SACENDU

SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNITY EPIDEMIOLOGY NETWORK ON DRUG USE

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

60TH SYMPOSIUM

EASTERN CAPE

TREATMENT DATA

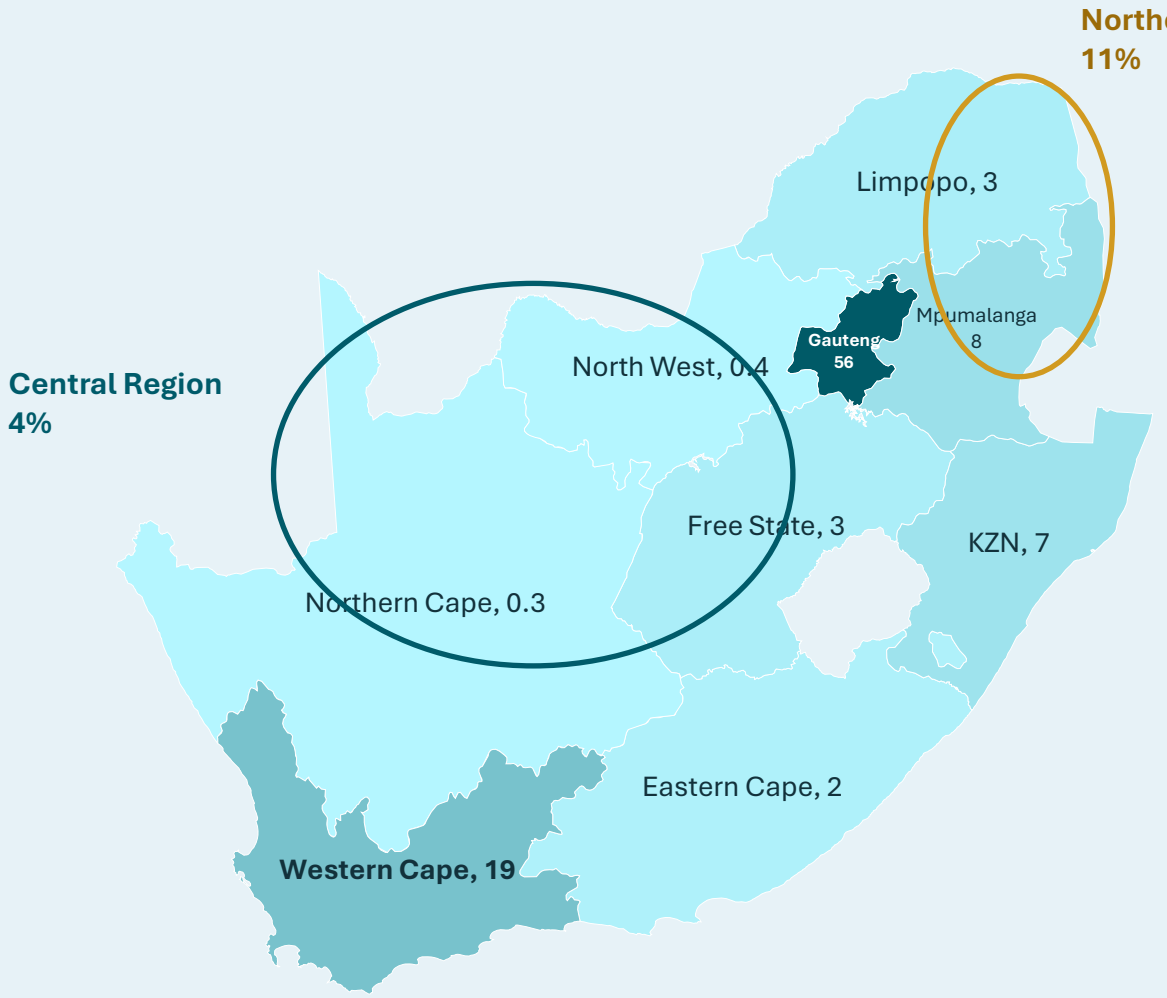
CELEBRATING OUR 60TH SACENDU SYMPOSIUM

MS NANCY HORNSBY & MS JODILEE ERASMUS

Phase 60 | Jan - Jun 2026

saMRC advancinglife

Eastern Cape represents 9% of the national total



EC admissions halved since 2021 and now stable

OVERALL RELATIVE CHANGE

−51.3%

CI: −59.1 to −42.0

198 fewer admissions

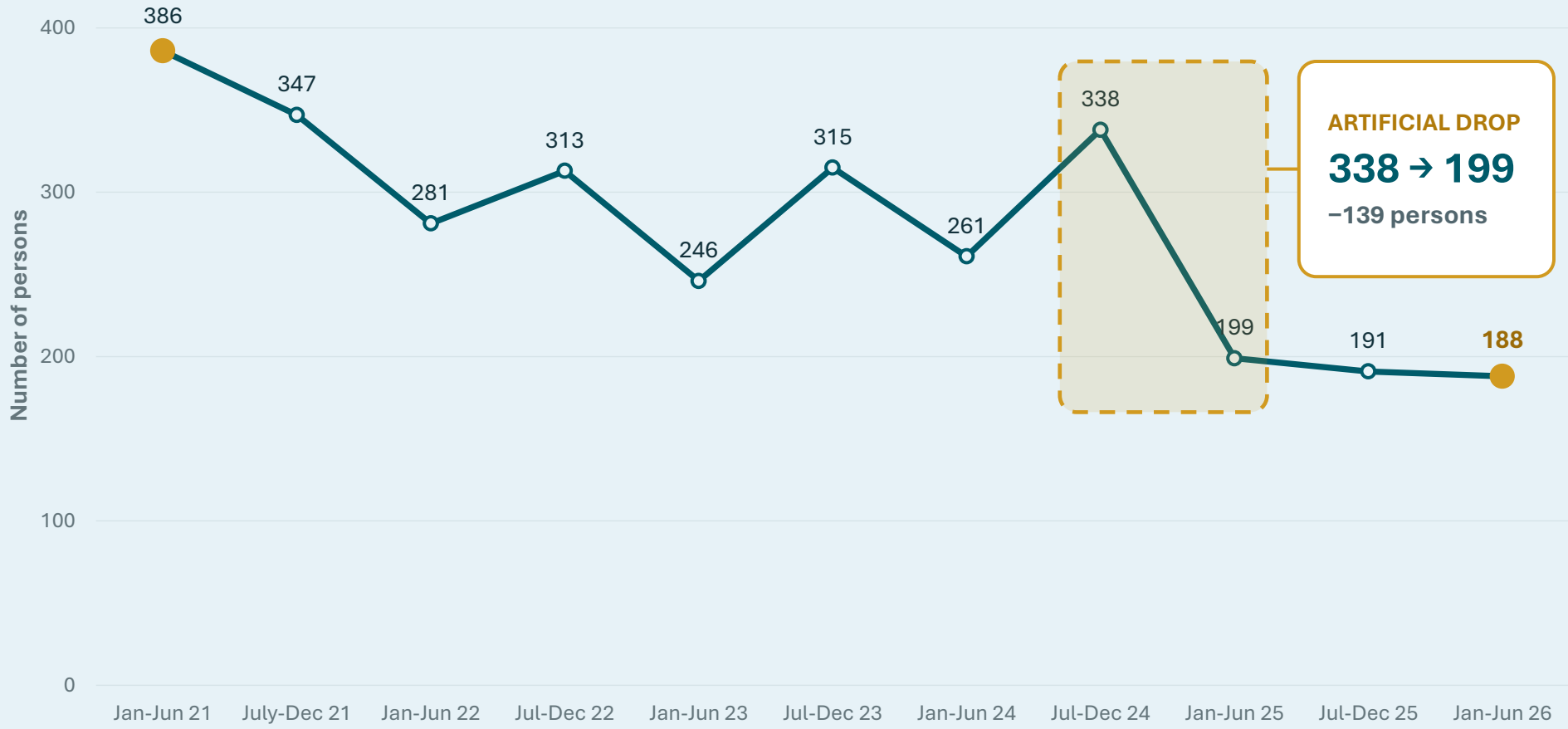
386 in Jan–Jun 2021
188 in Jan–Jun 2026

LAST 3 PERIODS

−5.5%

CI: −22.6 to 15.3

Jan–Jun 2025 to Jan–Jun 2026

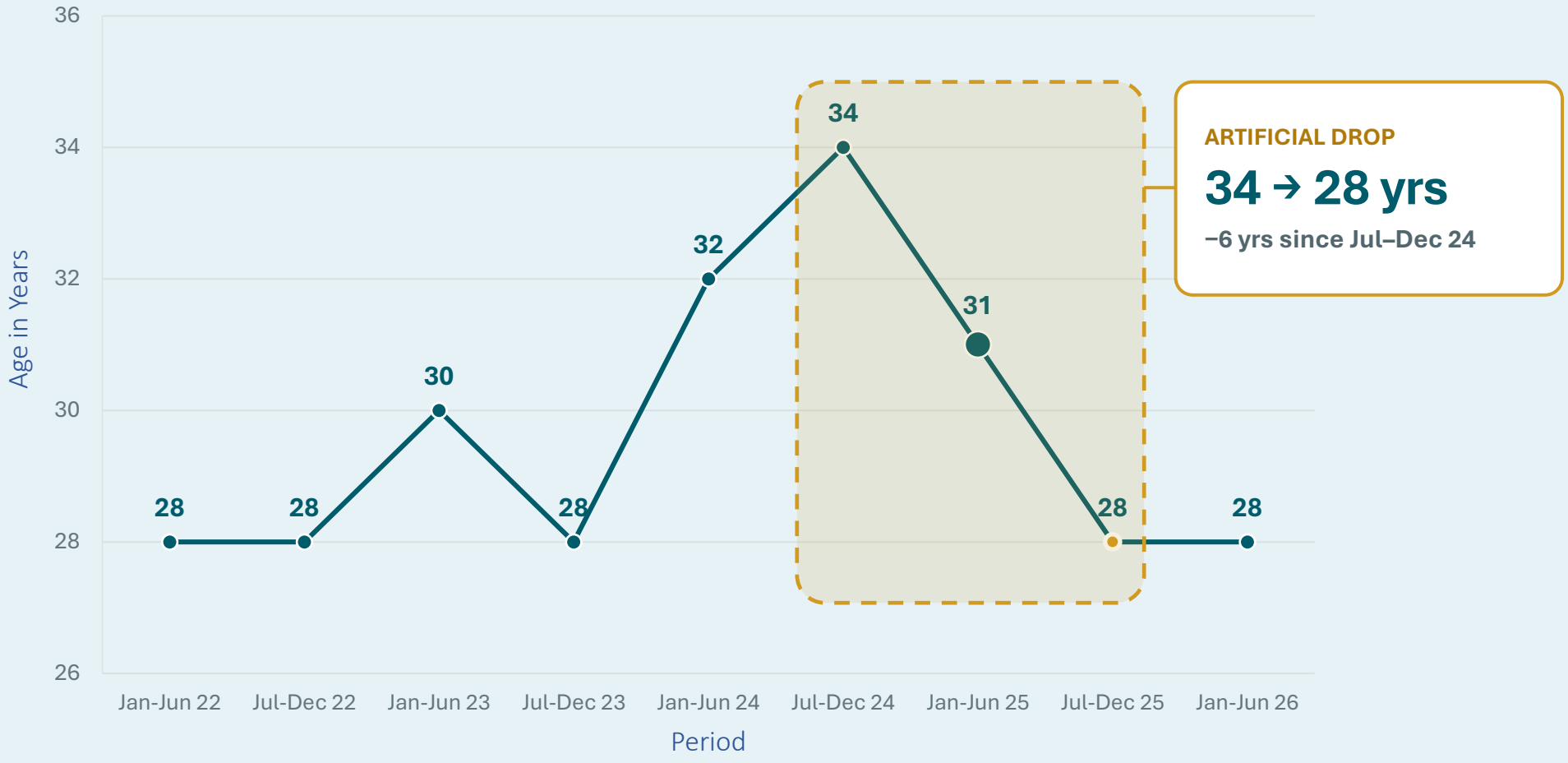


Mean age was 28 years in Jan–Jun 2026

CURRENT PERIOD
Jan–Jun 2026

28 yrs
Mean age

95% CI: 26.0–29.7



ARTIFICIAL DROP

34 → 28 yrs

–6 yrs since Jul–Dec 24

01

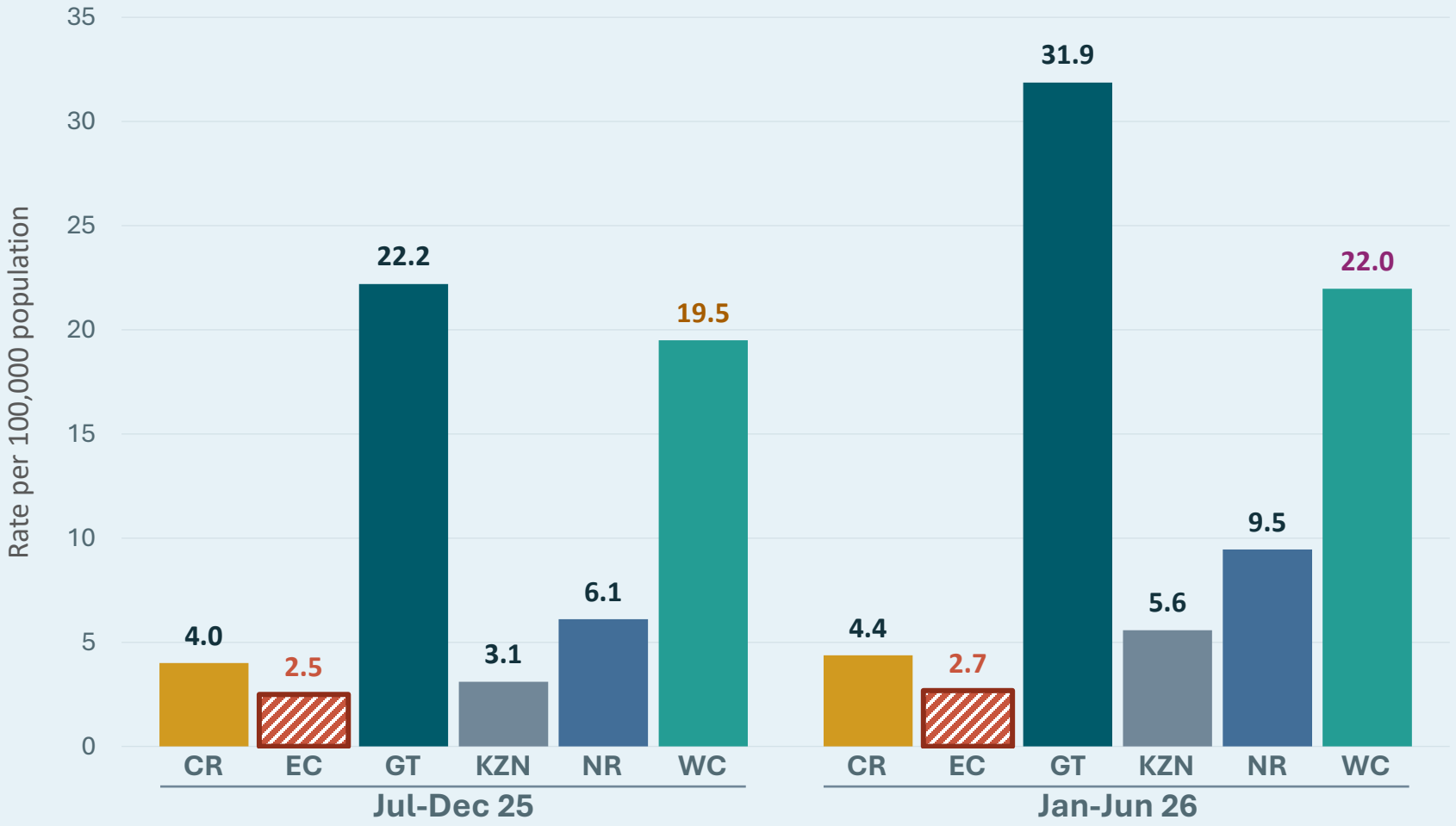
SECTION

Population-adjusted estimates

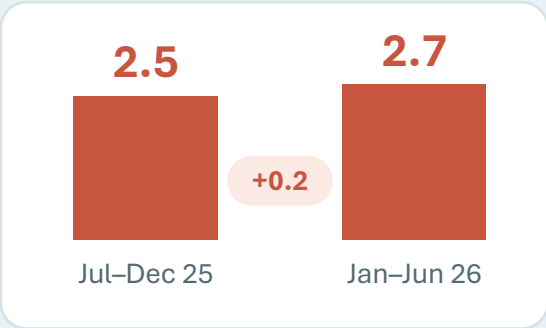
Regional and gender variations

POPULATION-ADJUSTED VIEW

EC treatment rate rose from 2.5 to 2.7 per 100,000



EC ADMISSIONS



1.02

Rate ratio (RR)

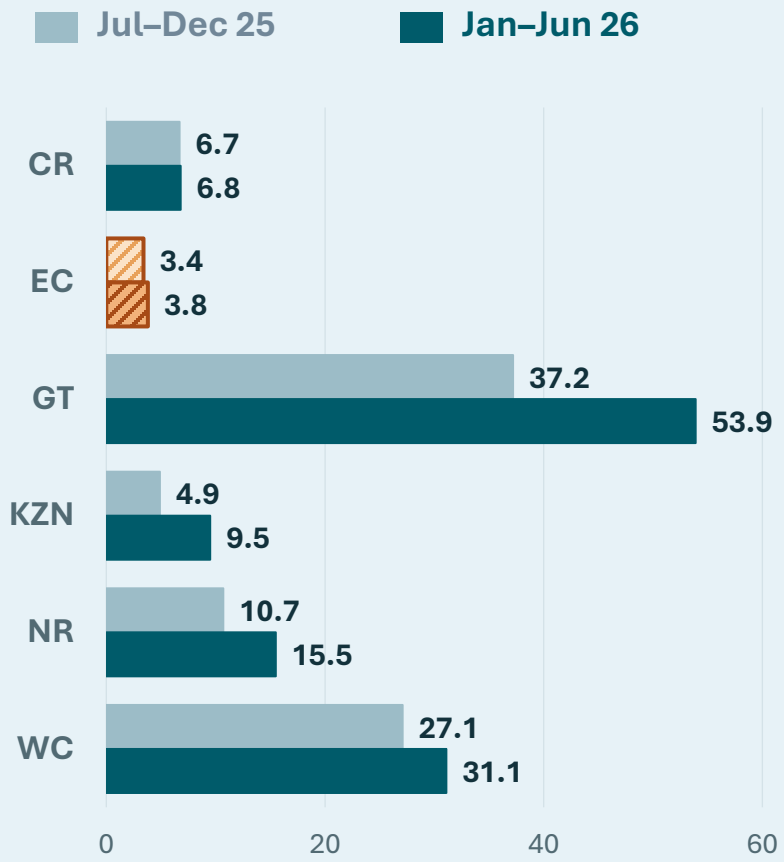
CI: 0.70–1.18

No significant difference in admissions from Jul–Dec 25 to Jan–Jun 26

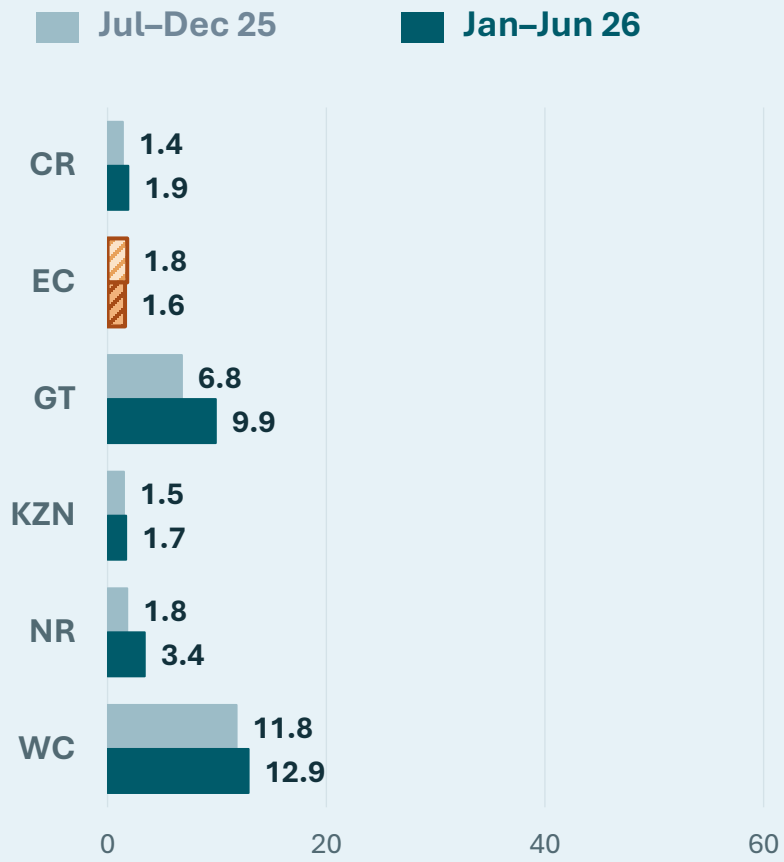
POPULATION-ADJUSTED VIEW

Gap between male and female admissions smallest in EC compared to other regions

Male



Female



Both charts use the same scale for direct comparison

Adjusted rate per 100,000 population

Jul–Dec 25 vs Jan–Jun 26

Males

RR = 0.90

CI: 0.70–1.18



Females

RR = 1.13

CI: 0.80-1.16



Jan–Jun 26

Males vs Females

RR = 2.08

CI: 1.53–2.82



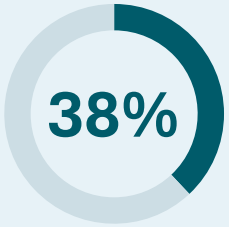
02

SECTION

Substances use patterns

Alcohol overtakes dagga as the leading primary substance

JAN–JUN 2026



Alcohol

Leading primary substance

Alcohol **+6 pp**

H2 25 — 32%

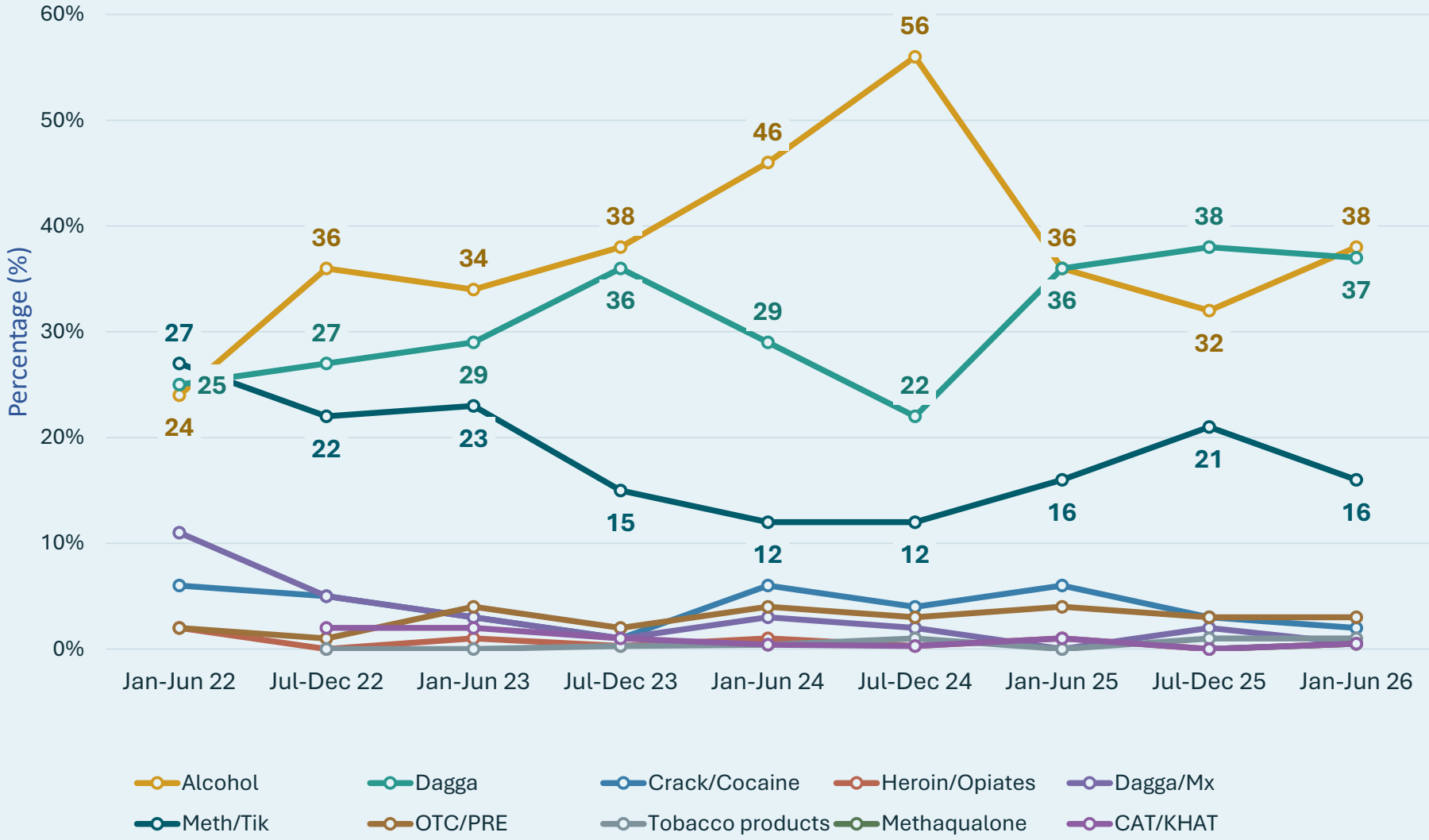
H1 26 — 38%

Meth / Tik **−5 pp**

H2 25 — 21%

H1 26 — 16%

H2 25 = Jul–Dec 2025; H1 26 = Jan–Jun 2026
pp = percentage points



Smoking remains the main route as swallowing gains ground

56%

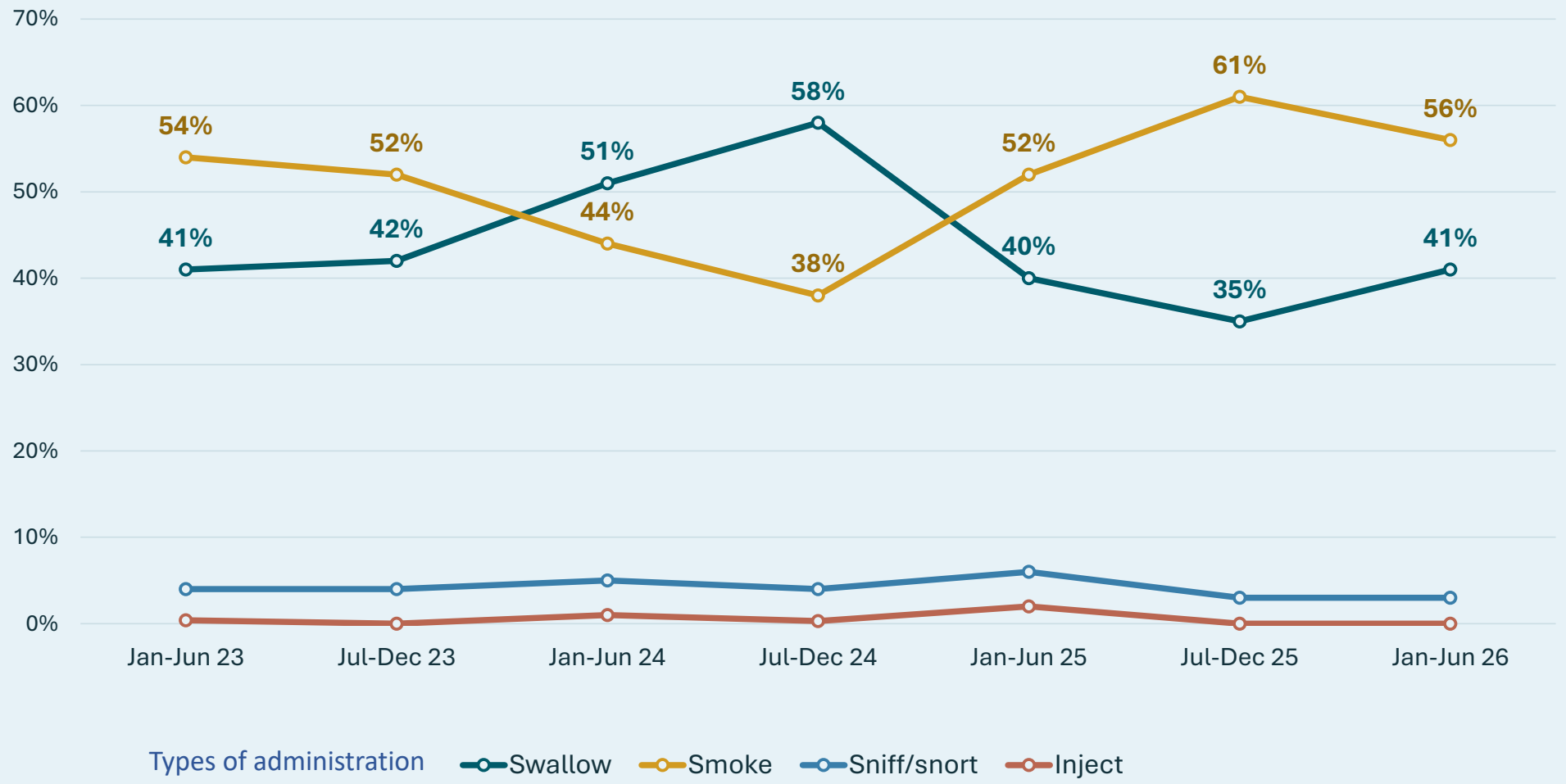
CI: 48.7–63.0

Smoking remains the main route of administration

–5 pp

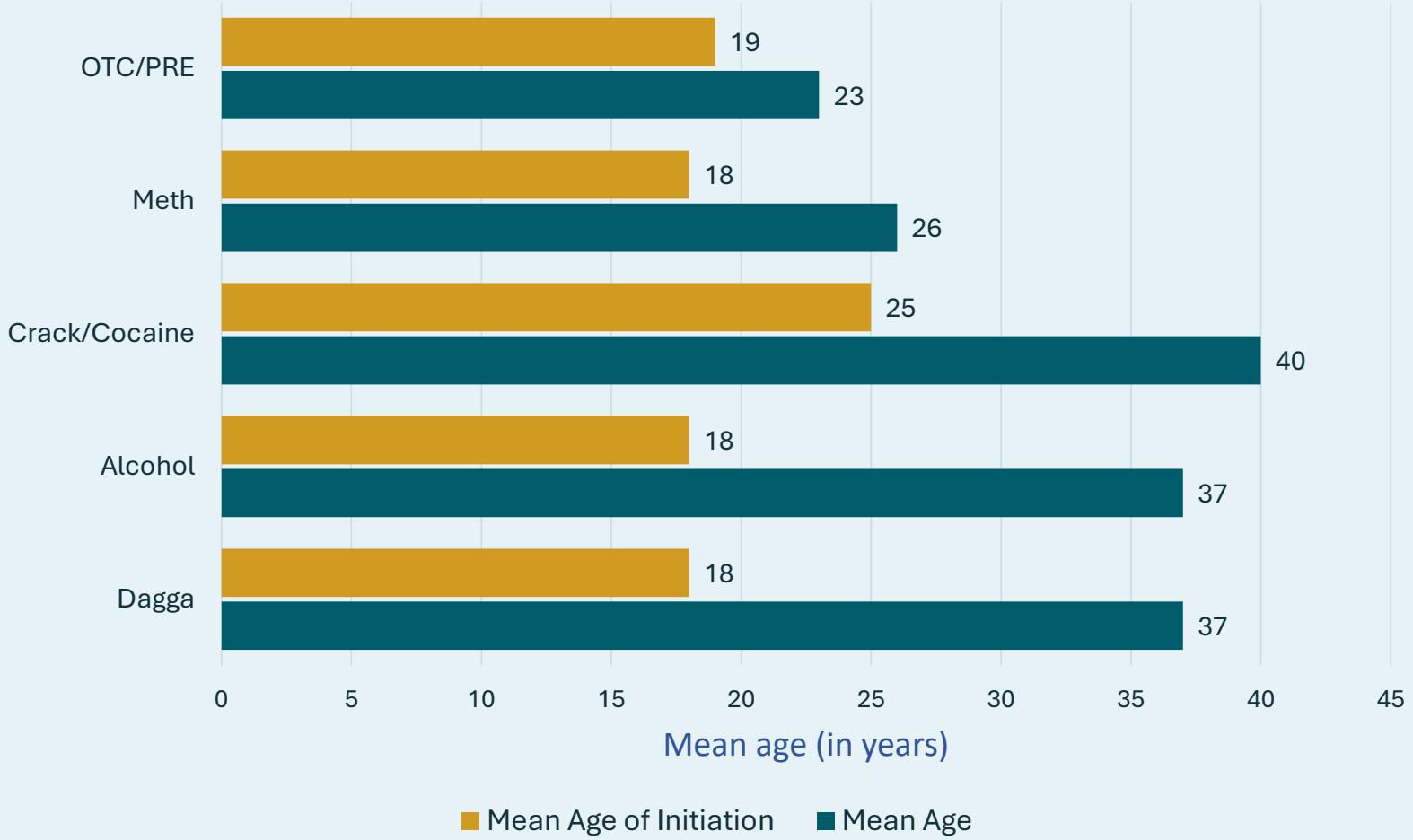
Down from 61% to 56%
Jul–Dec 2025 to Jan–Jun 2026

Swallowing up 6 pp (35% to 41%)



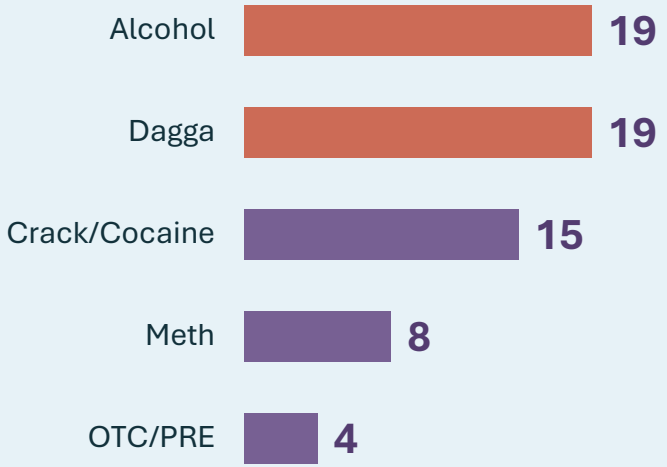
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Alcohol and dagga: longest delay, 19 years



Treatment delay

Difference in years



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

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Daily use holds at 60% after the early 2025 peak

60%

CI: 52.7–66.9

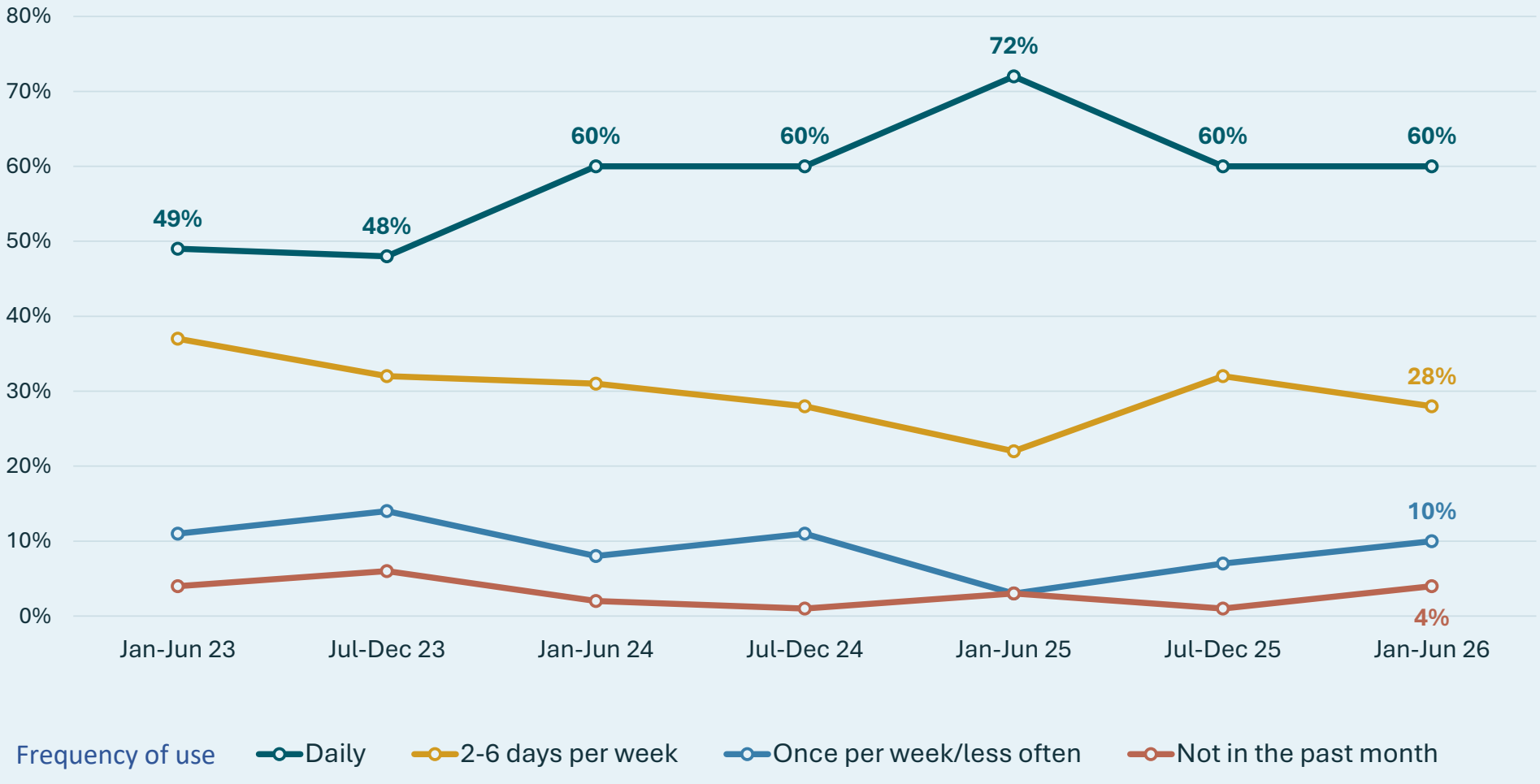
daily use
Jan–Jun 2026

+11 pp

Across the entire period

Jan–Jun 2023 to Jan–Jun 2026

Down 12 pp from the Jan–Jun 2025 peak of 72%



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Dagga leads secondary use, rebounding to 23%

23%

CI: 17.5–29.7

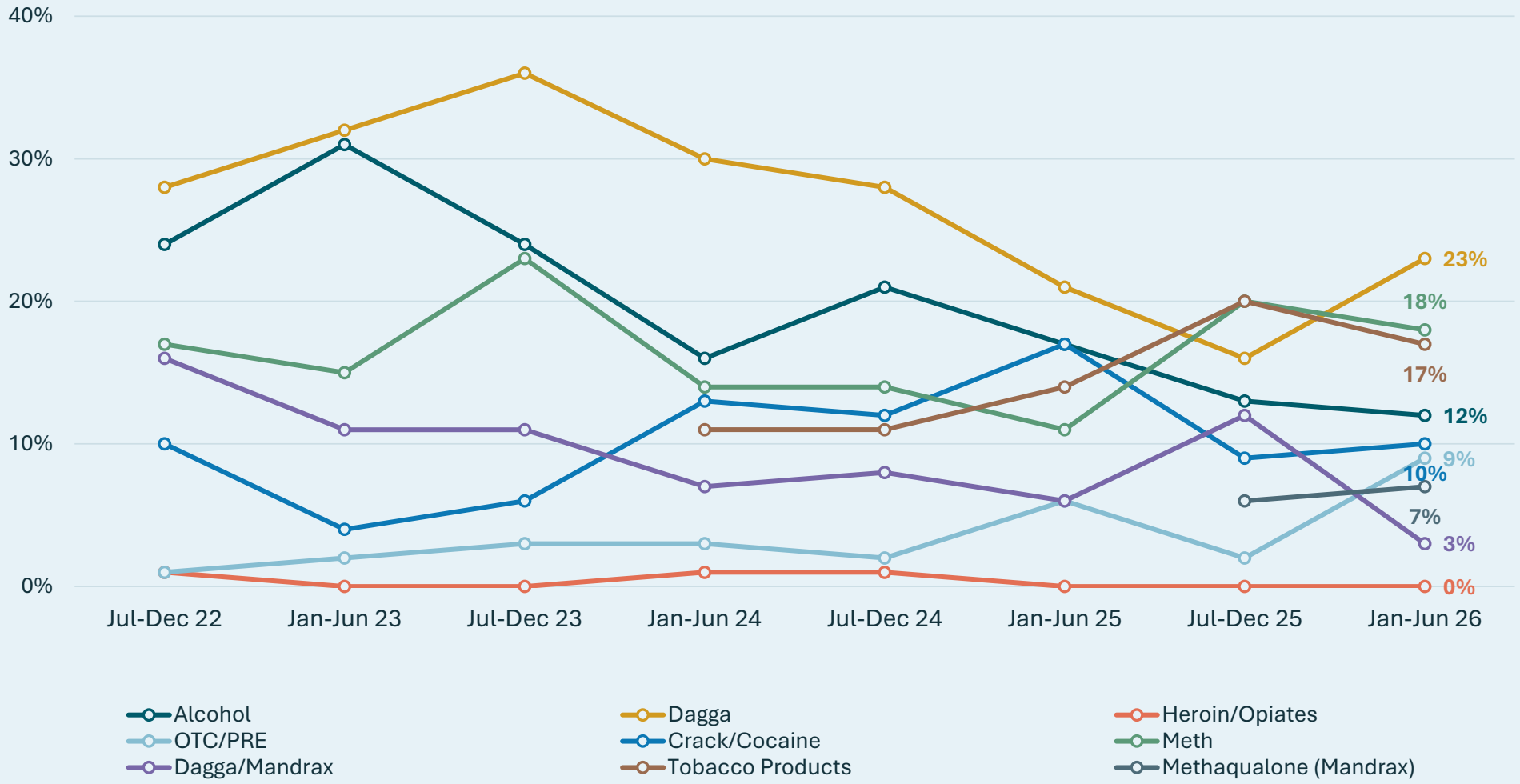
secondary dagga
Jan–Jun 2026

+7 pp

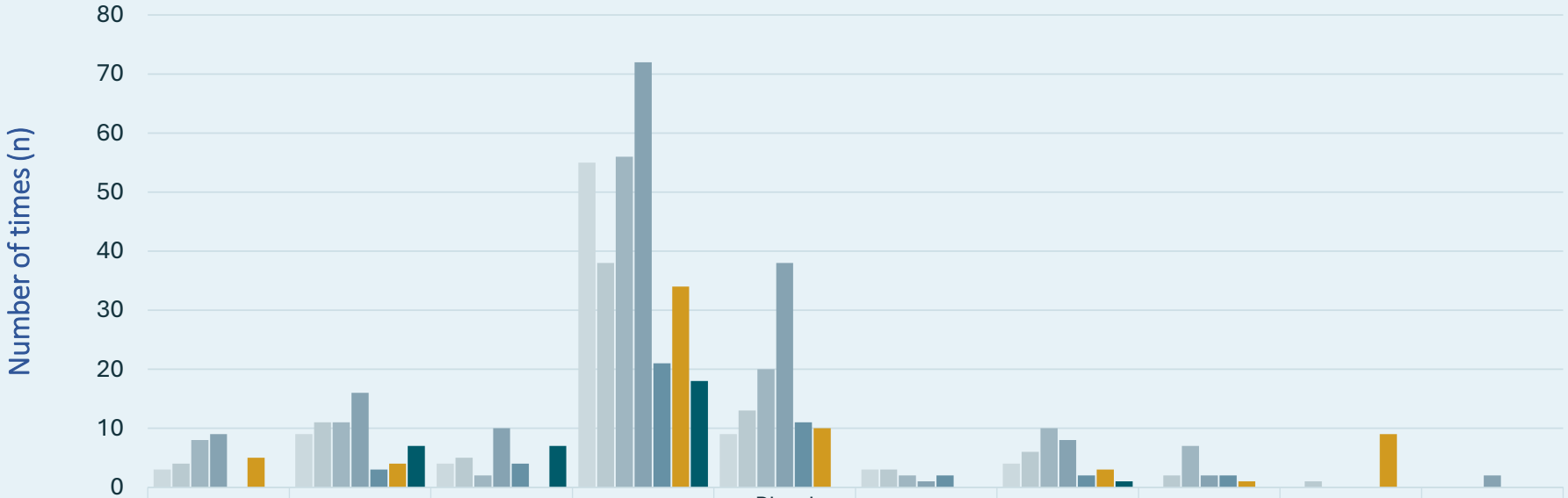
Jul–Dec 2025 to
Jan–Jun 2026

Up from 16%
to 23%

Meth next at 18%,
tobacco at 17%



EC service users reporting NCDs upon admission (n = 42, 23%)



	Cardiovascular	Respiratory diseases	Diabetes	Mental Health	Blood pressure illnesses	Liver Disease	GIT Disease	Neurological Disease	Hepatitis	Cancer
Jan-Jun 23	3	9	4	55	9	3	4	0	0	0
Jul-Dec 23	4	11	5	38	13	3	6	2	1	0
Jan-Jun 24	8	11	2	56	20	2	10	7	0	0
Jul-Dec 24	9	16	10	72	38	1	8	2	0	2
Jan-Jun 25	0	3	4	21	11	2	2	2	0	0
Jul-Dec 25	5	4	0	34	10	0	3	1	9	0
Jan-Jun 26	0	7	7	18	0	0	1	0	0	0

23%

CI: 17.0 – 29.0

reported an NCD upon admission

Last doctor visit

87%

<2 years ago



6%

2–5 years ago

7%

> 5 years ago

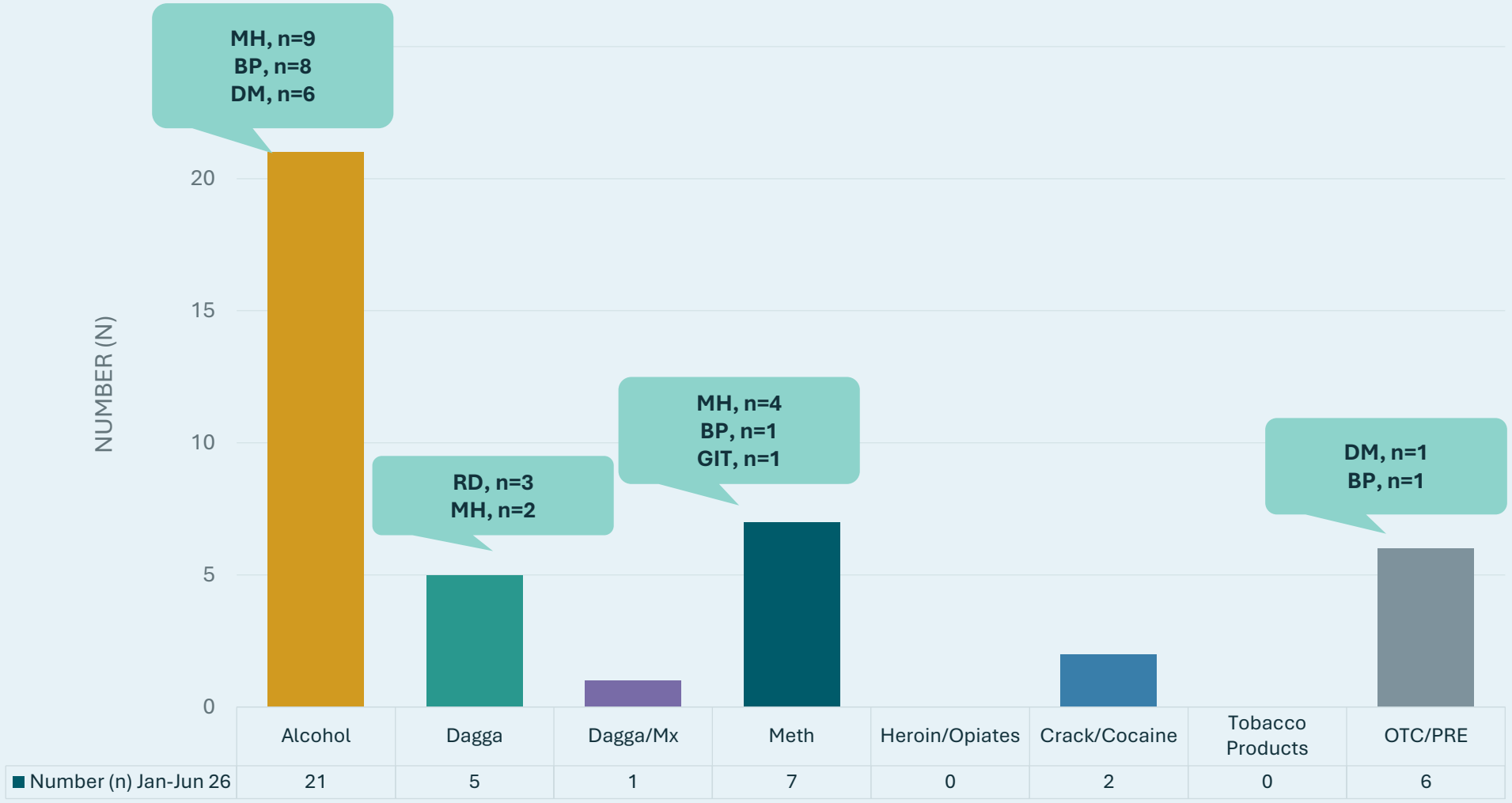
Alcohol leads NCD cases by primary substance

21 individuals

Alcohol + NCD

Half of all NCD cases

involve alcohol as primary substance



KEY TAKEAWAYS

Eastern Cape admissions have halved, with alcohol now the leading substance

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ADMISSIONS & REACH

- Admissions down 51.3% since Jan–Jun 2021 (386 to 188), stable over the last 3 periods.
- Eastern Cape is 9% of the national total; adjusted rate 2.7 per 100,000.
- Smallest male–female gap of any region.
- Rate ratio 1.02 vs Jul–Dec 2025: not significant.

WHO IS TREATED

- Males continue to dominate; 15–29 is the largest age group, then 35–39.
- Mean age 28 years; mean age of initiation 18 years.
- Fewer employed, more students; readmissions down.

SUBSTANCES & PATTERNS

- Alcohol leads primary use at 38% (+6 pp); dagga 37%; meth down 5 pp to 16%.
- Secondary: dagga 23%, meth 18%, tobacco 17%.
- Smoking is the main route (56%); daily use at 60%.

HEALTH

- 23% reported an NCD on admission (n = 42); mental health is most common.
- Alcohol-primary users account for half of NCD cases (21).

Thank you

Baie dankie · Enkosi

Visit our website at

https://www.samrc.ac.za/intramural-research-units/MASTRU-sacendu

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