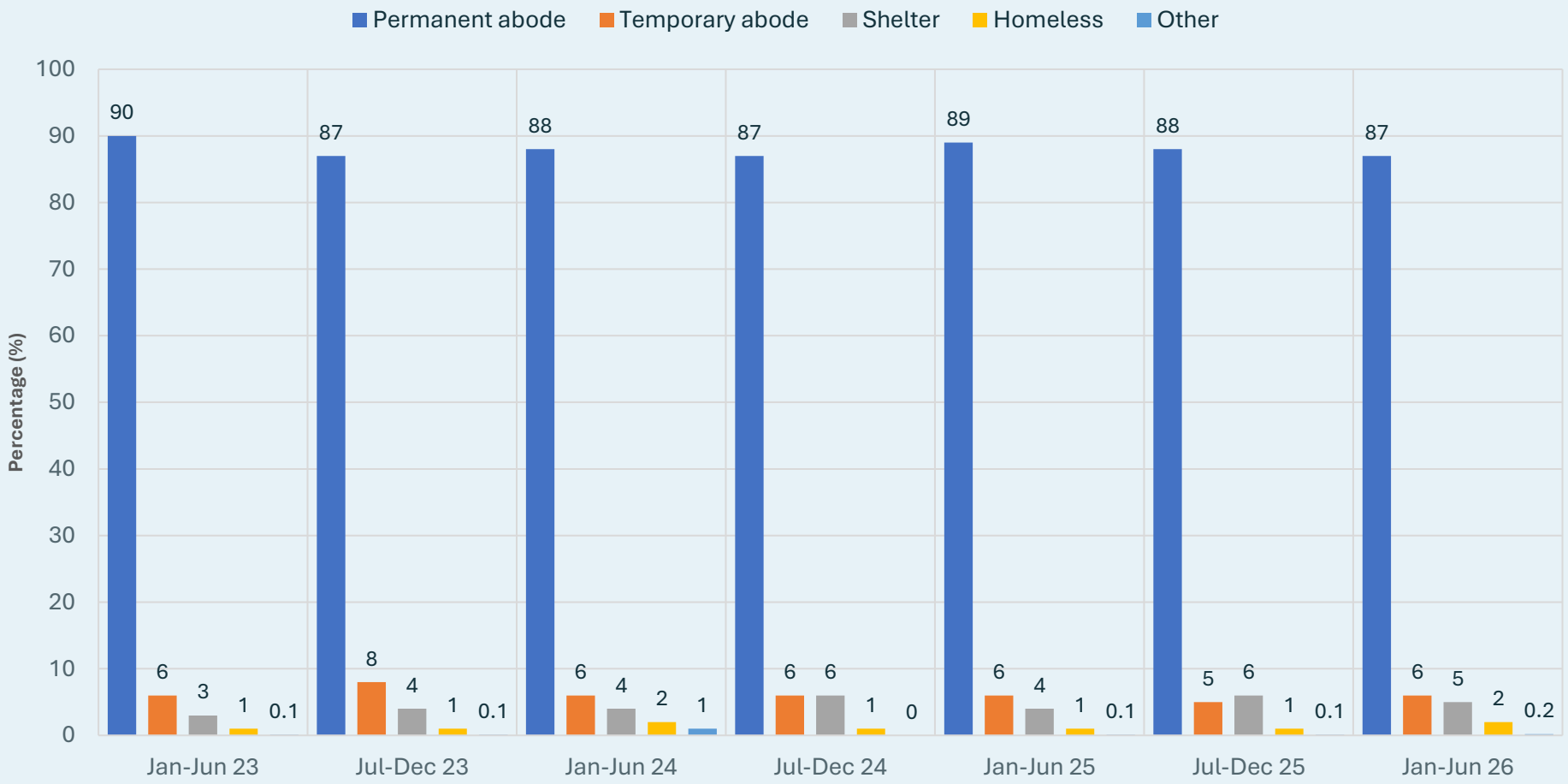
Jan–Jun 2023 to Jan–Jun 2026

−3 pp
Permanent abode
90% to 87%

0 pp
Temporary abode
6% to 6%

+2 pp
Shelter
3% to 5%

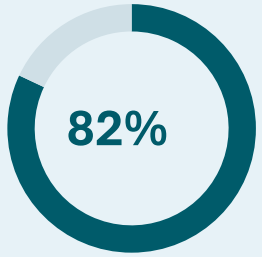
+1 pp
Homeless: 1% to 2%



Latest other: 0.2%. Jul–Dec 2025 to Jan–Jun 2026: permanent abode 88% to 87% (−1 pp).

95% CI: [add exact counts and valid denominators]. pp = percentage points.

Service users' living arrangements



Live with parents or relatives

Jan–Jun 2026

OVERALL TRENDS

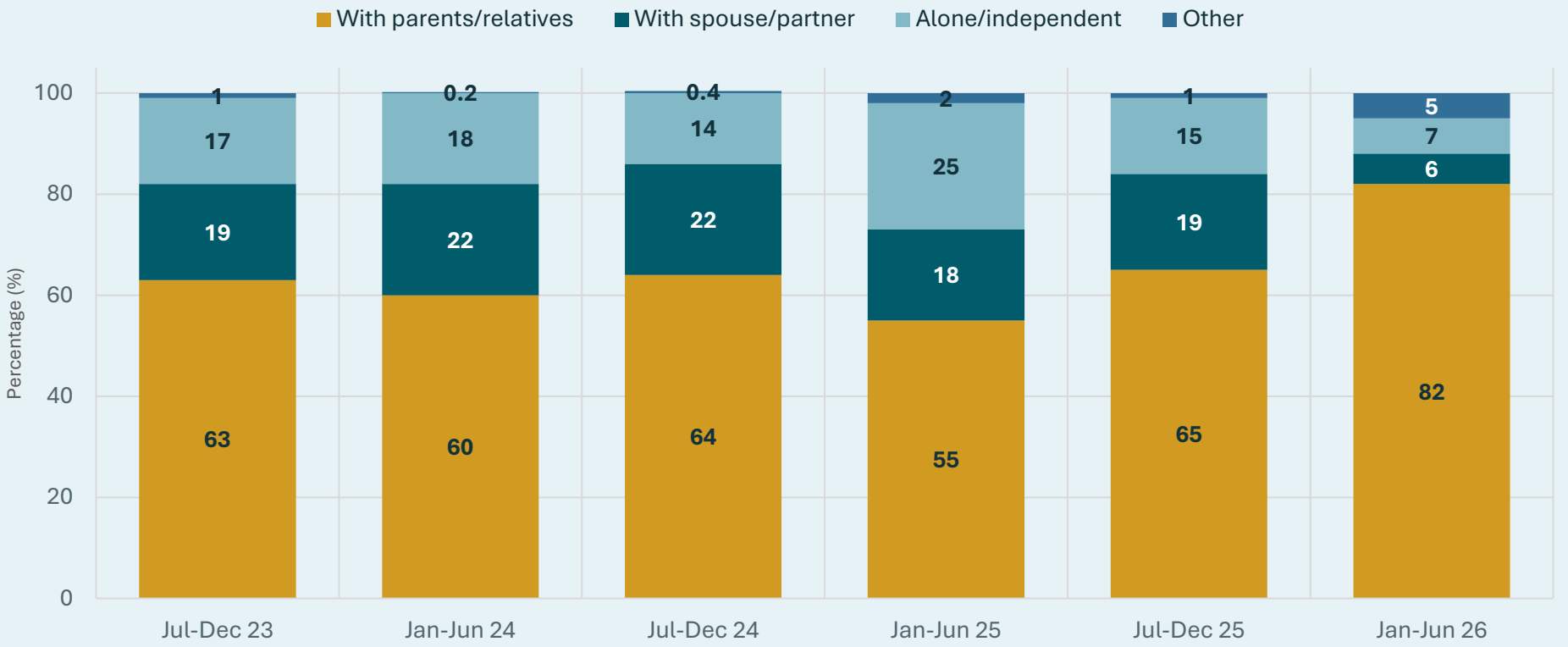
Jul–Dec 2023 to Jan–Jun 2026
Percentage points (pp)

+19 Parents / relatives

−10 Alone / independent

−13 Spouse / partner

+4 Other



With parents or relatives: 65% to 82%
Jul–Dec 2025 to Jan–Jun 2026 (+17 pp)

95% CI: [add exact counts and valid denominators]

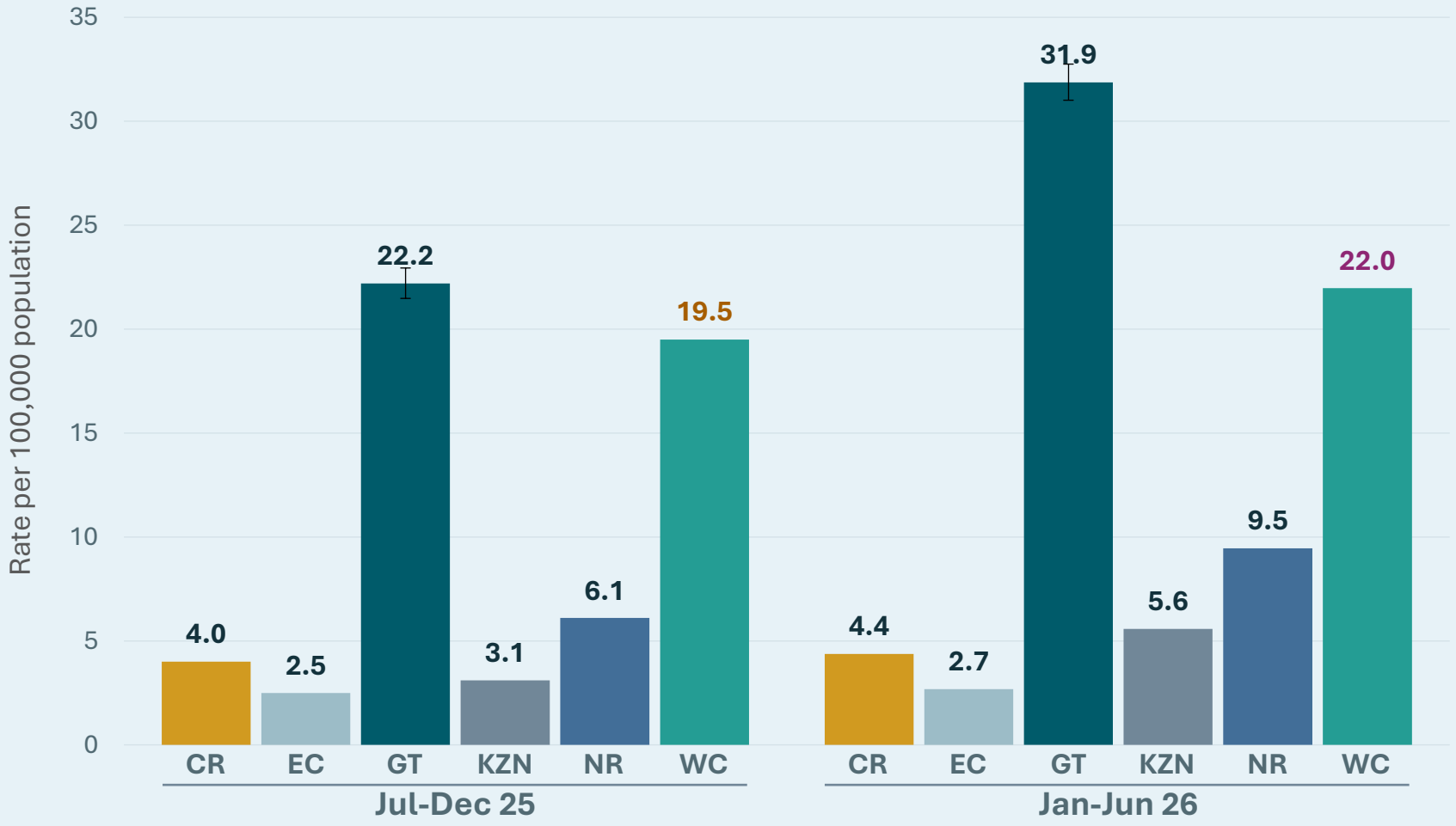
Other specified	n
Homeless/Shelter/Unstable	233
Friends	6
Children's home/Youth centre	5

01

POPULATION-ADJUSTED ESTIMATES

Population-adjusted estimates reveal large regional gaps

Population-based treatment admission rates



GAUTENG COMPARISON

Jan–Jun 2026 / Jul–Dec 2025

1.44

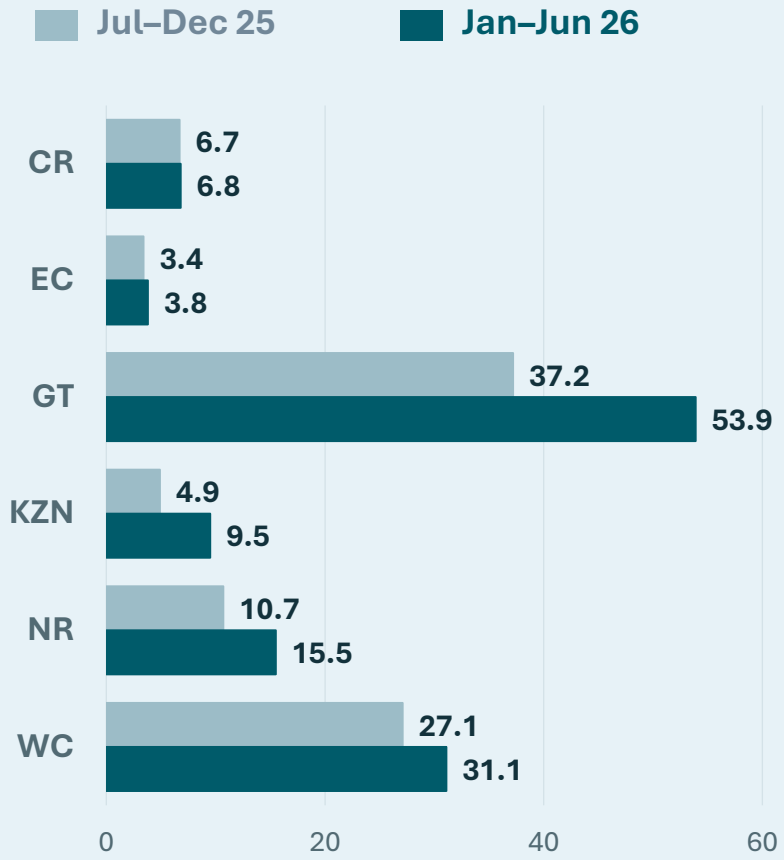
Rate ratio

95% CI 1.38–1.50

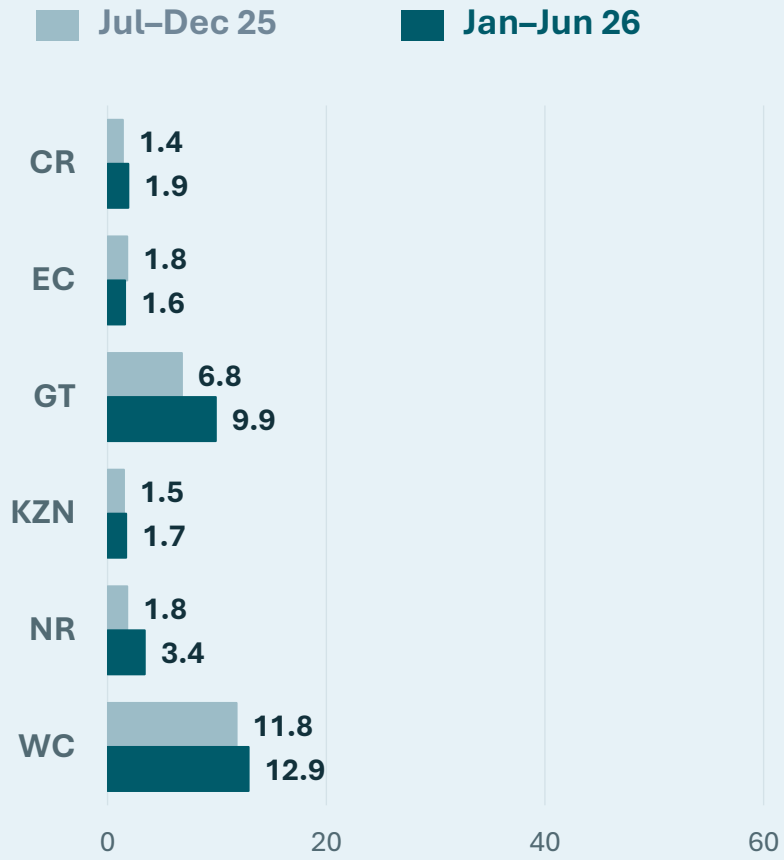
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Treatment Demand Data + Service Quality Measures (SQM) + Community-Based Harm Reduction Services

Treatment admission rates by sex

Male



Female



Both charts use the same scale for direct comparison

Adjusted rate per 100,000 population

GAUTENG RATE RATIOS
Jan–Jun 2026 / Jul–Dec 2025

Males

RR = 1.45

95% CI: [0.65-0.72]

Females

RR = 1.46

95% CI: [0.61-0.76]

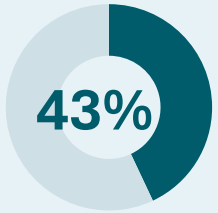
02

SUBSTANCES OF USE

Substance patterns

Dagga is the leading primary substance

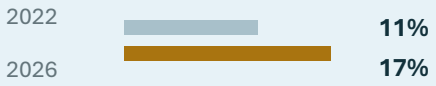
JAN–JUN 2026



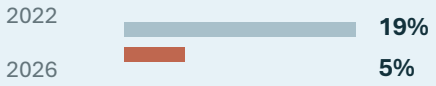
Dagga

Leading primary substance
CI: [41.3% - 43.9%]

Alcohol +6 pp

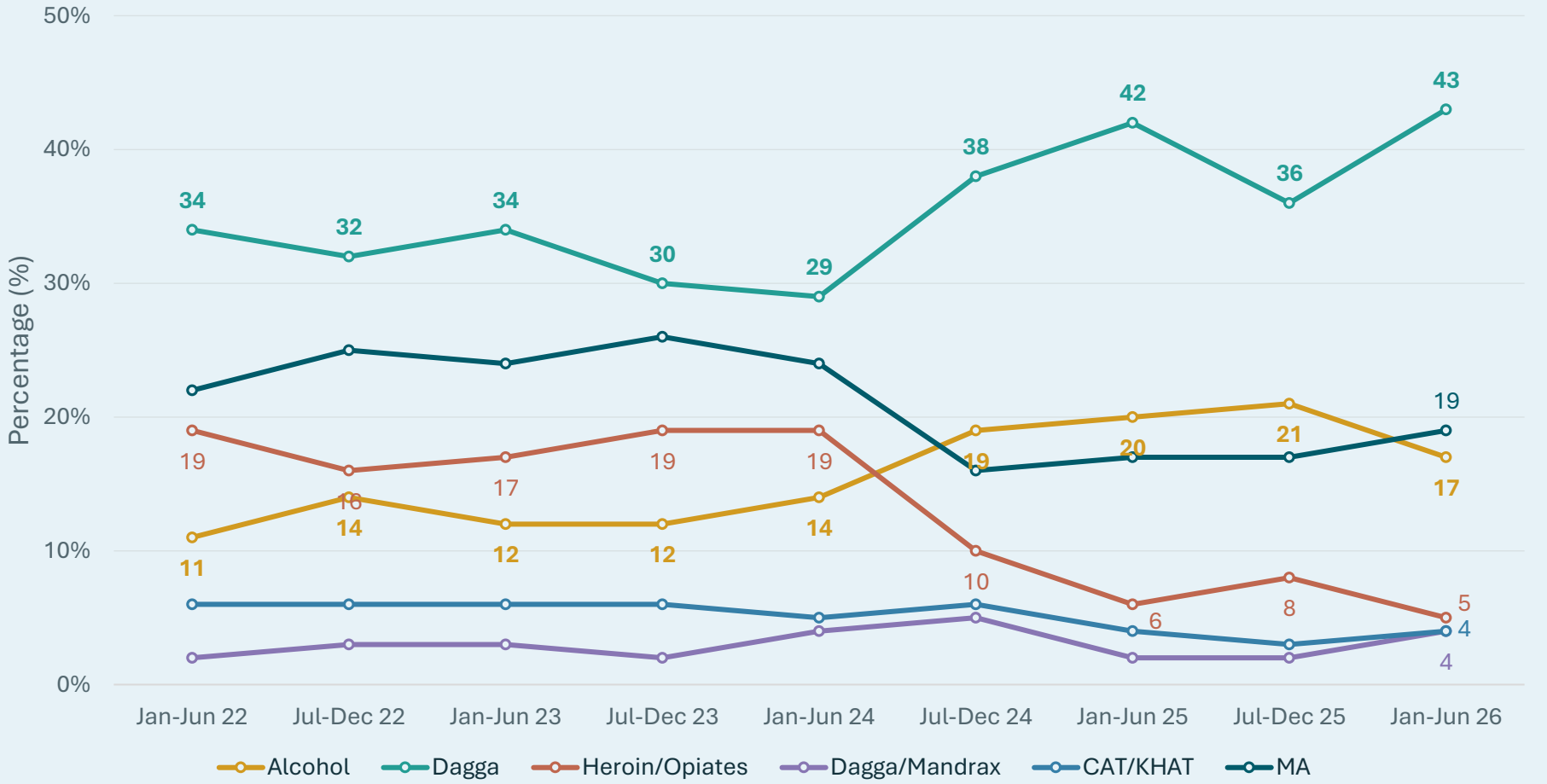


Heroin / opiates −14 pp



Jan–Jun 2022 vs Jan–Jun 2026
pp = percentage points

PP change for Dagga (95% CI):
Jul–Dec 25 to Jan–Jun 26: +7 pp (+4.9 to +9.1)
Jan–Jun 22 to Jan–Jun 26: +9 pp (+7.2 to +10.8)



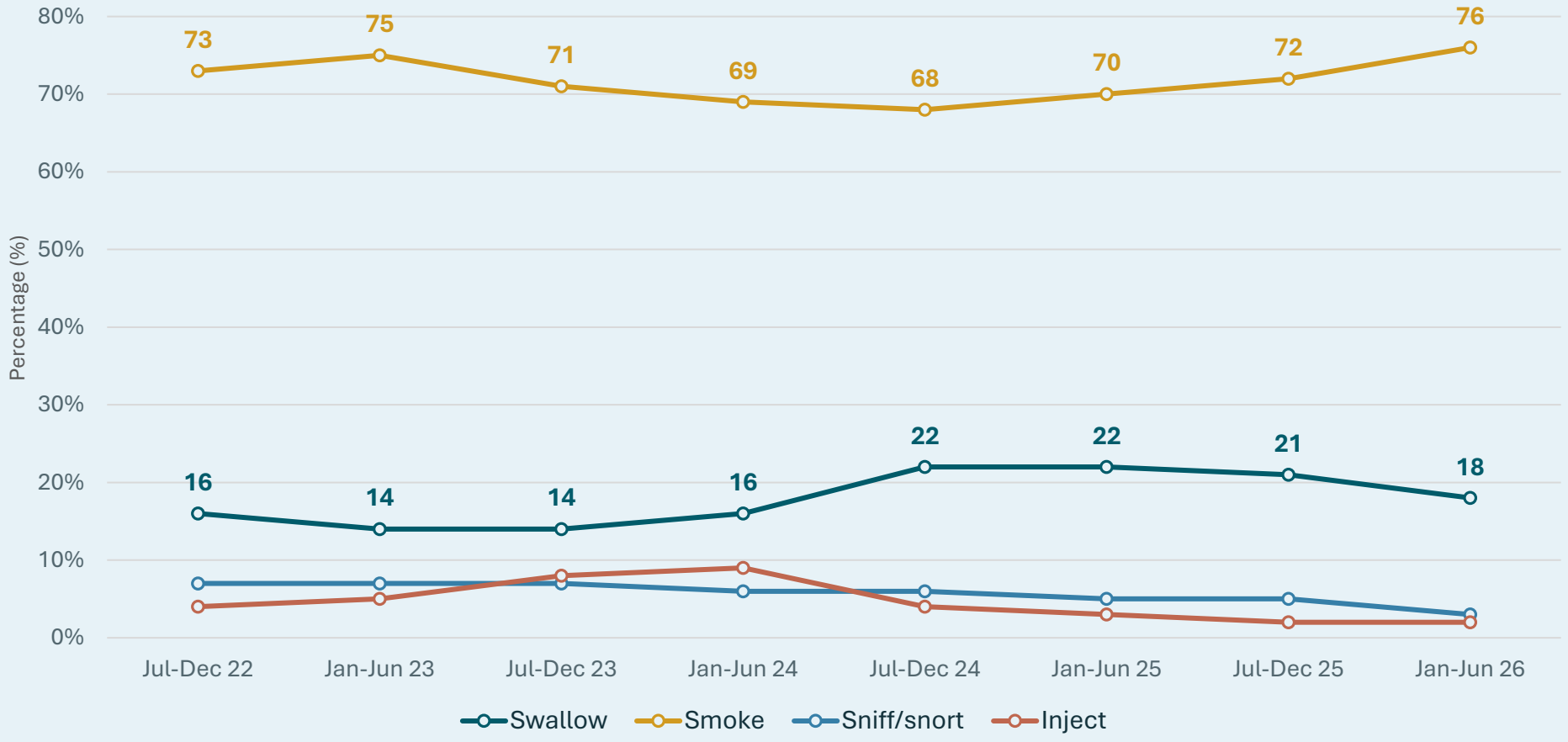
Smoking remains dominant

76%

CI: [74.6% – 76.9%]

Smoking remains the main route of administration

JAN–JUN 2026



Routes of heroin administration

64%

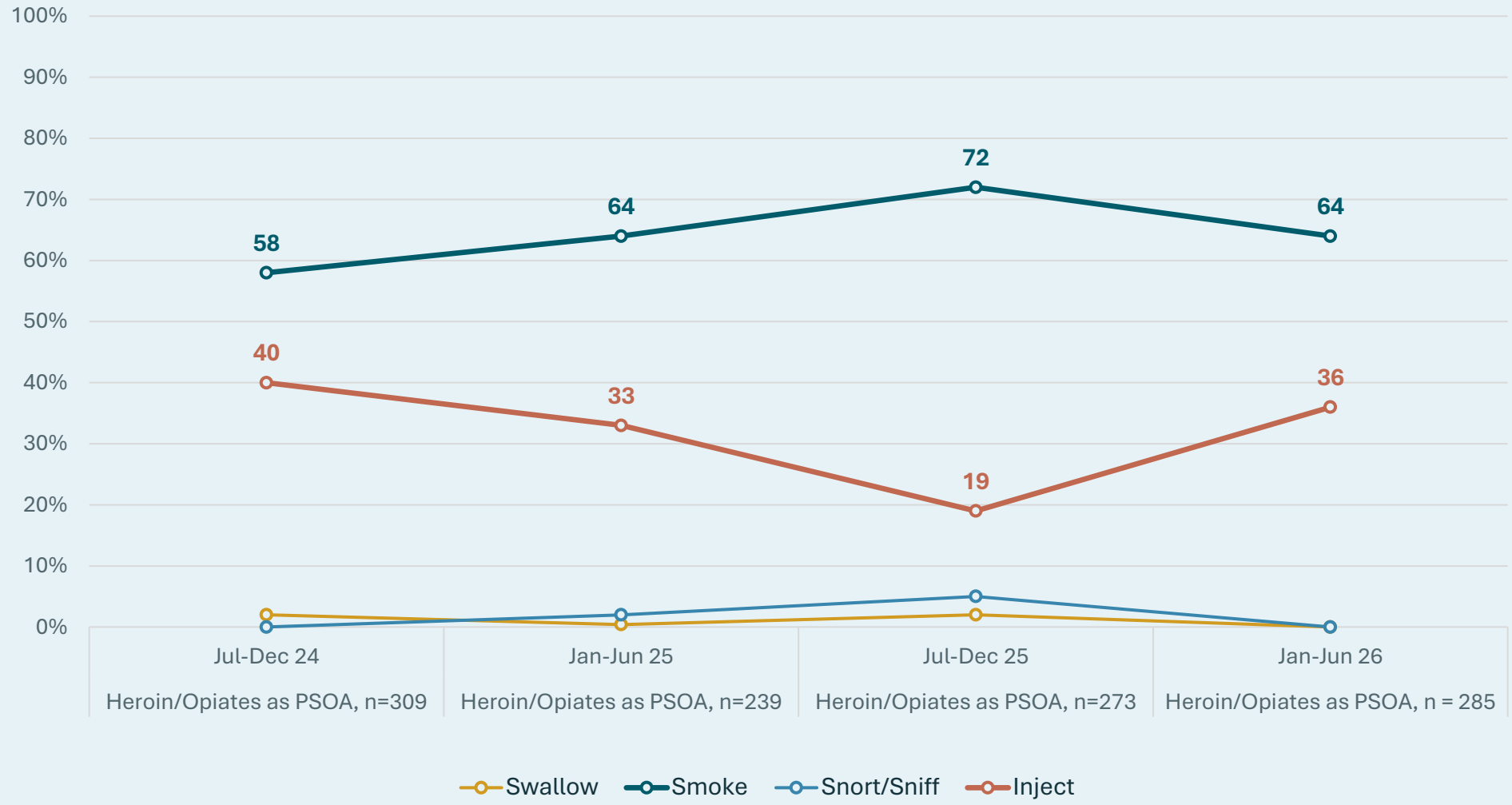
CI: [58.3% - 69.5%]

Smoking

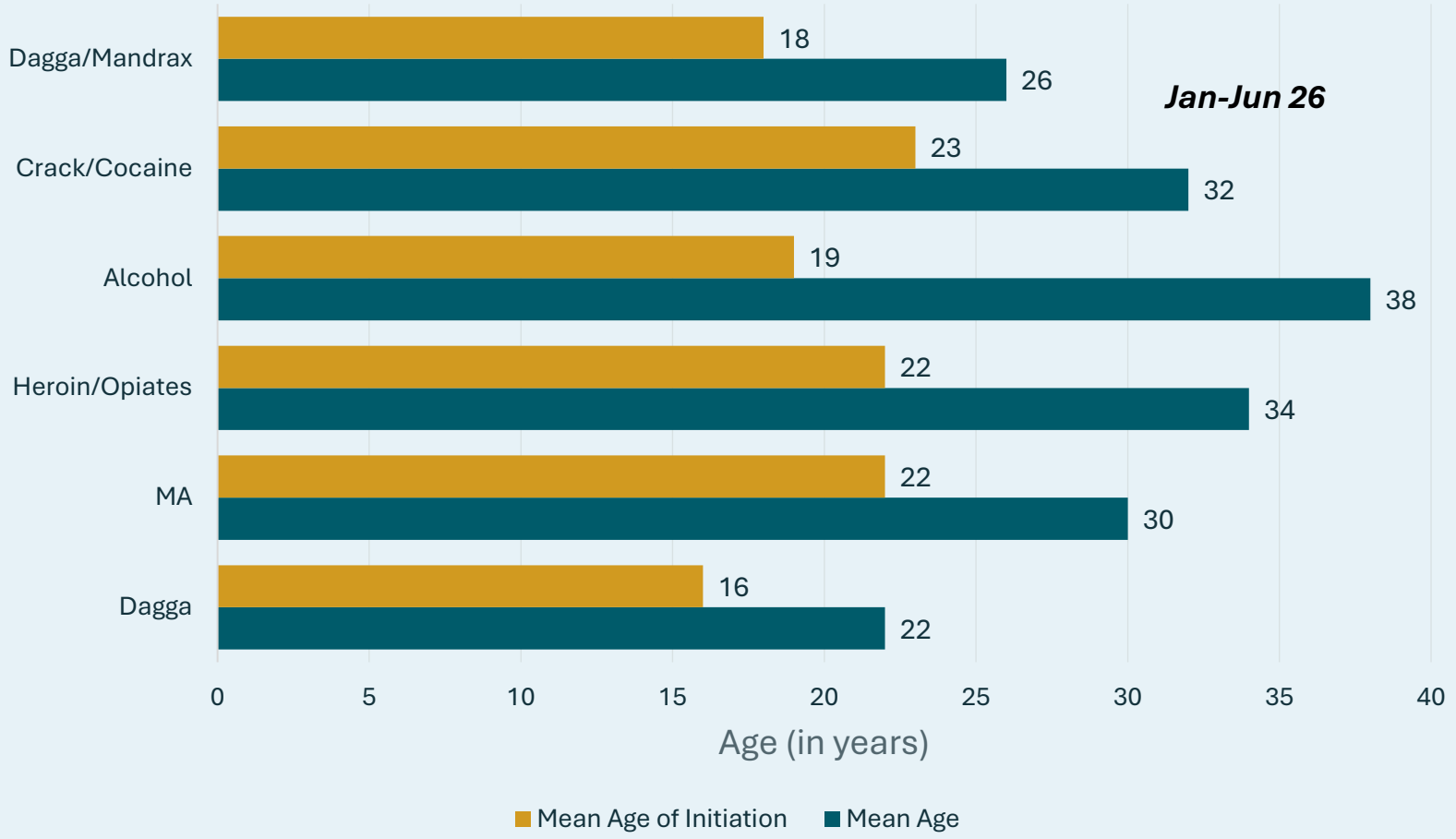
INJECTION USE

36%

CI: 30.4% - 41.7%]

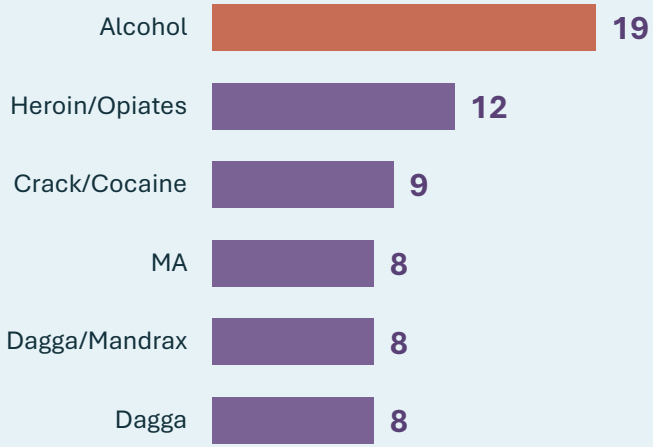


Cannabis use starts earliest, at a mean age of 16



Treatment delay

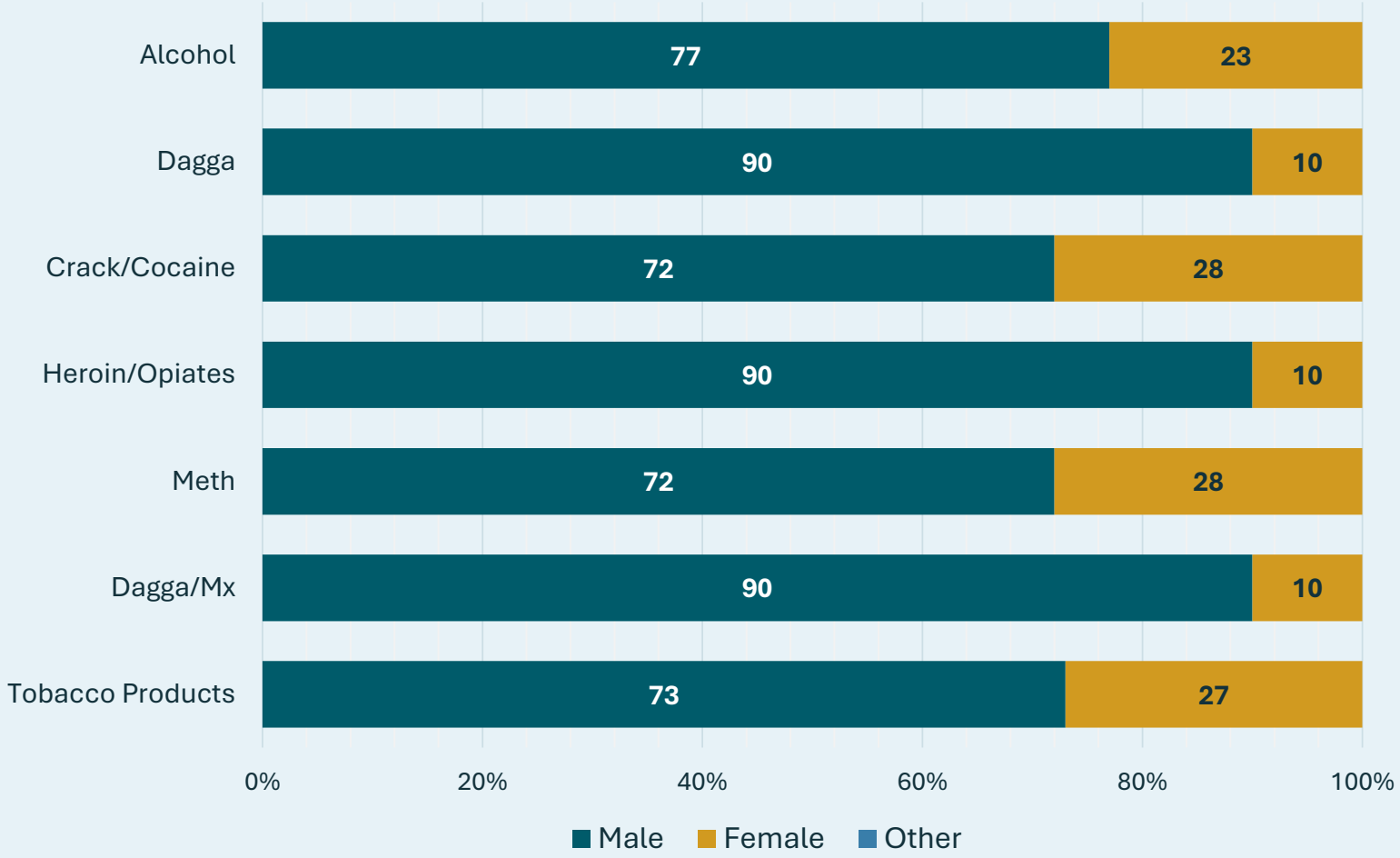
Difference in group means (years)



Difference in group means, not a direct measure of time to first treatment.

95% CI: [add sample size and SD or SE]

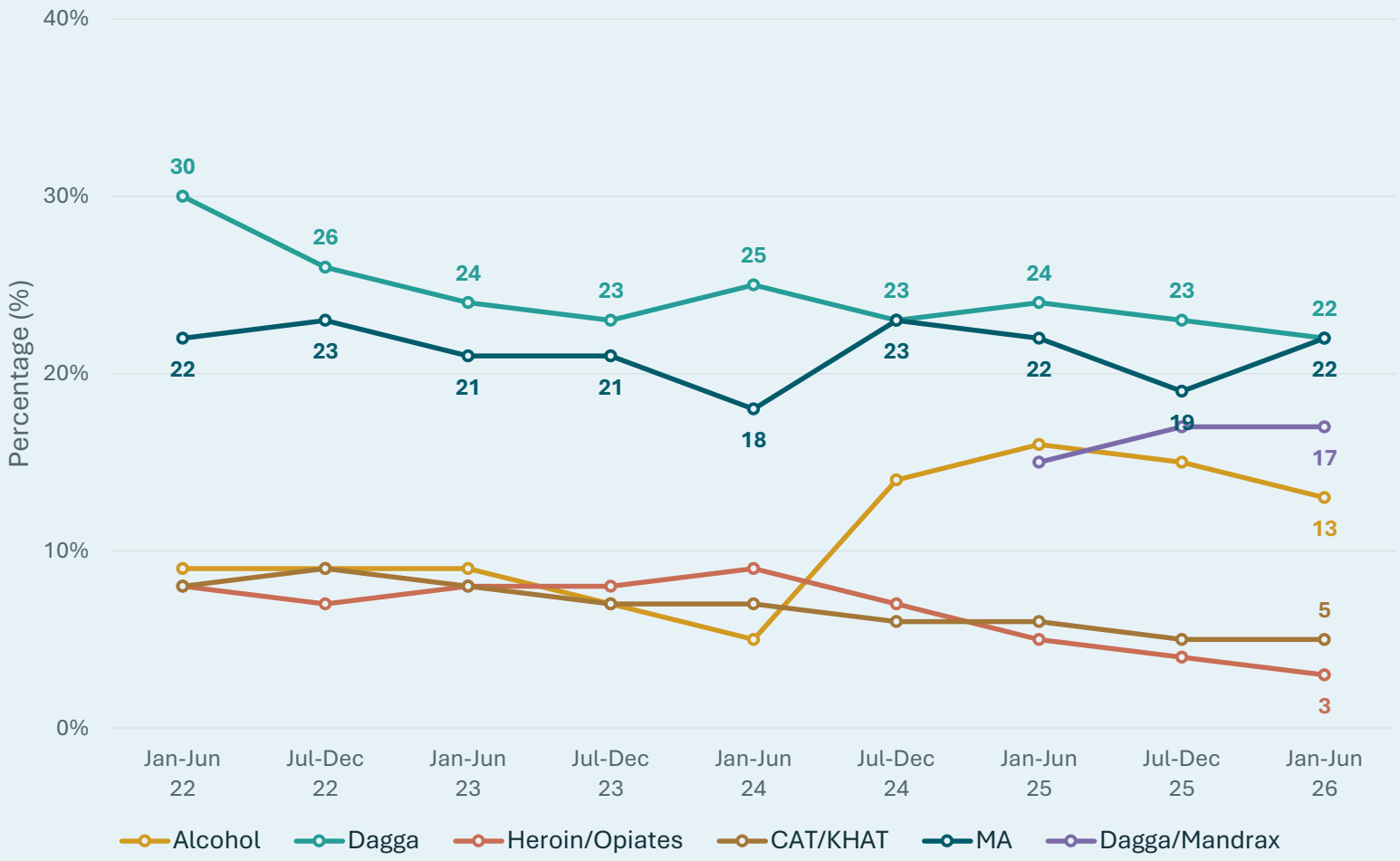
Men comprise the majority across primary substances



Males dominate across substance variants

$\chi^2 = 157.6$, df = 22.5 $p < 0.001$

Dagga and methamphetamine lead secondary use



Jul–Dec 2025 to Jan–Jun 2026: dagga −1 pp, methamphetamine +3 pp. pp = percentage points.

Polysubstance use:
50% [CI: 48.6-51.4]

Leading substances

Jan–Jun 2026

22% Dagga
22% Methamphetamine
17% Dagga/Mandrax

Full-period change

Jan–Jun 2022 to Jan–Jun 2026

Dagga: −8 pp
Alcohol: +4 pp
Methamphetamine: 0 pp

Dagga/Mandrax: data start in 2025

95% CI: [add counts and valid n]

03

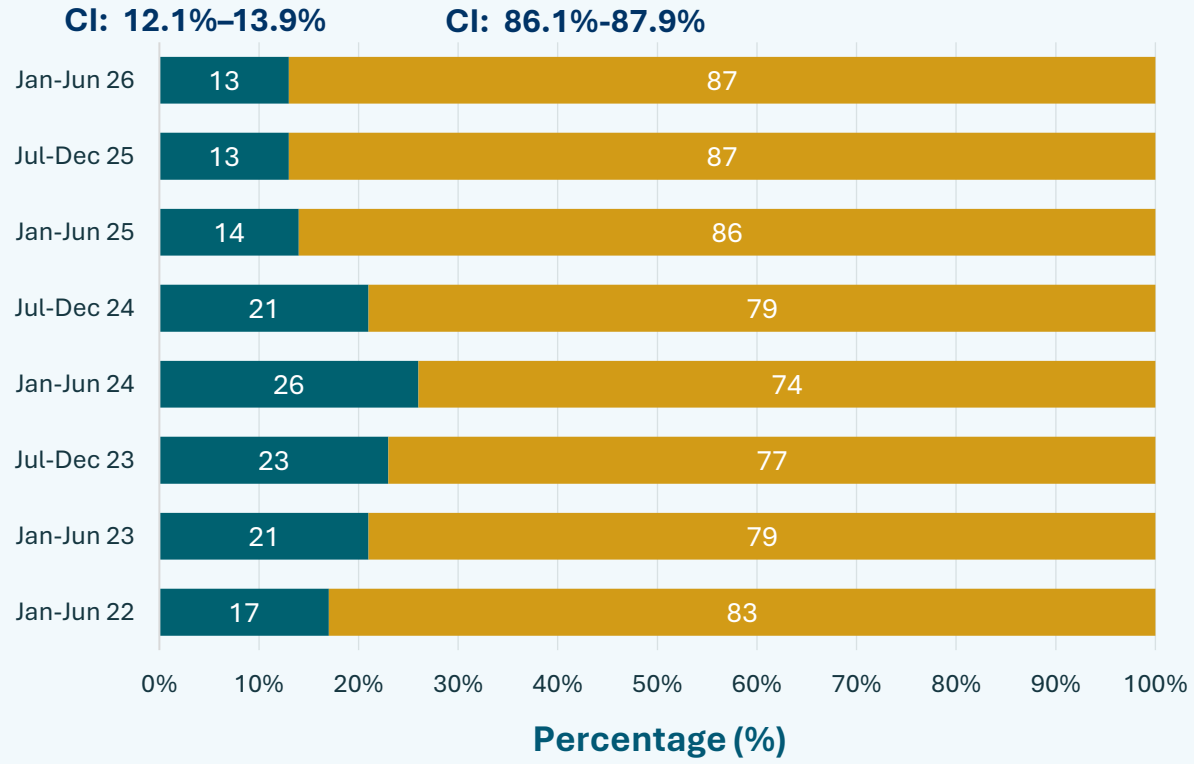
SECTION

Prior treatment

Readmission patterns and prior treatment exposure

Readmissions account for 13% of admissions

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First-time admissions: 87% in both Jul–Dec 2025 and Jan–Jun 2026

Readmission episodes

Episodes	n
1-5 times	**391**
6-10 times	**15**
>10 times	**10**

Tx Type

	n
Inpatient	**455**
Outpatient/Community-based	**298**
Detox	**78**

Methamphetamine readmissions fell while cannabis rose

	Jan-Jun 24	Jul-Dec 24	Jan-Jun 25	Jul-Dec 25	Jan-Jun 26
Alcohol	11	16	23	21	20
CAT/KHAT	6	7	5	5	6
MA	24	21	24	35	29
Dagga	18	30	24	16	22
Dagga/Mx	6	6	3	1	4
Crack/Cocaine	3	2	2	4	3
Heroin/Opiates	29	12	10	12	10
Inhalants	0.1	1	1	0	0
OTC/PRE	2	3	3	4	3
Methaqualone	0	0	0	2	1
Other	2	2	0.4	0	0.2



Codeine use is concentrated among young, unemployed clients

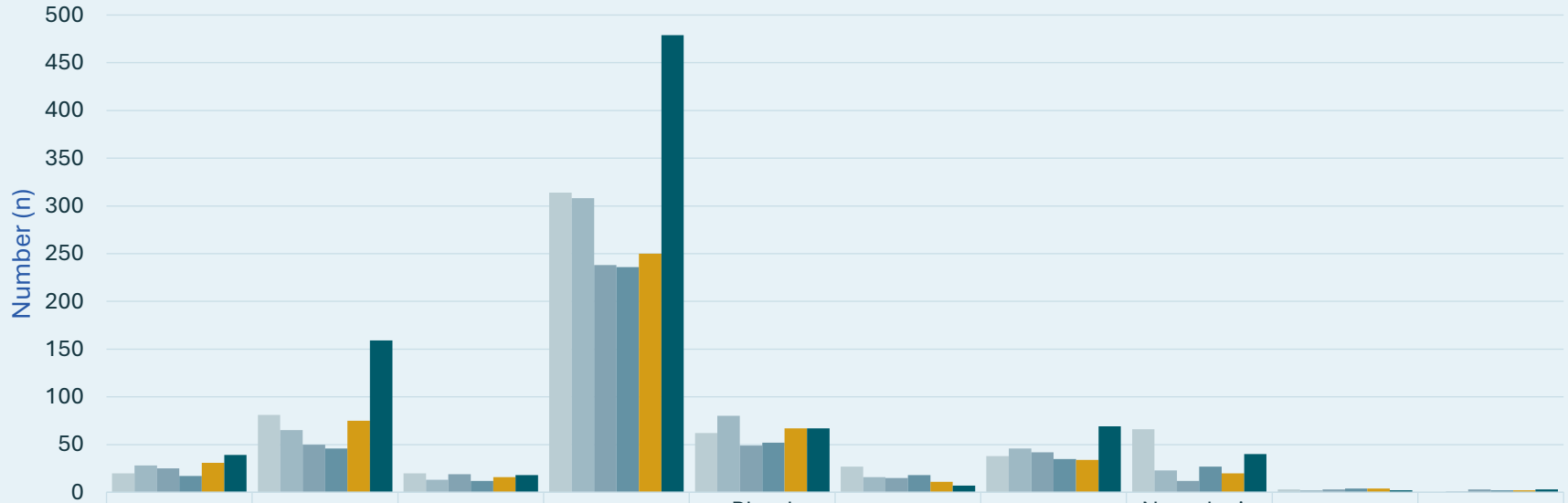
Profile of Individuals who use Codeine (n=272, 5%)	Percent (%)
Gender:	
Males: Females: Other	85:14:1
Ages:	
15-19 years	32
20-24 years	25
25-29 years	17
Employment status:	
Unemployed	54
School learner	32
Codeine product:	
First product: tablets, followed by syrup Second product: tablets, followed by syrup	
Type of codeine-containing medication:	
Mybulen, Adcodol, Stilpane, Astrapain, Mylan → Tablets	
Bronchleer, Benylin with codeine, Lenazine, Medipyn, Astrapain → Cough syrup	

03

HEALTH CONSEQUENCES

Health impacts extend well beyond treatment

Mental health is the most frequently reported NCD



	CVD	Respiratory diseases	Diabetes	Mental Health	Blood pressure problems	Liver Disease	GIT Disease	Neurological Disease	Hepatitis	Cancer
Jul-Dec 23	20	81	20	314	62	27	38	66	3	0
Jan-Jun 24	28	65	13	308	80	16	46	23	2	1
Jul-Dec 24	25	50	19	238	49	15	42	12	3	3
Jan-Jun 25	17	46	12	236	52	18	35	27	4	2
Jul-Dec 25	31	75	16	250	67	11	34	20	4	2
Jan-Jun 26	39	159	18	479	67	7	69	40	2	3

11%

reported an NCD upon admission

CI: 10.7%-12.4%

Last doctor visit

57%

<2 years ago



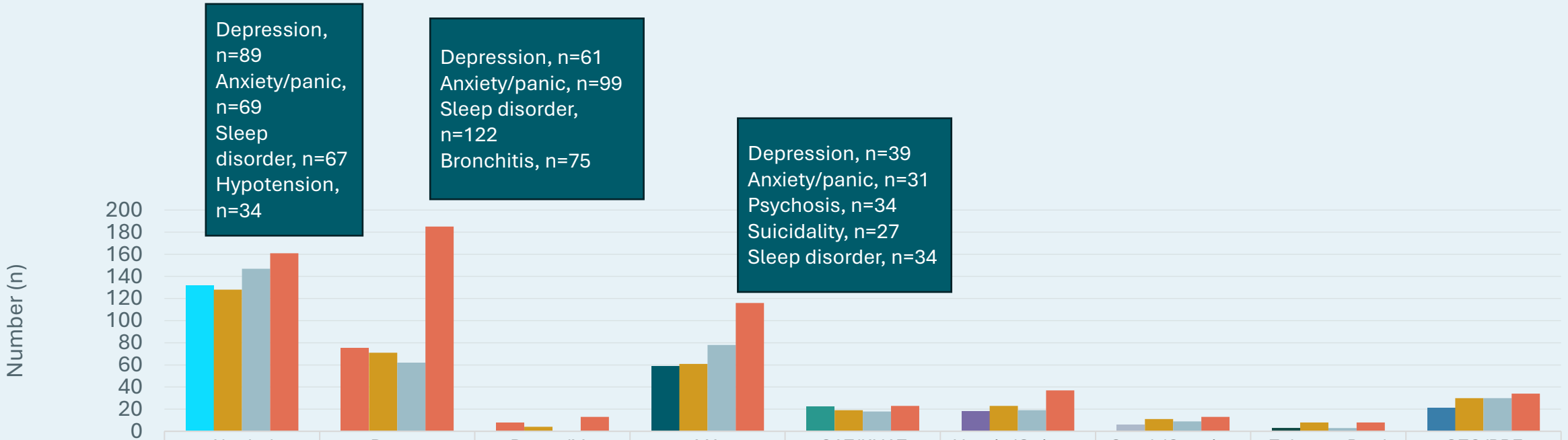
24%

2–5 years ago

19%

>5 years ago

Reported NCDs by primary substance



	Alcohol	Dagga	Dagga/Mx	MA	CAT/KHAT	Heroin/Opiates	Crack/Cocaine	Tobacco Prod	OTC/PRE
Jul-Dec 24	132	75	8	59	22	18	6	3	21
Jan-Jun 25	128	71	4	61	19	23	11	8	30
Jul-Dec 25	147	62	0	78	18	19	9	3	30
Jan-Jun 26	161	185	13	116	23	37	13	8	34

JUL–DEC 2025 TO JAN–JUN 2026

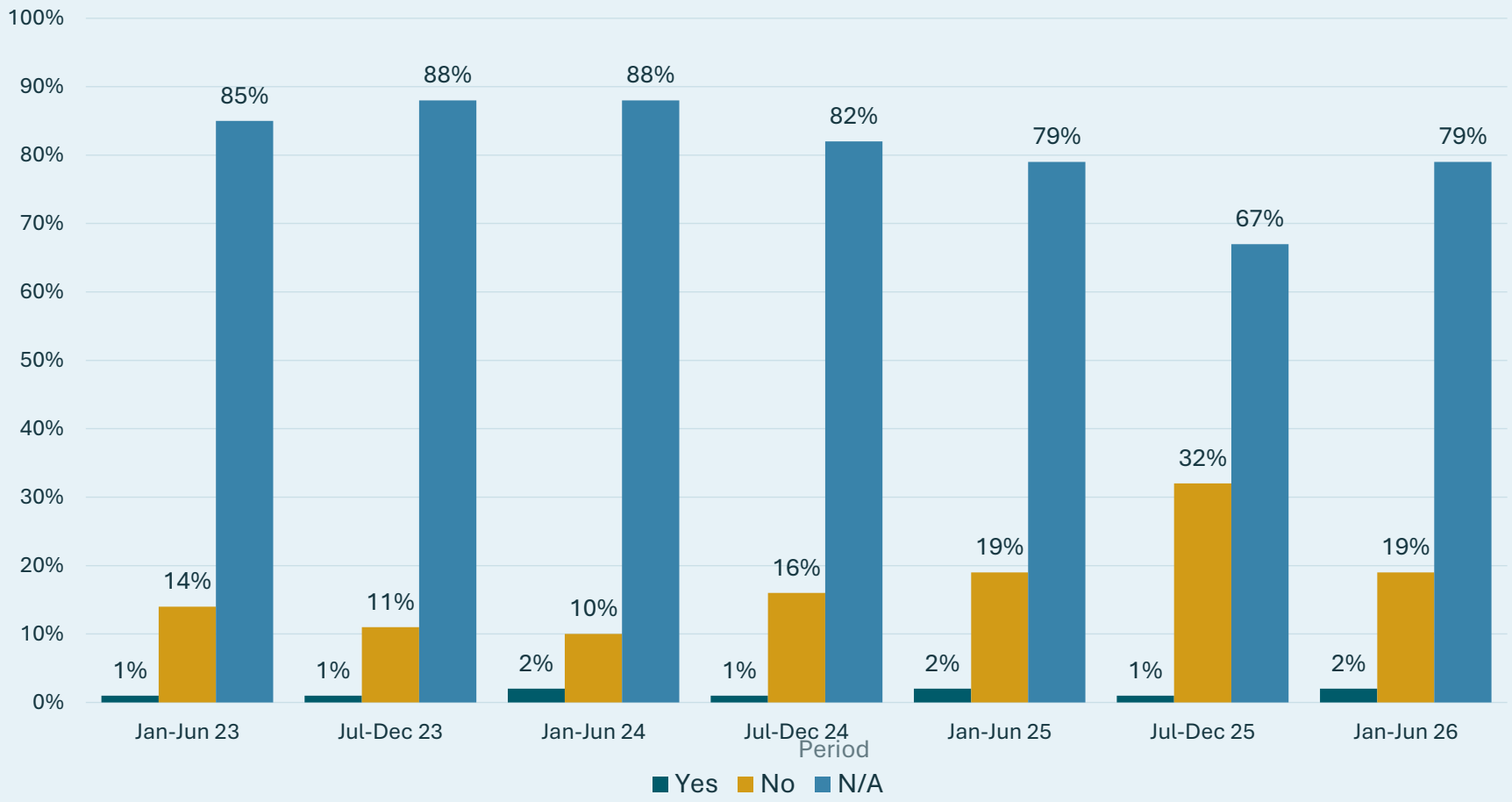
Cannabis-related reports: 62 to 185

2% reported substance use during pregnancy

Substances used

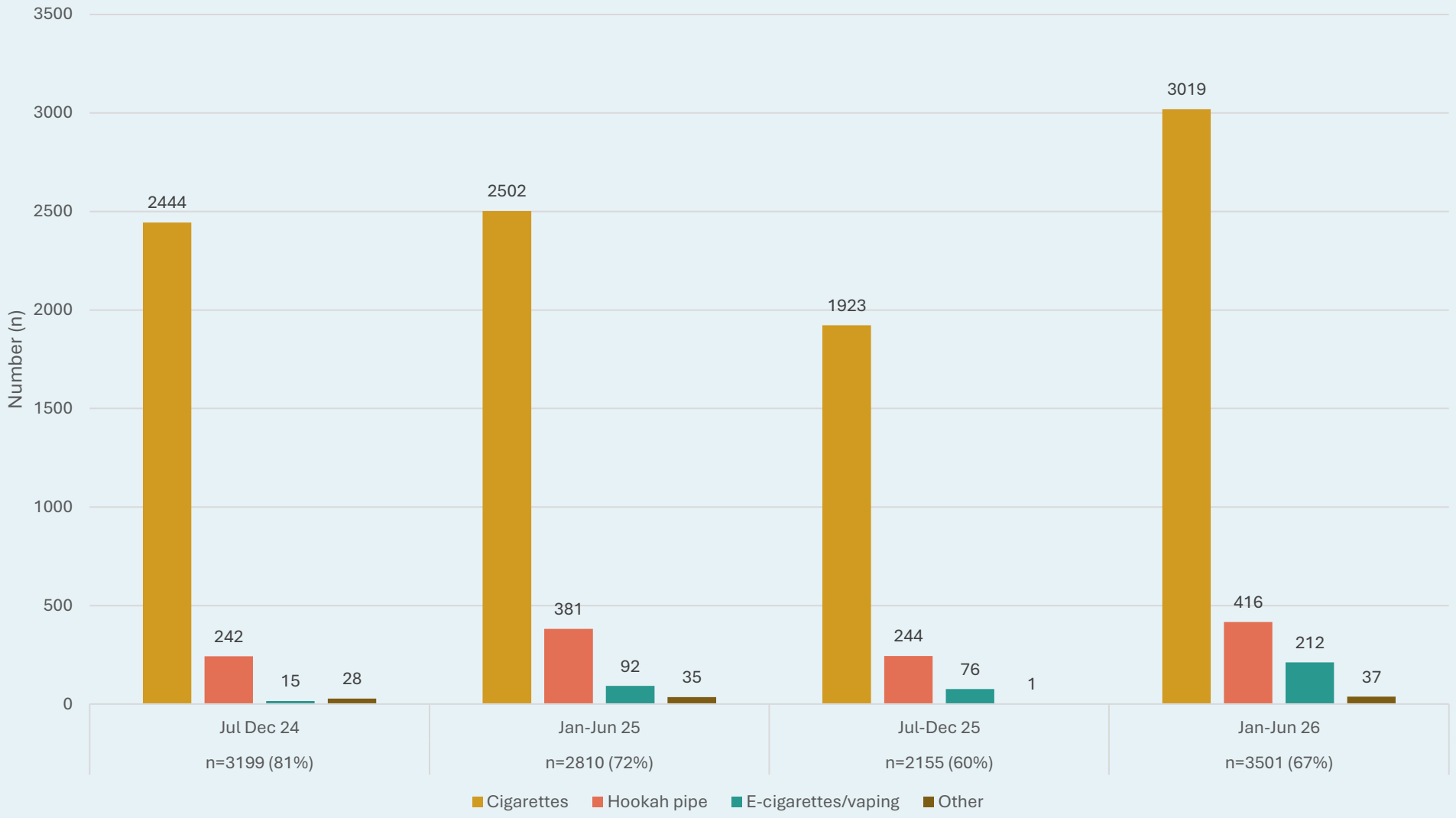
N = 83

Alcohol	43%
Dagga	13%
Crystal MA	25%
CAT/KHAT	2%
Dagga/Mx	15%
Crack/Cocaine	5%
OTC/PRE	2%

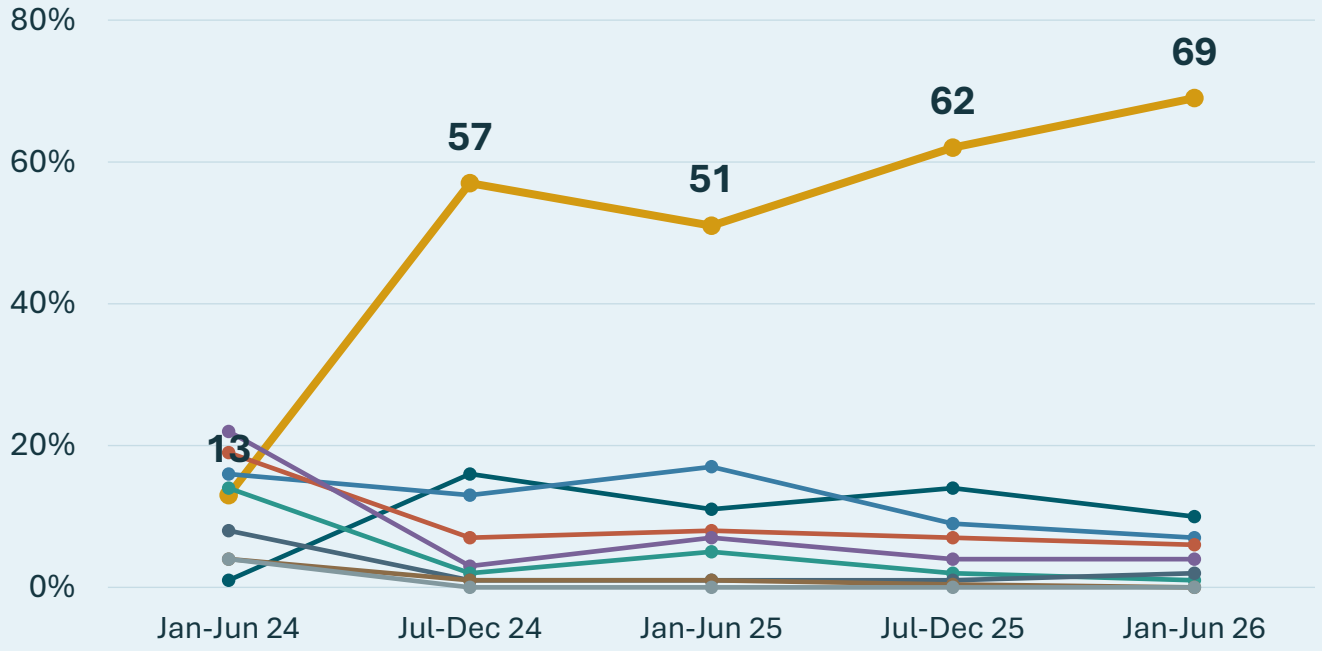


Overall use of tobacco products

n=3,019, 67%



Age profile of hookah users



Jan–Jun 2026

Age group	Share
10–14 years	10%
15–19 years	**69%**
20–24 years	7%
25–29 years	6%
30–34 years	4%
35–39 years	1%
40–44 years	2%
45–49 years	0%
50+ years	0%

Ages 15–19: 62% to 69%

Jul–Dec 2025 compared with Jan–Jun 2026

04

PERSONS ≤18 YEARS

Under-18 admissions need focused prevention and care

1,485 service users aged 18 and younger entered treatment

29%

of total GT service users were aged 18 and under

Up from 23% in Jul–Dec 2025

OVERALL CHANGE

8.2%

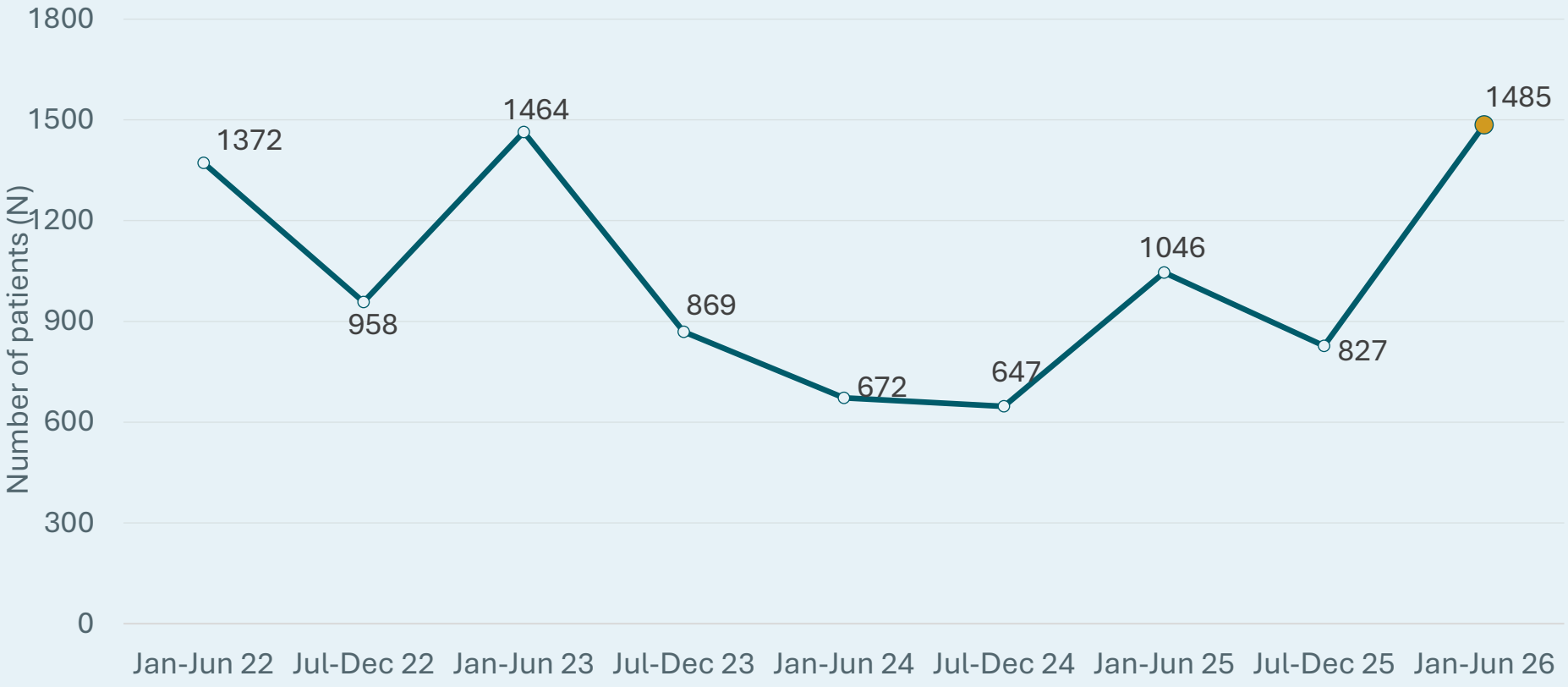
95% CI: 0.6%–16.5%

increase

113 more service users

From Jul–Dec 2025 to Jan–Jun 2026

Relative change: +79.6% (95% CI: 64.9%–95.5%)



Admissions aged 18 and under by gender

Males: 82%

CI: 80.4–84.3%

Females: 17%

CI: 15.6%–19.5%

OVERALL CHANGE

Jan–Jun 2023 to
Jan–Jun 2026

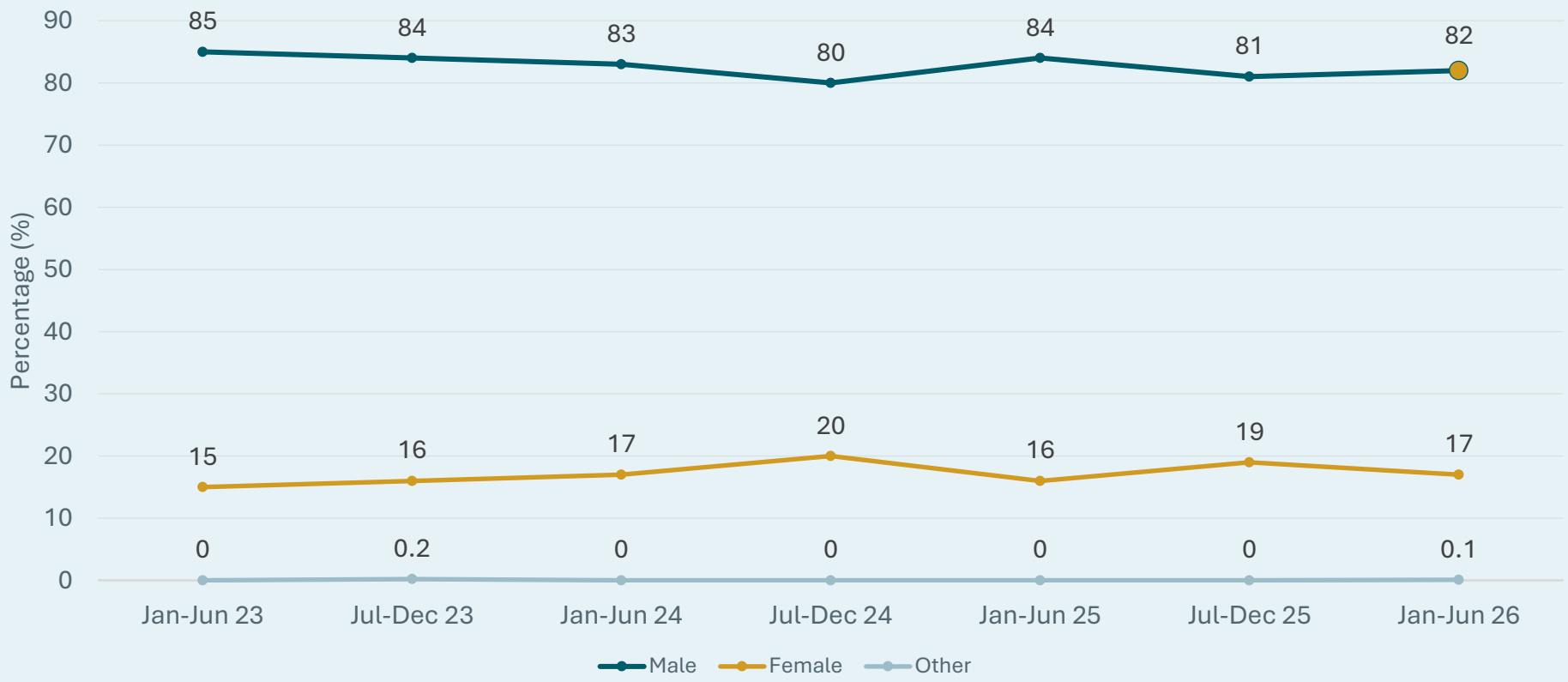
Males: −3 pp

CI: −5.7 to −0.3 pp

Females: +2 pp

CI: −0.6 to +4.6 pp

JUL–DEC 2025 TO JAN–JUN 2026



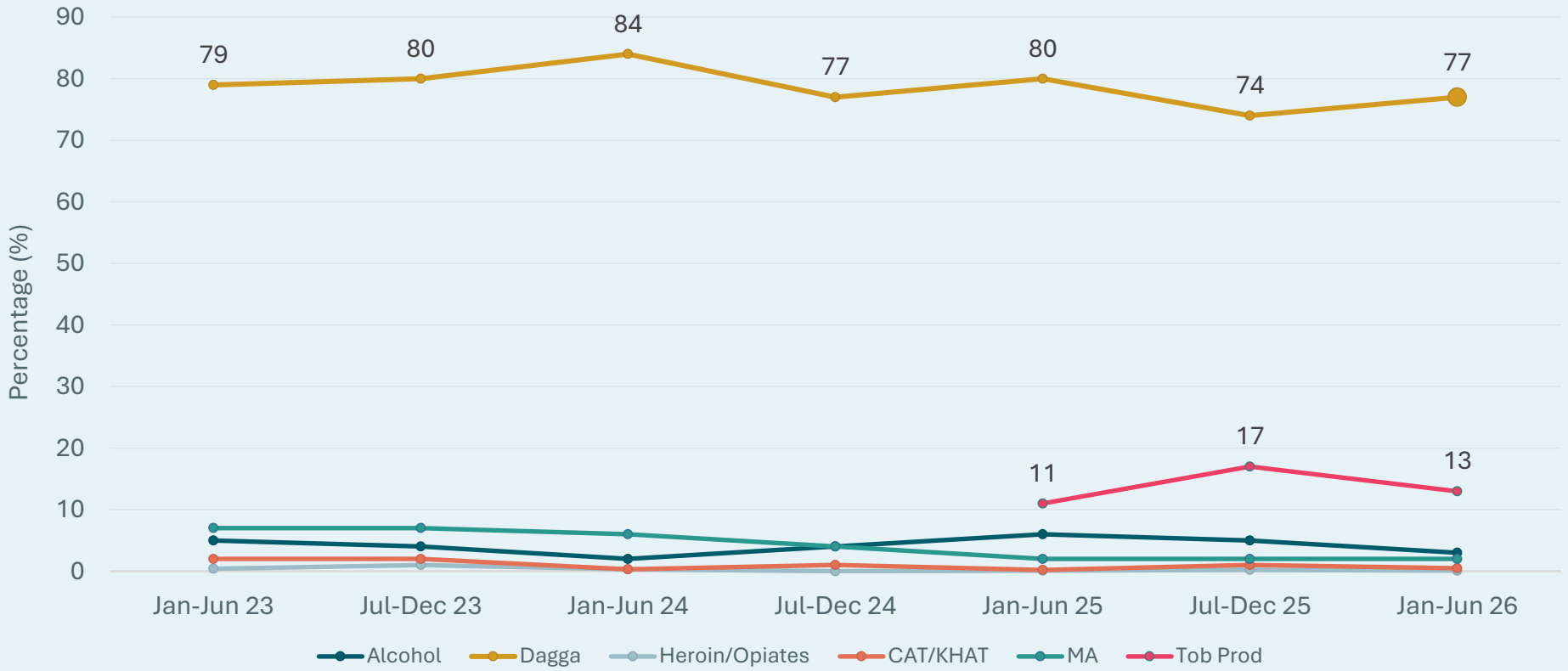
Primary substance use among younger service users

Top 3 substances

Dagga **77%**

Tobacco **13%**

Alcohol **3%**



JUL–DEC 2025 TO JAN–JUN 2026

Cannabis: 74% to 77%

Tobacco products lead secondary substance use among service users aged 18 and under

26%

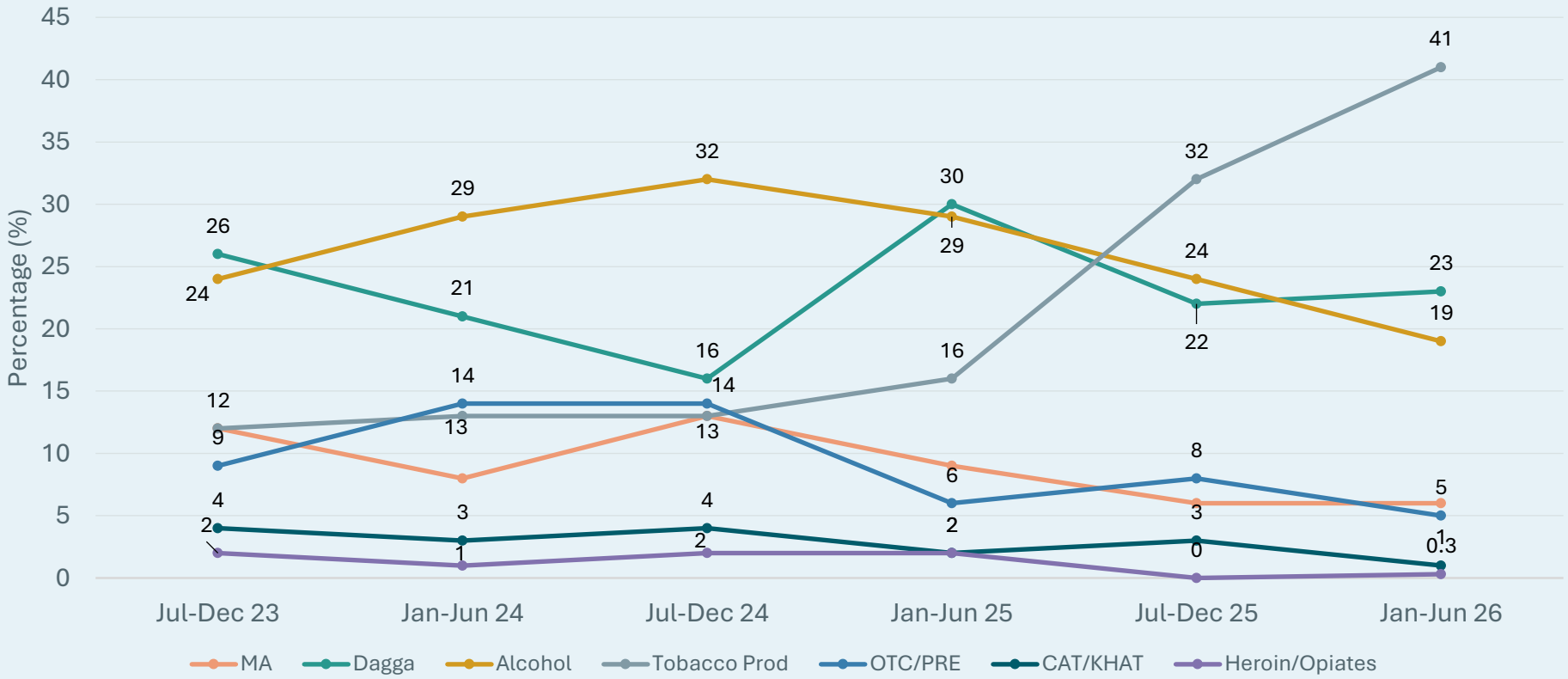
CI: [23.8-28.2]
of service users reported polysubstance use

Top 3 substances

Tobacco products **41%**

Dagga **23%**

Alcohol **19%**



JUL–DEC 2025 TO JAN–JUN 2026

Tobacco products: 32% to 41%

SACENDU
SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNITY EPIDEMIOLOGY NETWORK ON DRUG USE
Treatment Demand Data • Service Quality Measures (SQM) • Community-Based Harm Reduction Services

Gauteng treatment patterns and key findings

PROFILE & ACCESS

- Admissions rose from 3,573 to 5,206 (+46%). Men accounted for 85% of admissions.
- Unemployment fell to 56%. Learners and students made up 31%, up from 22%.
- Admissions were 83% voluntary and 87% first-time. The state funded 65% of treatment.

CARE & TIMING

- Previous HIV testing rose from 53% to 61%. Willingness to test fell from 45% to 37%.
- Self-referrals led at 33%. School referrals increased from 16% to 22%.
- Cannabis initiation averaged age 16. Mean admission–initiation age gaps: alcohol 19 years and heroin/opiates 12 years.

SUBSTANCE PATTERNS

- Primary use: cannabis 43%, methamphetamine 19% and alcohol 17%. Cannabis rose from 36%.
- Polysubstance use was 50%. Cannabis and methamphetamine each accounted for 22% of secondary use.
- Readmissions were 13%. Methamphetamine's share fell from 35% to 29%, while cannabis rose from 16% to 22%.

HEALTH & YOUTH

- NCDs affected 11%, most often mental-health conditions. Substance use during pregnancy was reported by 2%.
- Ages 18 and under: 1,485 admissions (28.5%), up from 827. Boys made up 82%.
- Youth primary use: cannabis 77%. Tobacco led secondary use at 41%. Youth polysubstance use was 26%.

Evidence base and references

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SACENDU treatment data

Explore the programme, discuss the findings or request further information.

WEB samrc.ac.za/intramural-research-units/ATOD-sacendu

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THANK YOU

Thank you

Baie dankie · Enkosi kakhulu · Ngiyabonga

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