



# SACENDU

SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNITY EPIDEMIOLOGY NETWORK ON DRUG USE

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

## NORTHERN REGION SYMPOSIUM: TREATMENT DEMAND DATA

---

Ms Nancy Hornsby

**Phase 59 | July – December 2025**

**26 March 2026, Virtual**



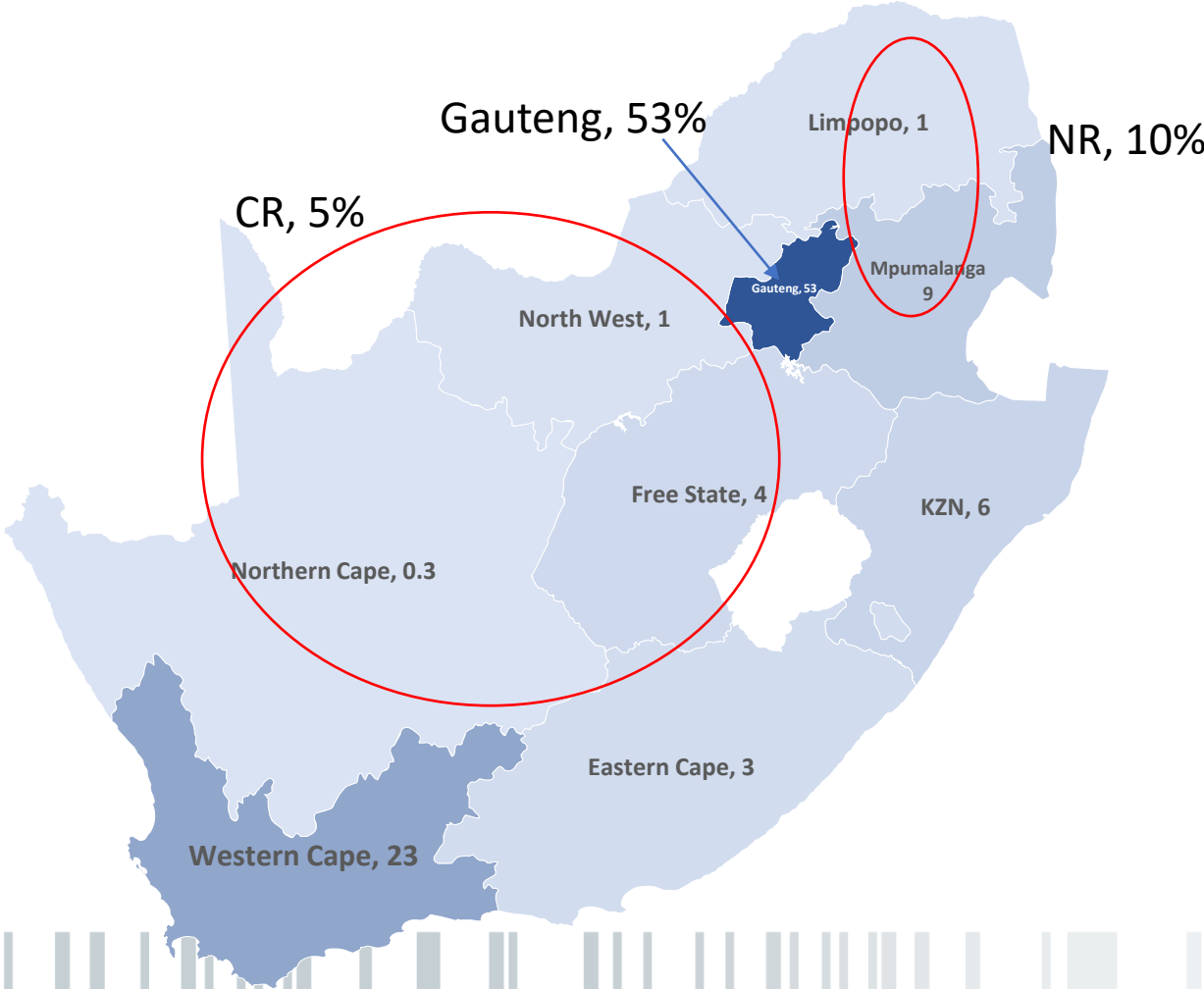
# National overview: 2025B



# SACENDU

SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNITY EPIDEMIOLOGY NETWORK ON DRUG USE

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

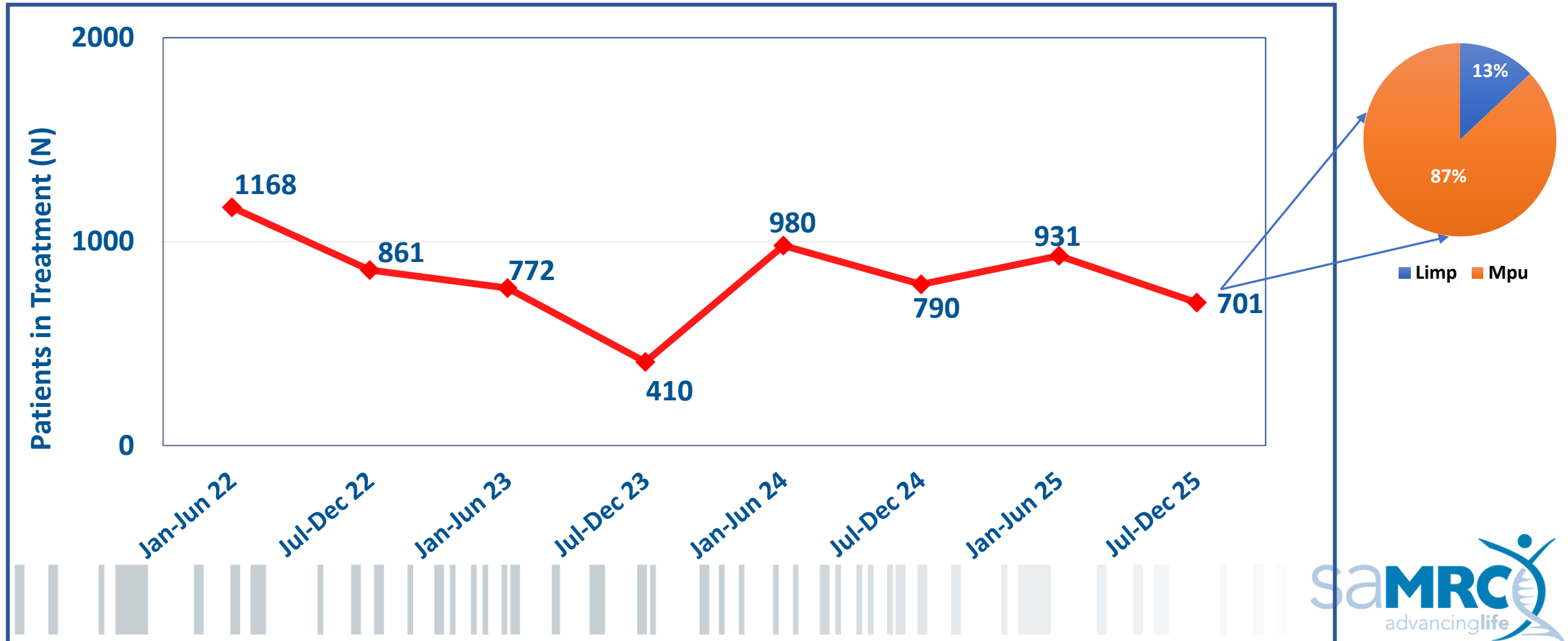


Percentage (%)





## NUMBER OF PATIENTS IN TREATMENT



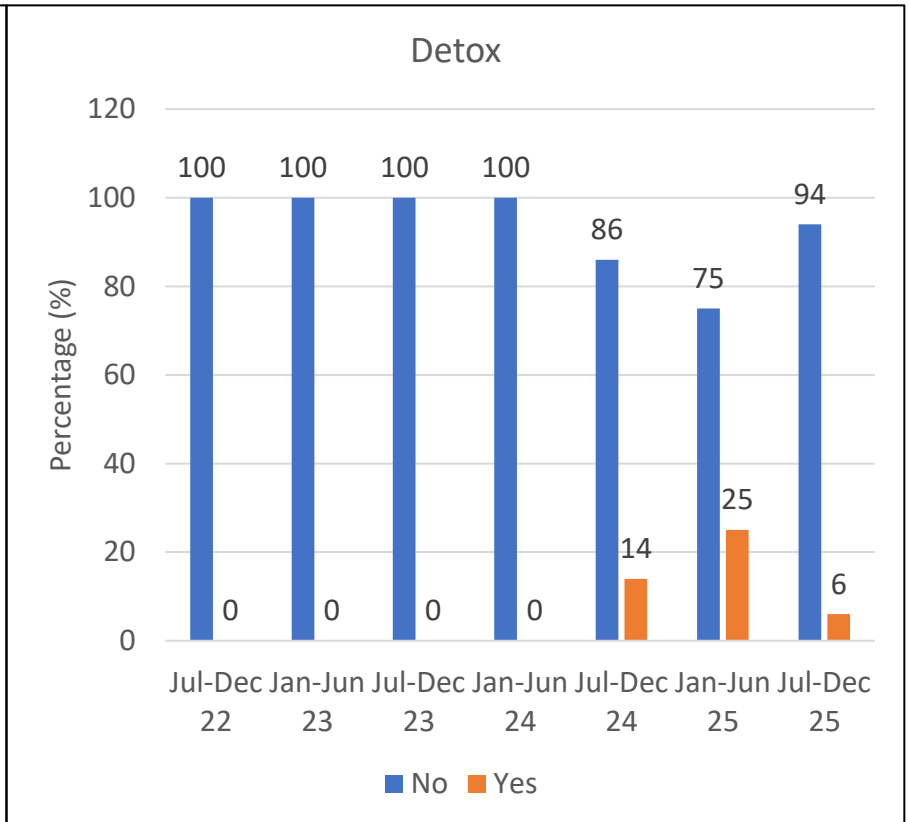
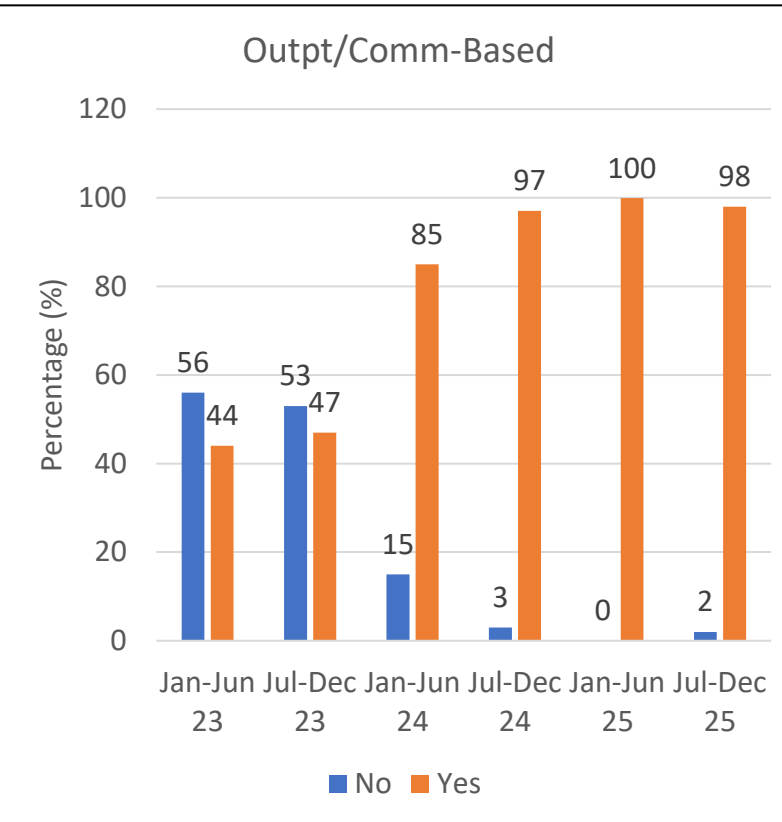
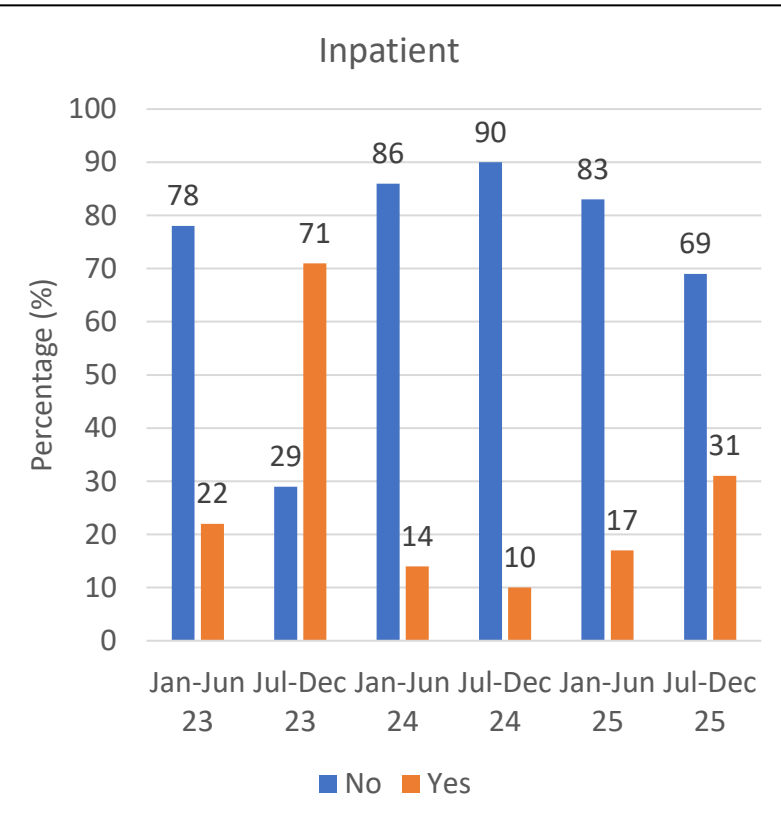
# TYPE OF TREATMENT RECEIVED



# SACENDU

SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNITY EPIDEMIOLOGY NETWORK ON DRUG USE

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



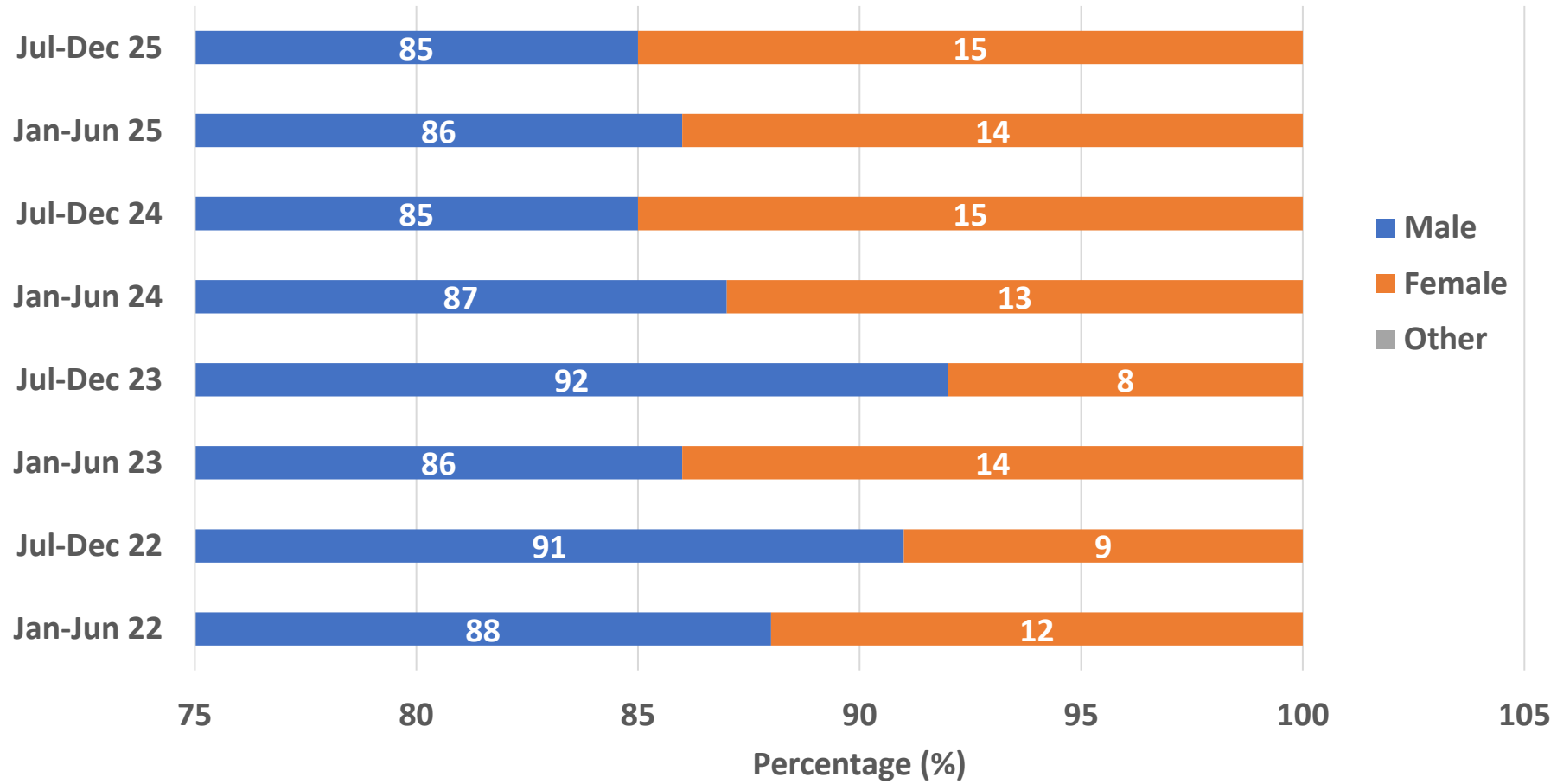
# GENDER



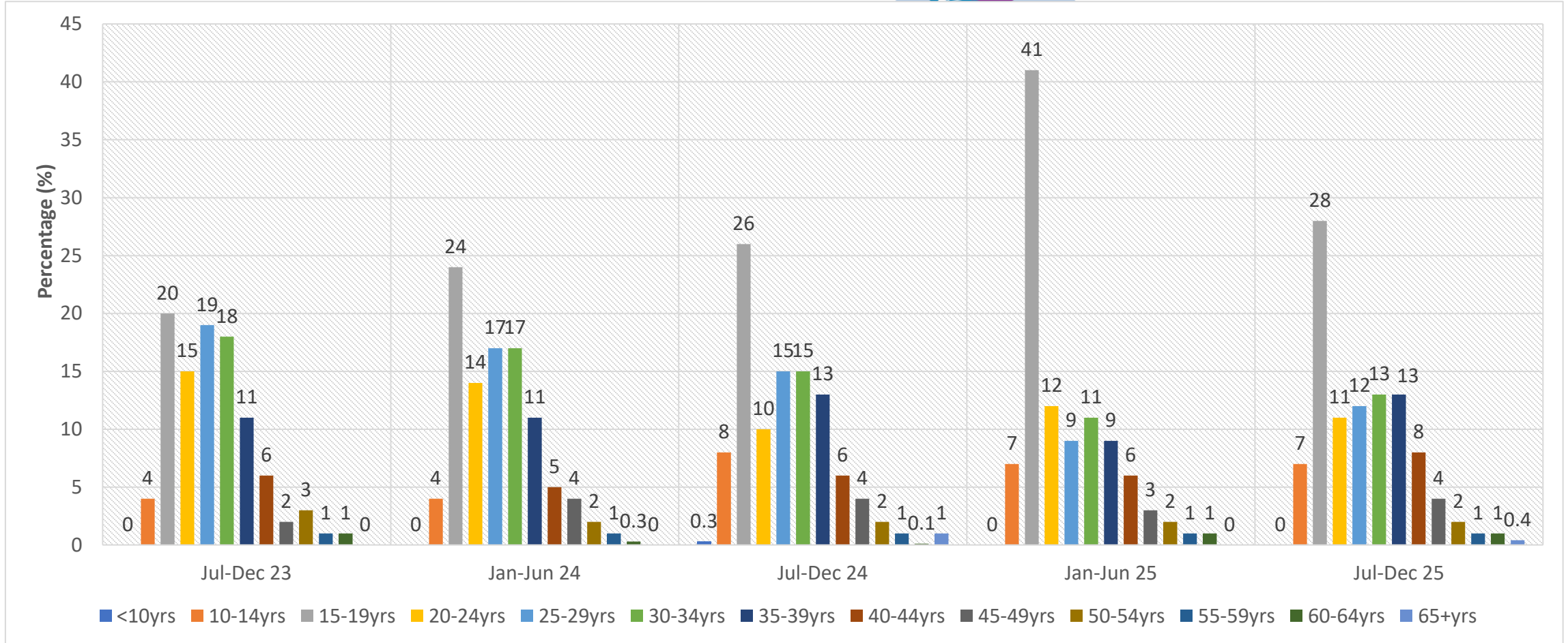
# SACENDU

SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNITY EPIDEMIOLOGY NETWORK ON DRUG USE

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

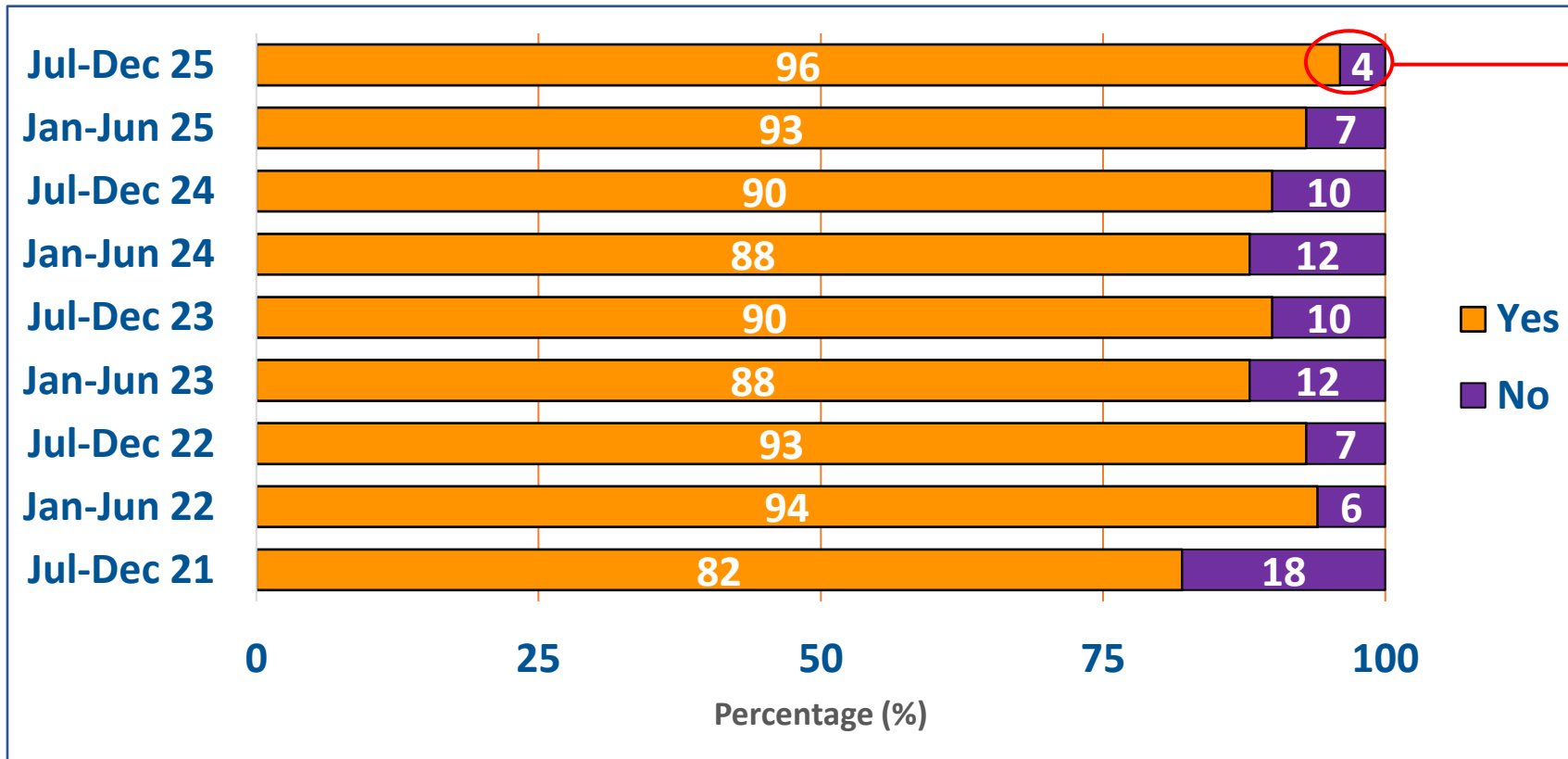


# AGE DISTRIBUTION





## FIRST-TIME ADMISSIONS VS READMISSIONS



Number of times	n
1 time	16
2 times	7
3 times	3

	Inpt (n)	Outpt/CB (n)	Detox (n)
1 time	5	21	0



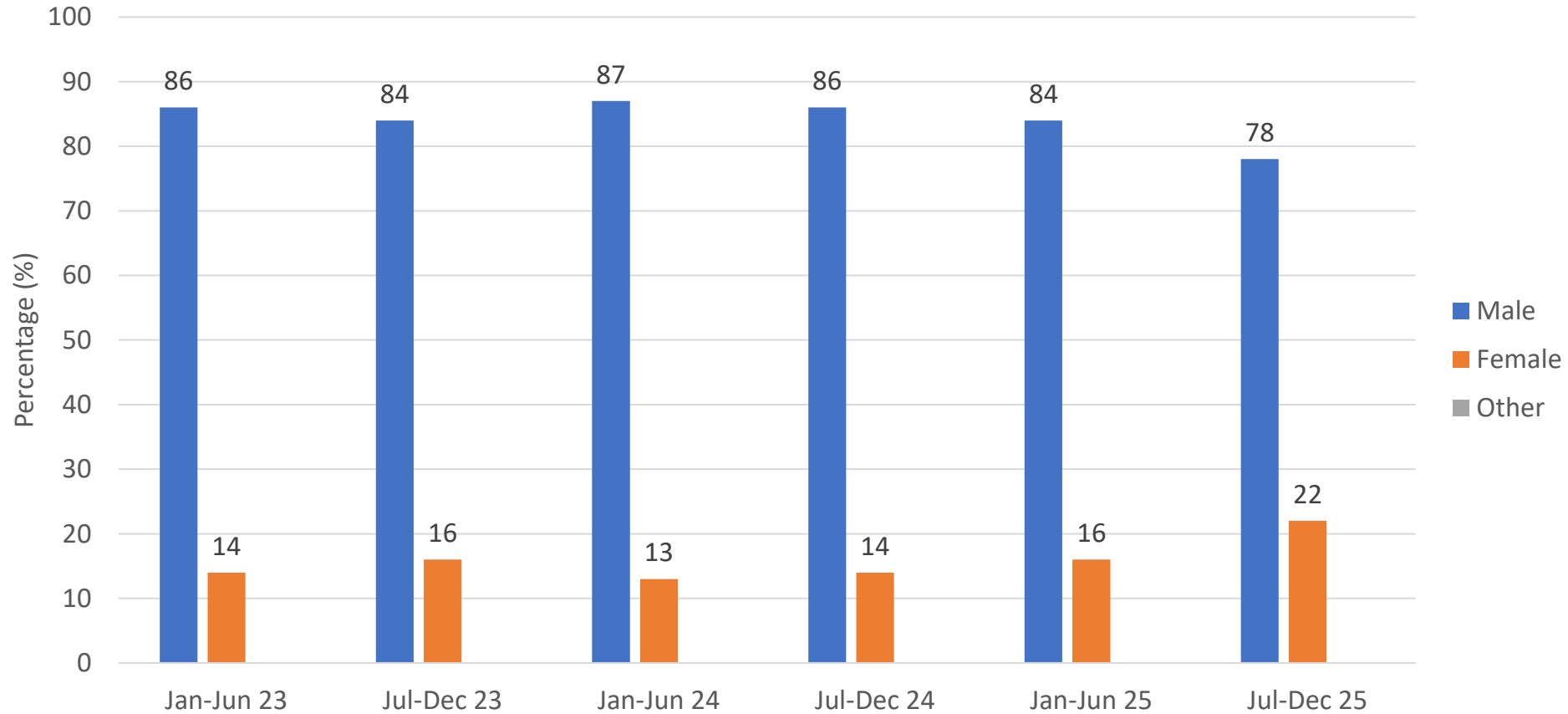
# READMISSION BY GENDER



# SACENDU

SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNITY EPIDEMIOLOGY NETWORK ON DRUG USE

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



# READMISSION BY AGE

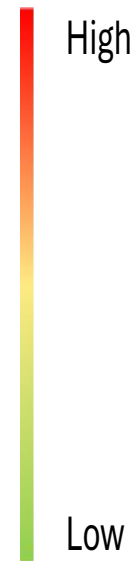


# SACENDU

SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNITY EPIDEMIOLOGY NETWORK ON DRUG USE

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

	Jul-Dec 23	Jan-Jun 24	Jul-Dec 24	Jan-Jun 25	Jul-Dec 25
<10yrs	0	0	0	0	0
10-14yrs	0	1	0	6	0
15-19yrs	5	7	6	41	0
20-24yrs	5	12	11	17	4
25-29yrs	32	21	24	6	19
30-34yrs	24	28	24	8	15
35-39yrs	18	17	17	11	11
40-44yrs	8	9	11	5	26
45-49yrs	3	3	5	5	7
50-54yrs	5	1	0	2	11
55-59yrs	0	0	0	0	4
60-64yrs	0	1	0	2	4
65+yrs	0	0	3	0	0



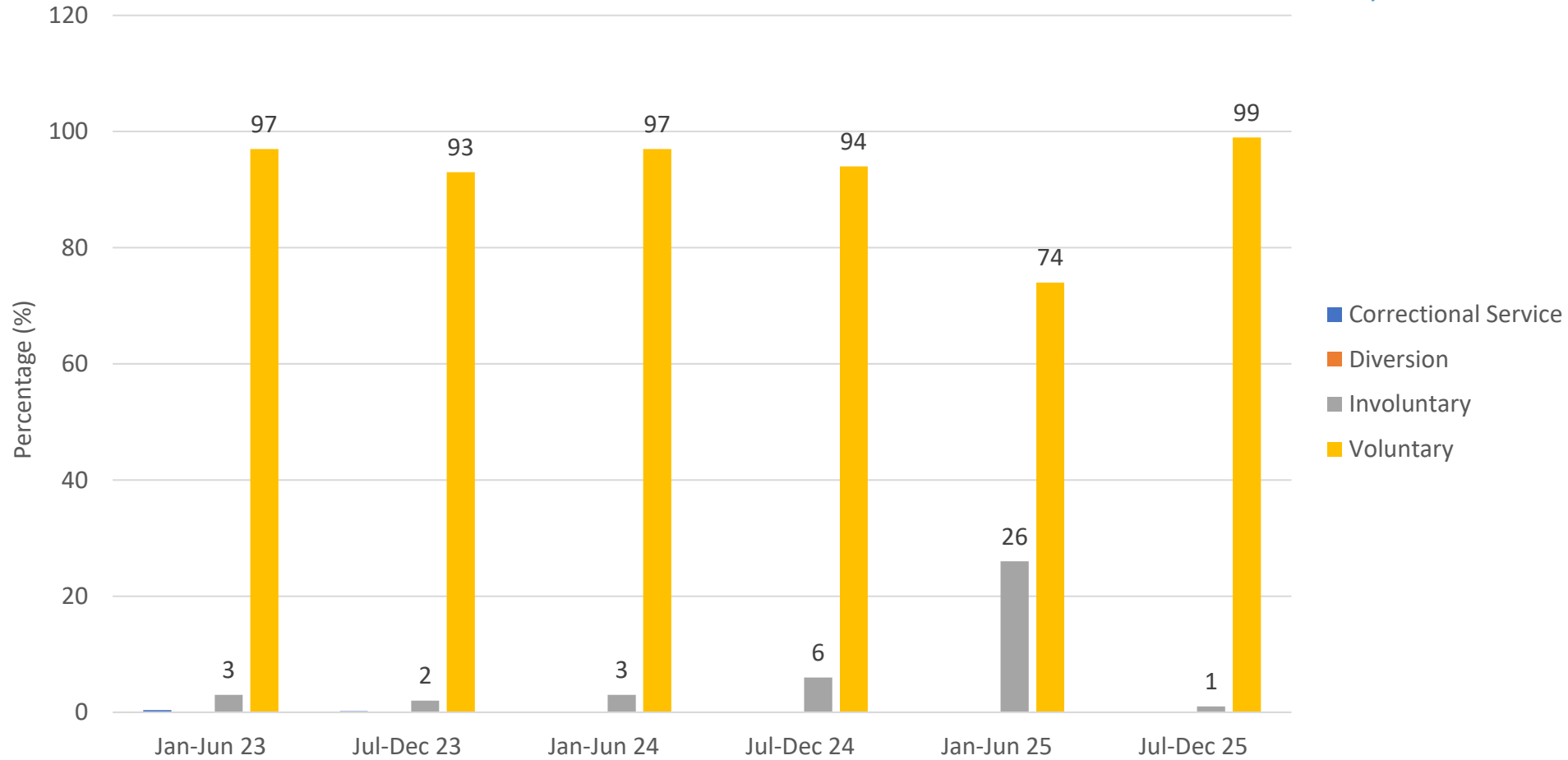


# SACENDU

SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNITY EPIDEMIOLOGY NETWORK ON DRUG USE

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

## TYPE OF ADMISSION



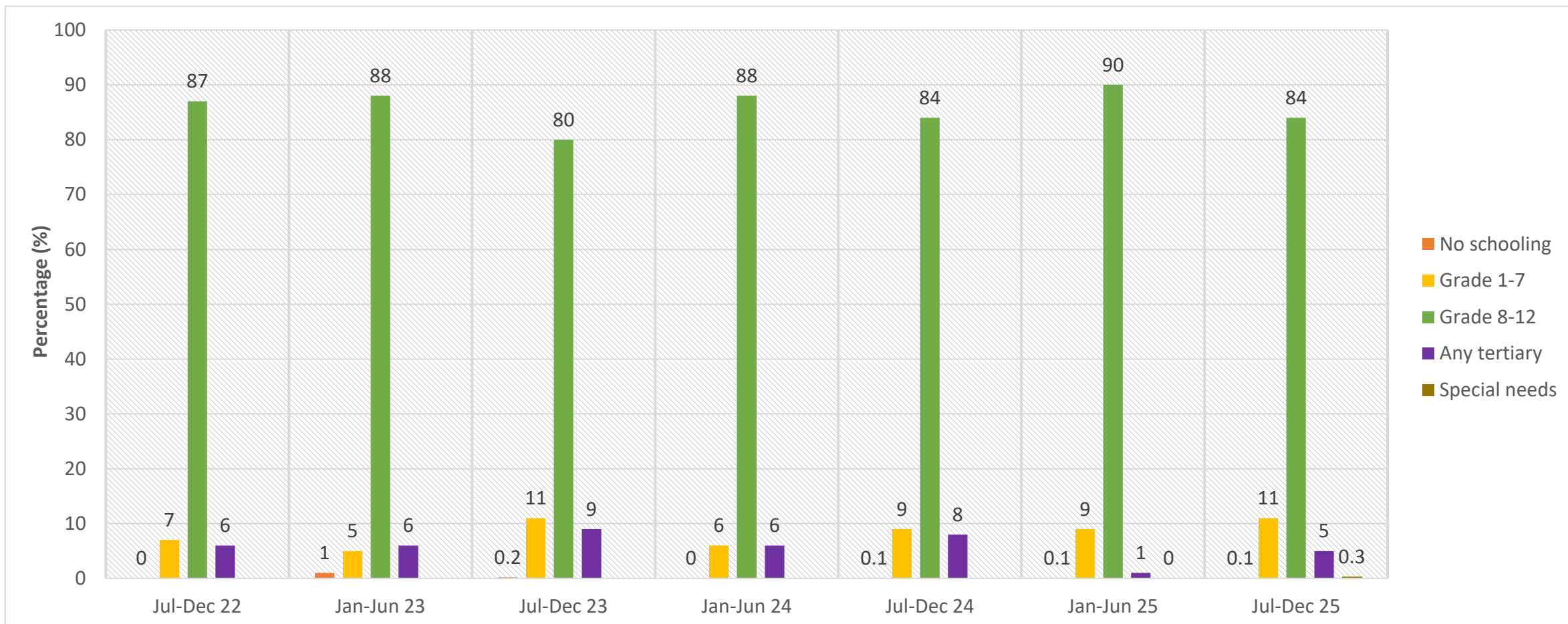
# EDUCATION LEVEL



# SACENDU

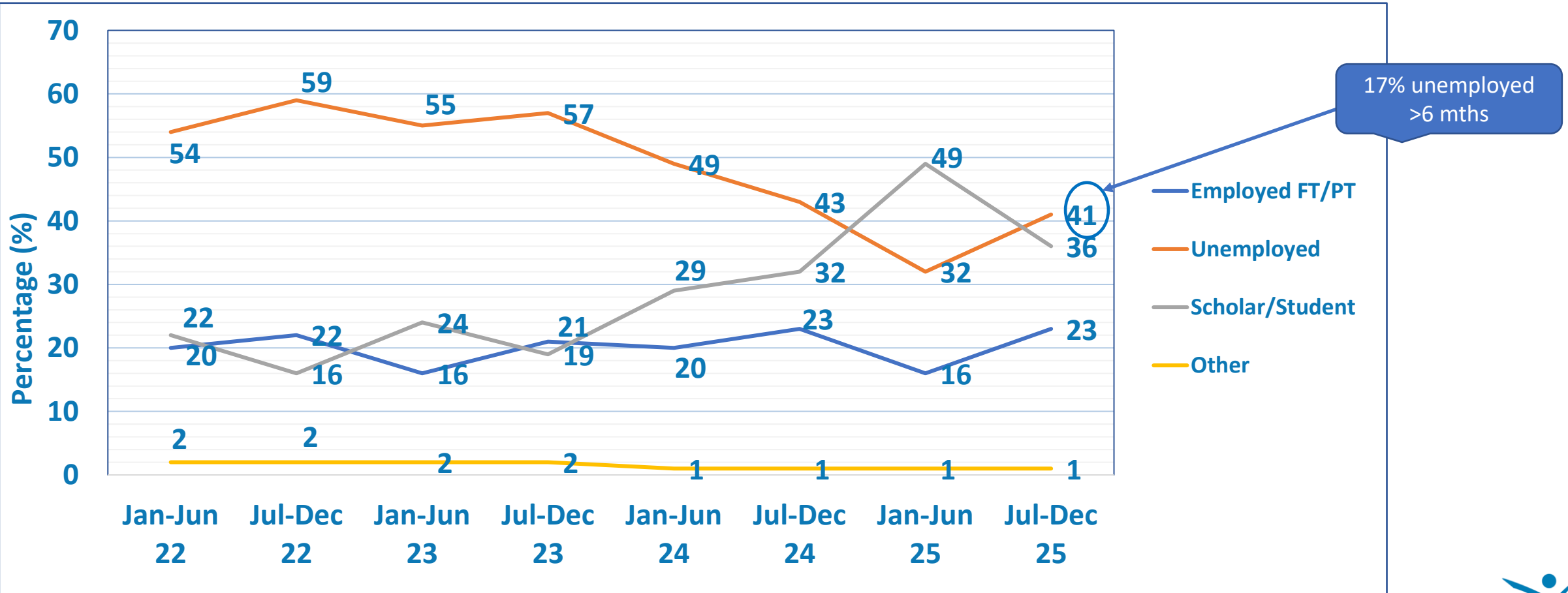
SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNITY EPIDEMIOLOGY NETWORK ON DRUG USE

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





## EMPLOYMENT STATUS



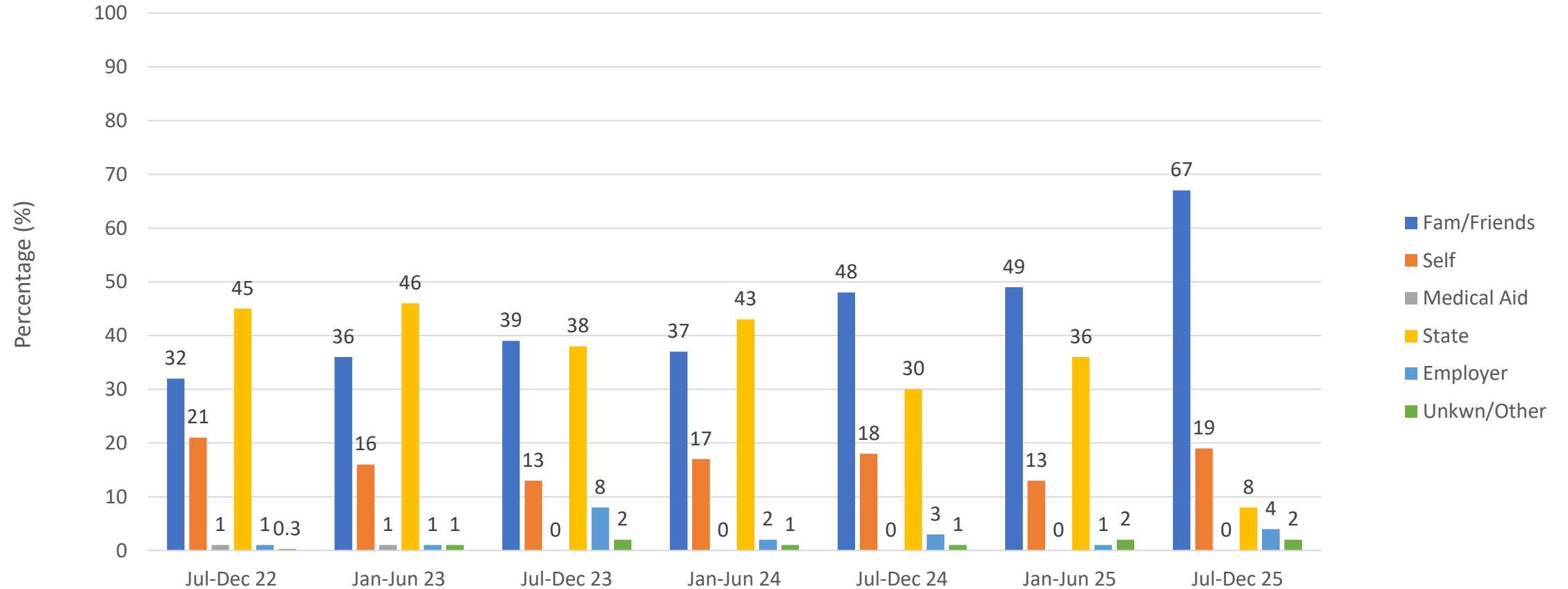
# SOURCE OF PAYMENT



# SACENDU

SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNITY EPIDEMIOLOGY NETWORK ON DRUG USE

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



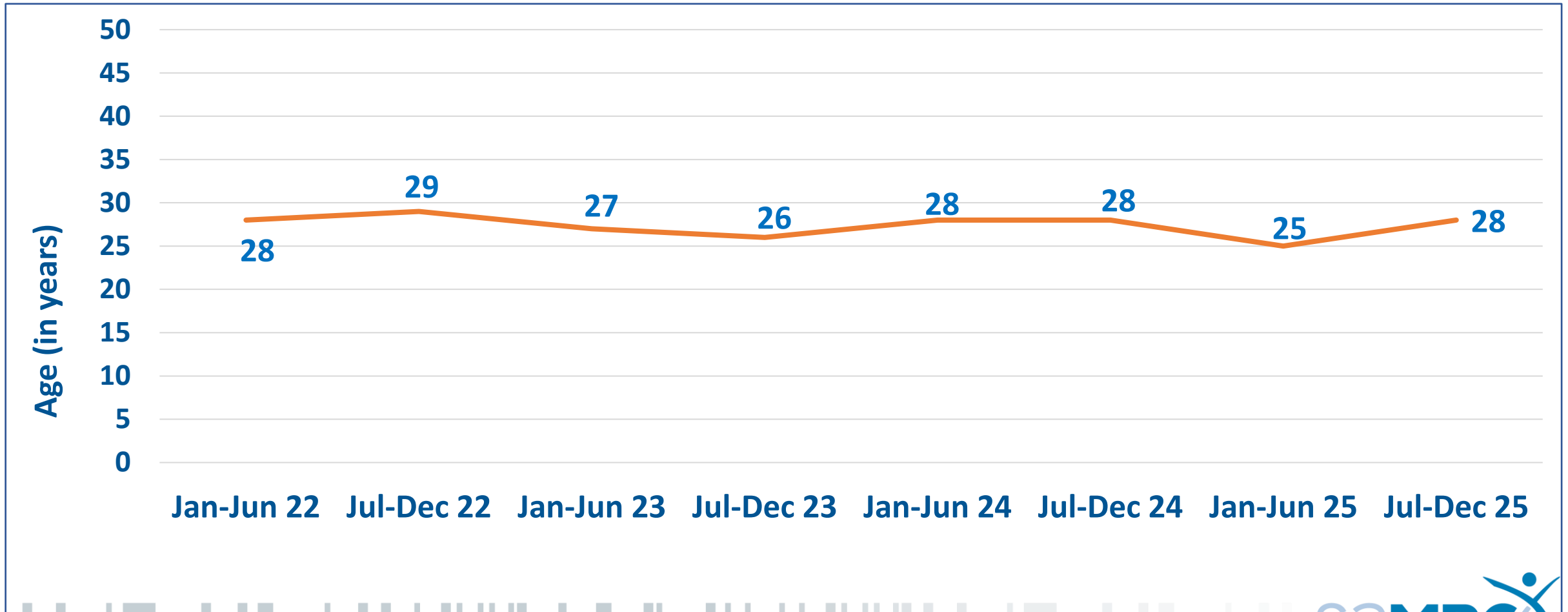
# MEAN AGE ACROSS PERIODS



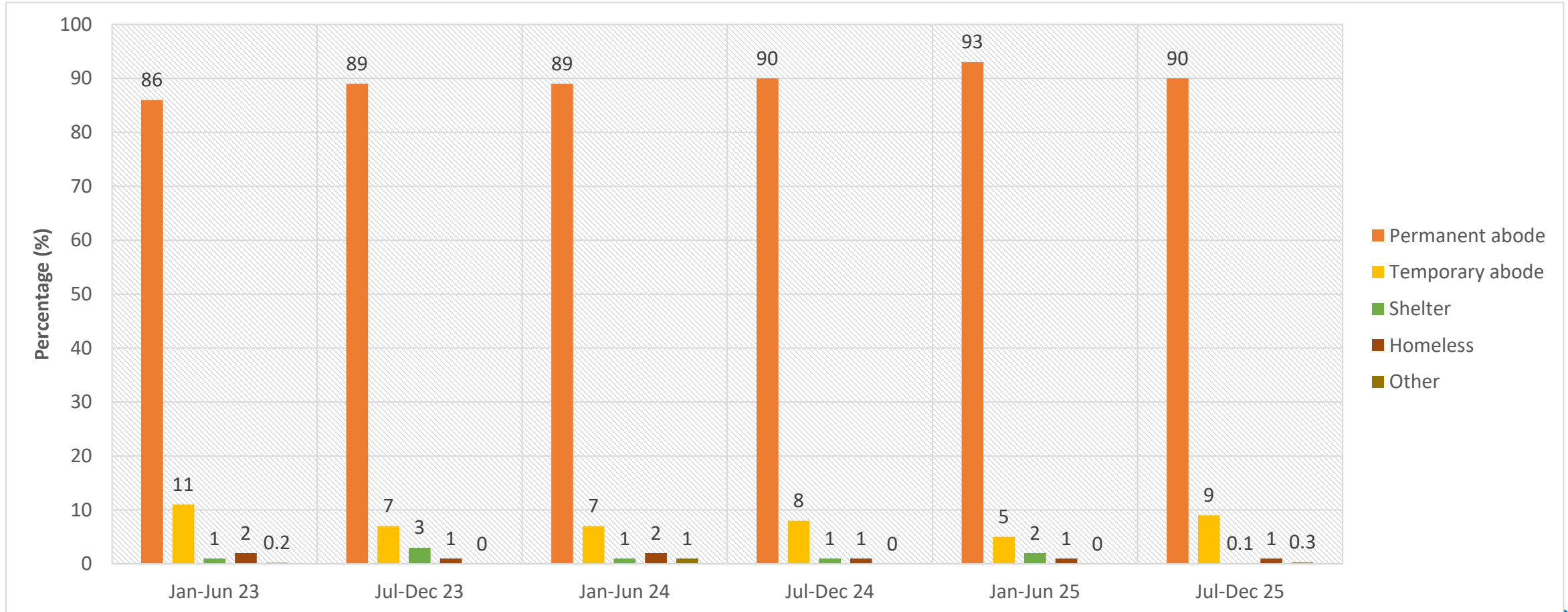
# SACENDU

SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNITY EPIDEMIOLOGY NETWORK ON DRUG USE

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



# TYPE OF RESIDENCE



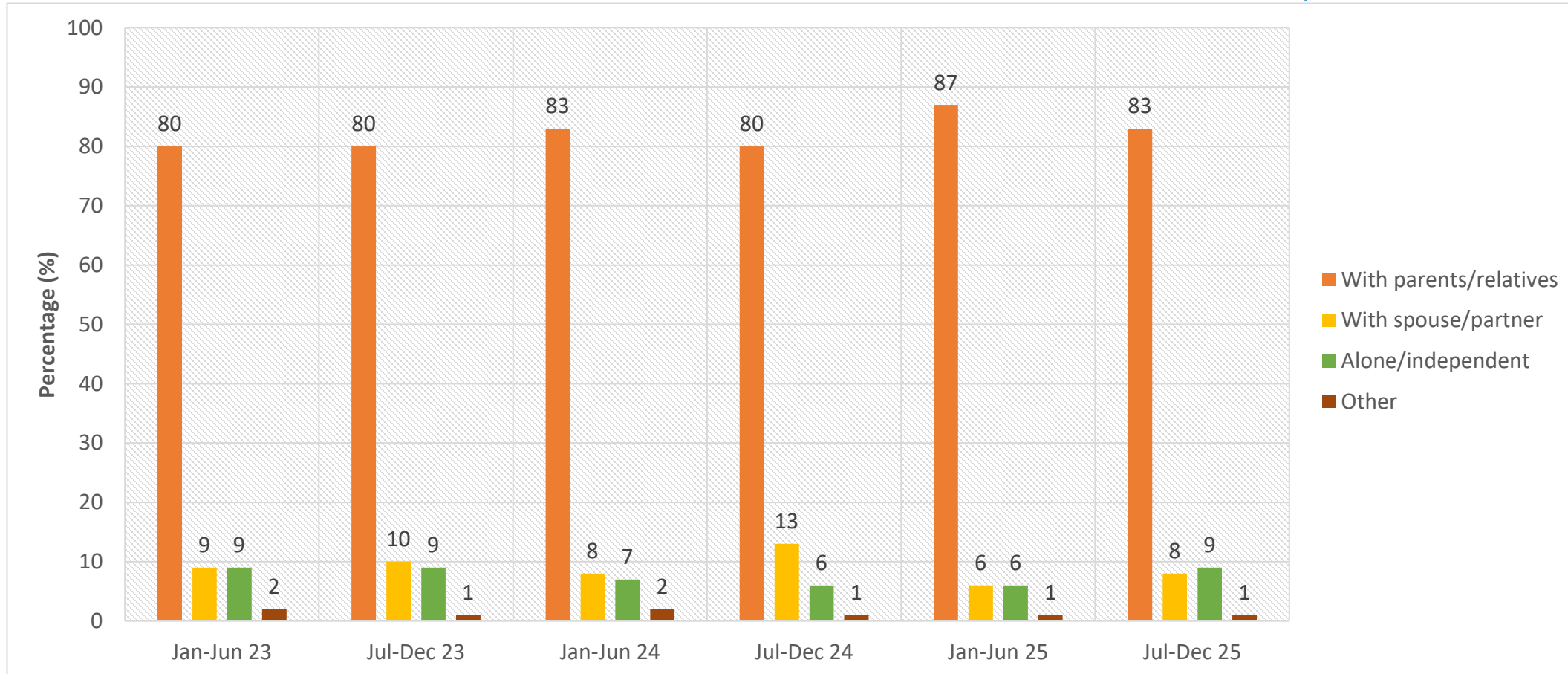
# WHO CLIENT RESIDES WITH



# SACENDU

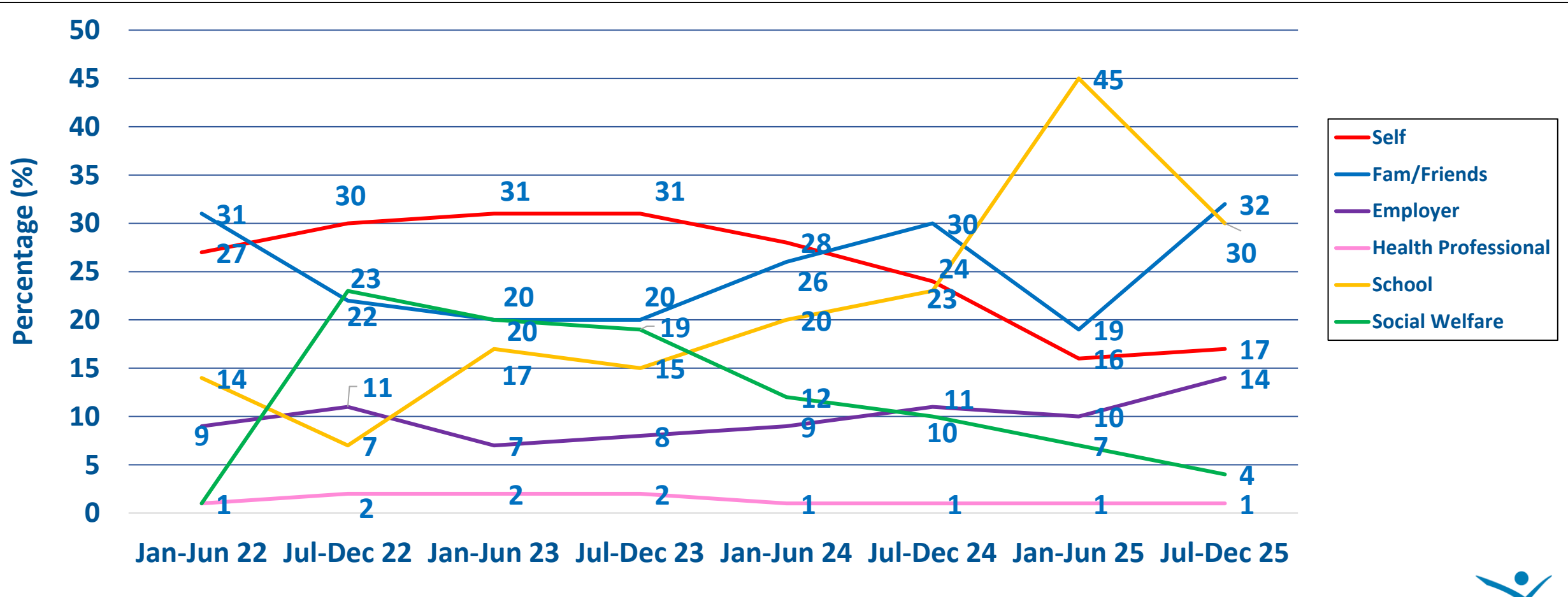
SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNITY EPIDEMIOLOGY NETWORK ON DRUG USE

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





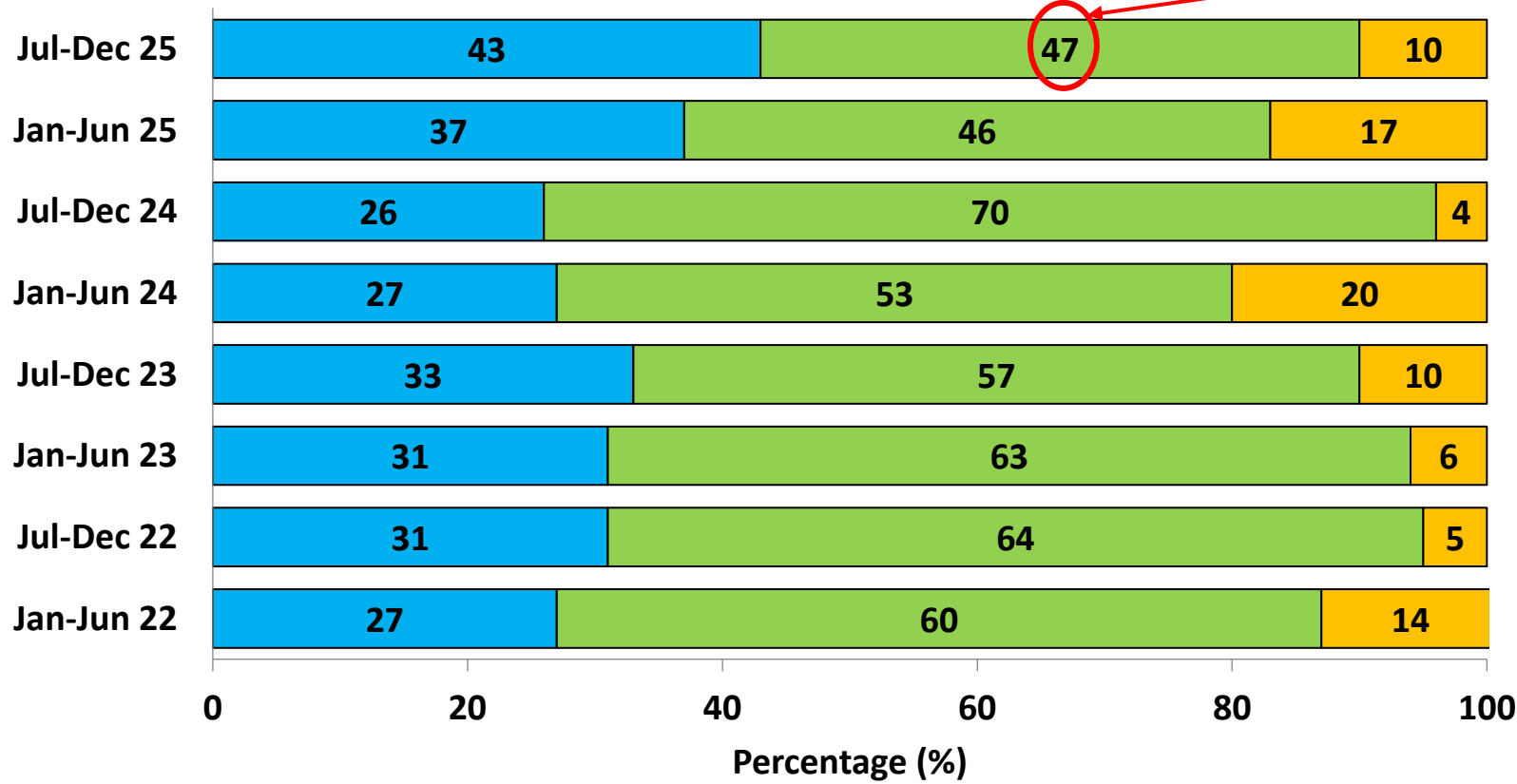
## REFERRAL SOURCE OVER TIME



# HIV TESTED



Yes, in past 12 mths	39%
Not in past 12 mths	8%



- No
- Yes
- Declined



# PRIOR HIV TEST BY AGE

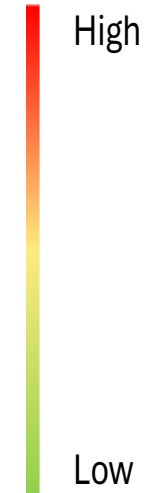


# SACENDU

SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNITY EPIDEMIOLOGY NETWORK ON DRUG USE

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

	Jul-Dec 23			Jan-Jun 24			Jul-Dec 24			Jan-Jun 25			Jul-Dec 25		
	Yes	No	Dec	Yes	No	Dec	Yes	No	Dec	Yes	No	Dec	Yes	No	Dec
<10yrs	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
10-14yrs	1	10	3	2	9	5	5	13	7	4	10	6	6	9	3
15-19yrs	12	35	18	11	36	45	19	38	24	35	49	42	25	31	33
20-24yrs	17	13	8	17	12	10	11	6	13	10	13	11	11	11	15
25-29yrs	22	13	15	20	14	13	18	11	14	10	7	12	13	10	10
30-34yrs	21	15	18	21	14	12	18	12	14	14	8	11	13	13	17
35-39yrs	13	4	23	14	9	7	18	7	11	12	6	8	15	11	11
40-44yrs	8	3	8	7	2	4	6	4	7	7	5	3	9	8	4
45-49yrs	2	2	3	5	2	2	3	6	6	3	2	3	4	4	1
50-54yrs	3	2	5	2	2	1	1	2	2	1	1	4	2	2	4
55-59yrs	1	2	0	1	1	2	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	0
60-64yrs	0	2	0	0.2	0.4	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	0
65+yrs	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1



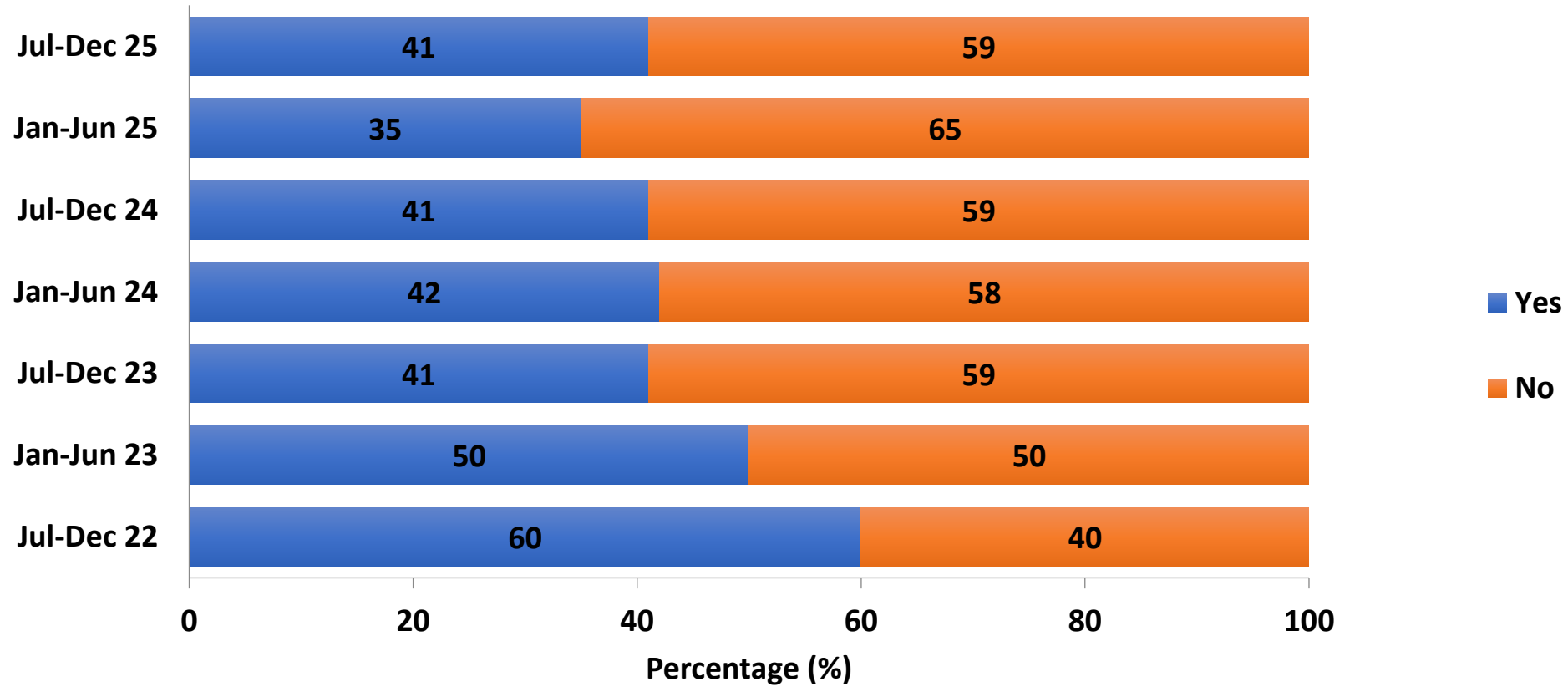
# FUTURE HIV TESTING



# SACENDU

SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNITY EPIDEMIOLOGY NETWORK ON DRUG USE

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



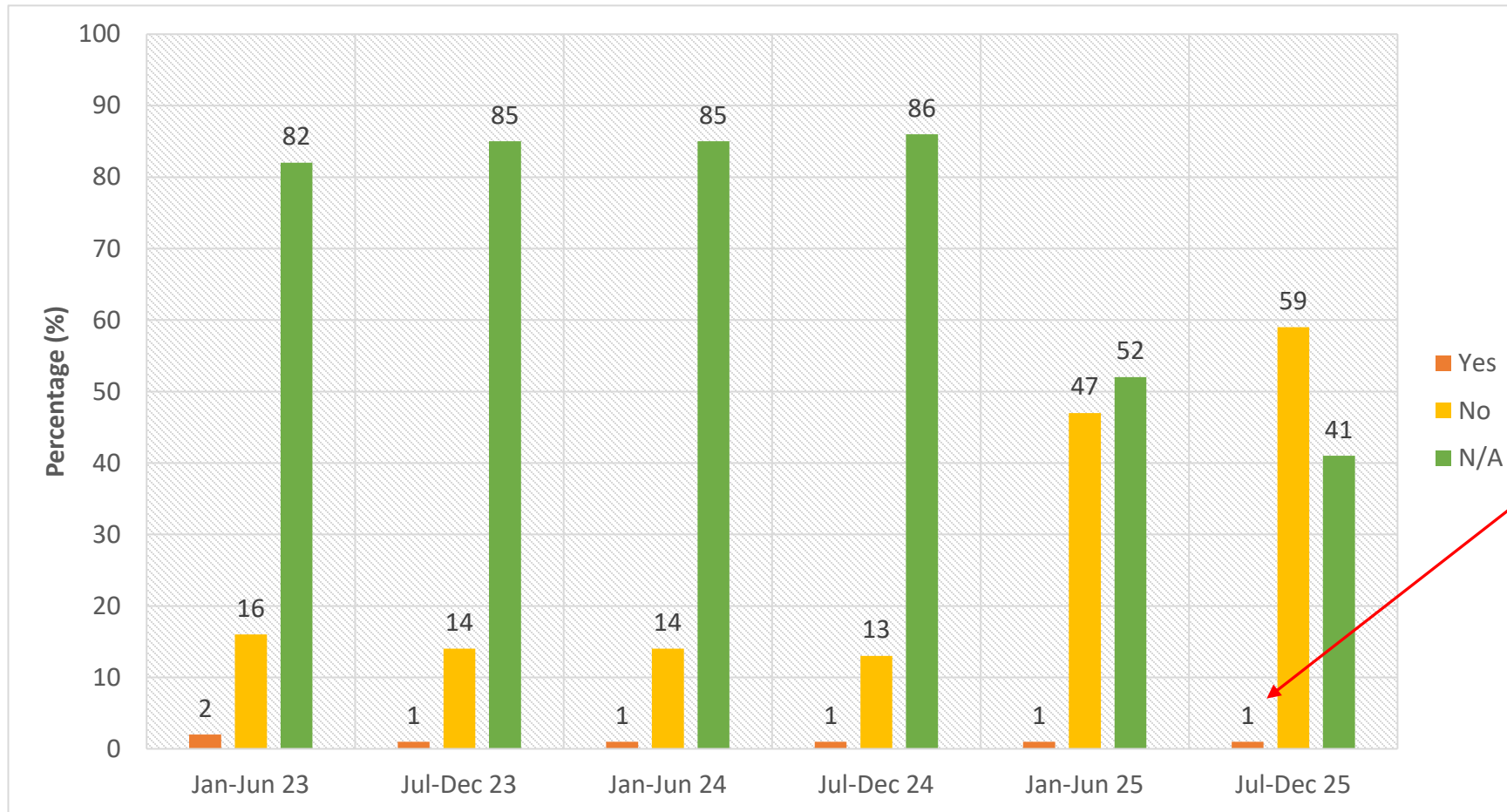
# SUBSTANCE USE DURING PREGNANCY



# SACENDU

SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNITY EPIDEMIOLOGY NETWORK ON DRUG USE

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



Substances used	n
Dagga	2
Alcohol	1
CAT/KHAT	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>



# SACENDU

SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNITY EPIDEMIOLOGY NETWORK ON DRUG USE

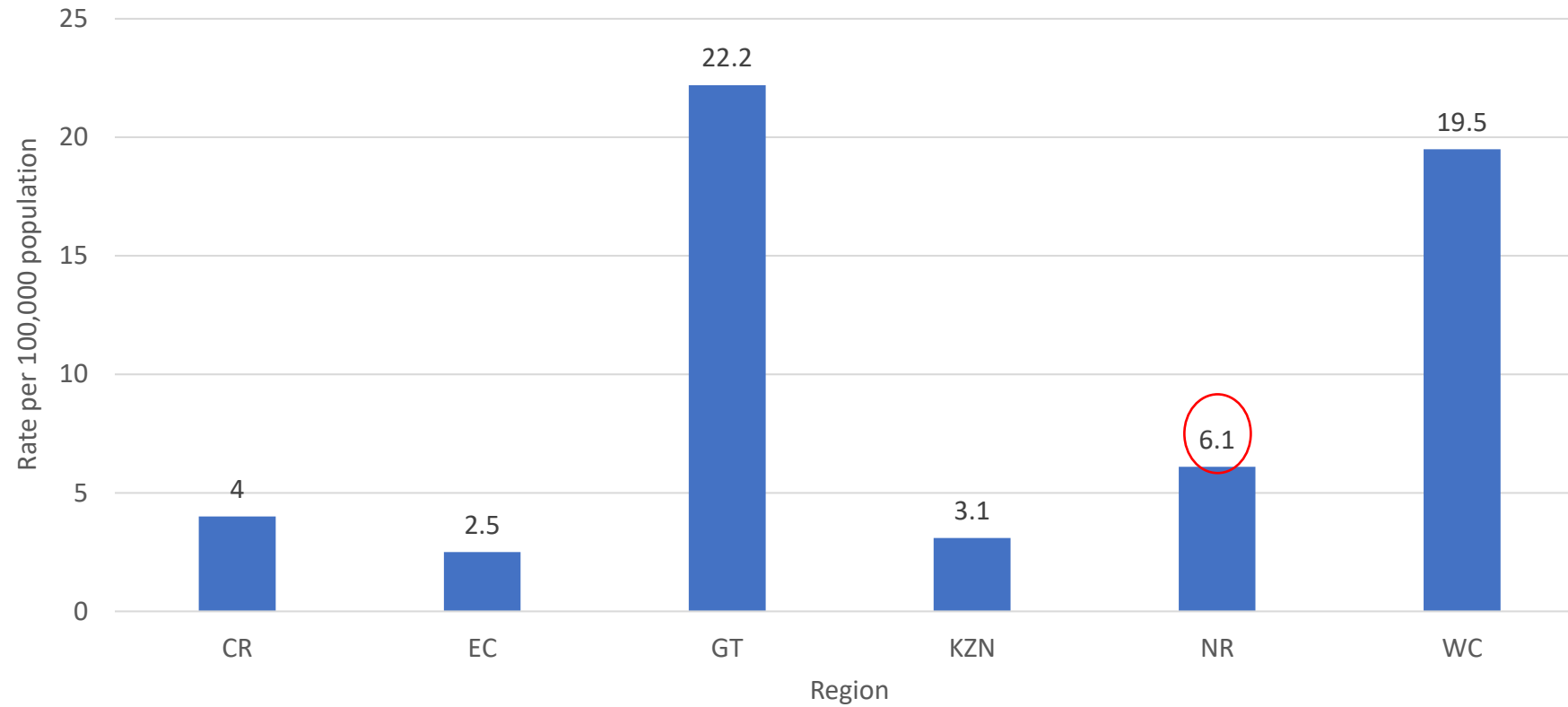
Treatment Demand Data • Service Quality Measures (SQM)  
• Community-Based Harm Reduction Services

# POPULATION-ADJUSTED ESTIMATES



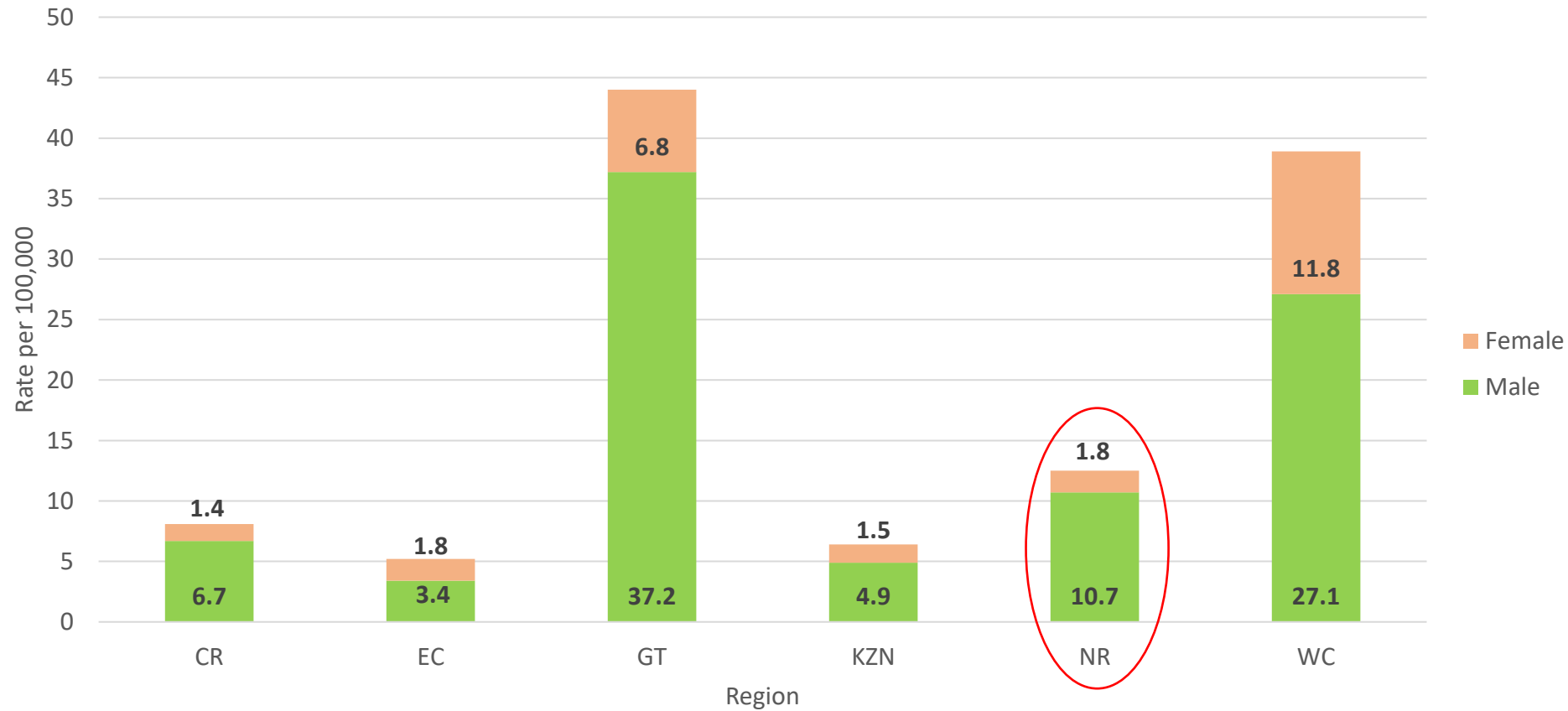


## Age and Sex-adjusted rate per 100,000 All Admissions





Age-adjusted rate per 100,000  
Gender





# SACENDU

SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNITY EPIDEMIOLOGY NETWORK ON DRUG USE

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

## SUBSTANCES OF USE



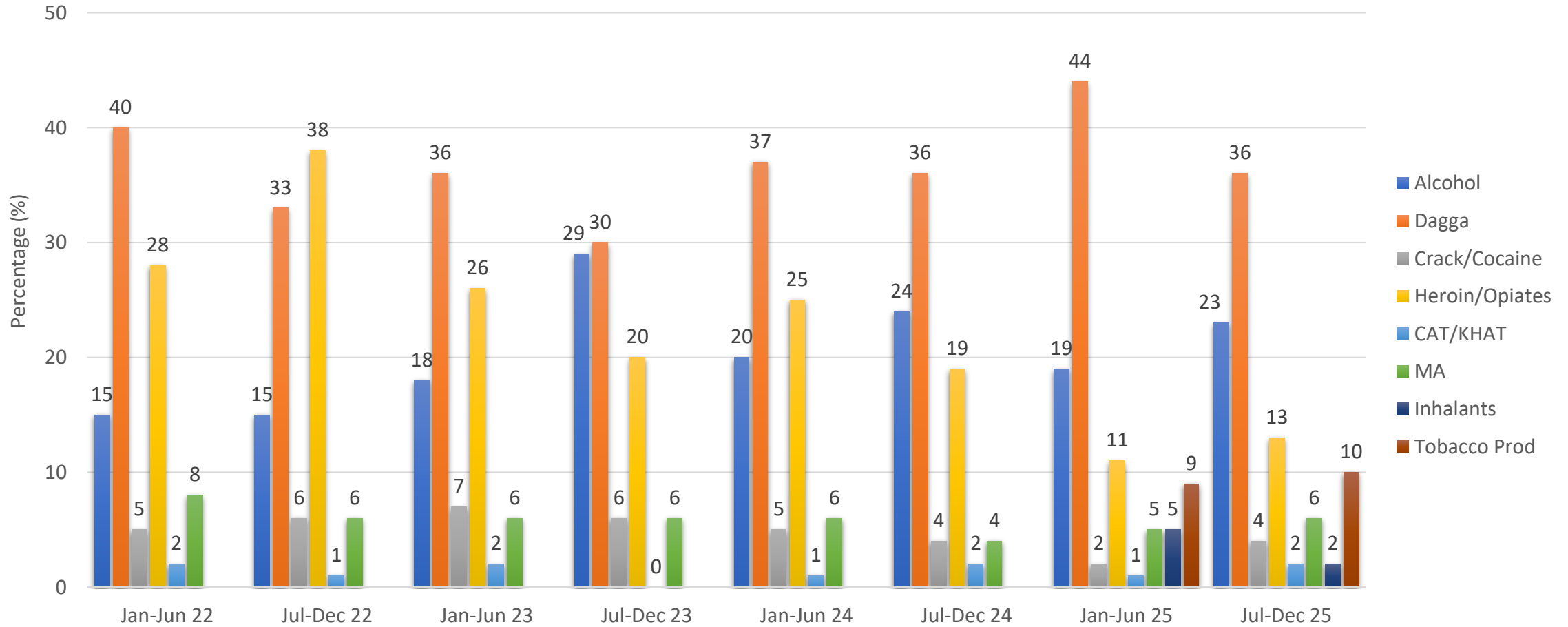
# SELECTED PRIMARY SUBSTANCES OF USE



# SACENDU

SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNITY EPIDEMIOLOGY NETWORK ON DRUG USE

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



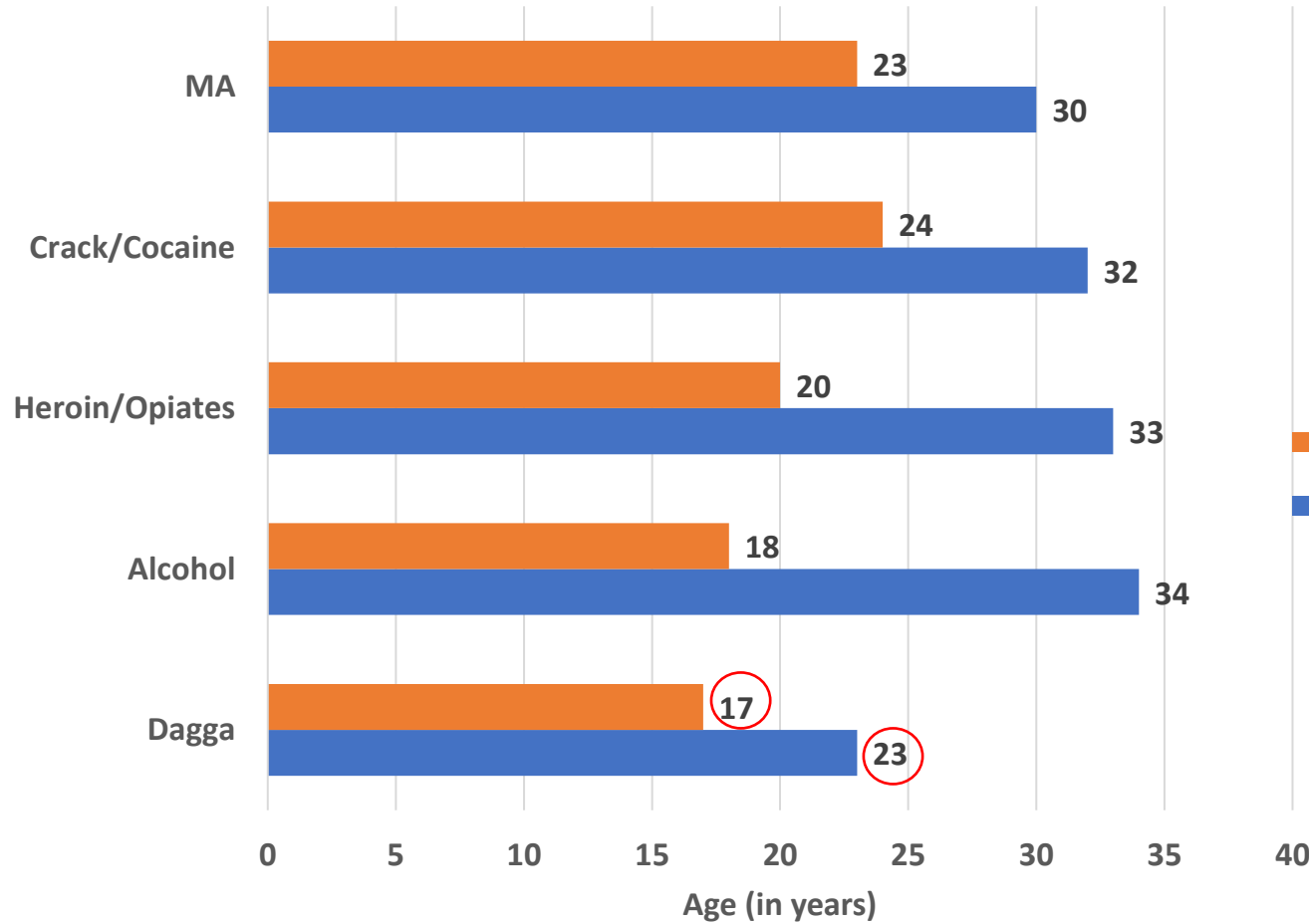
# SELECTED PSOA BY MEAN AGE/MEAN AGE OF INITIATION



# SACENDU

SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNITY EPIDEMIOLOGY NETWORK ON DRUG USE

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



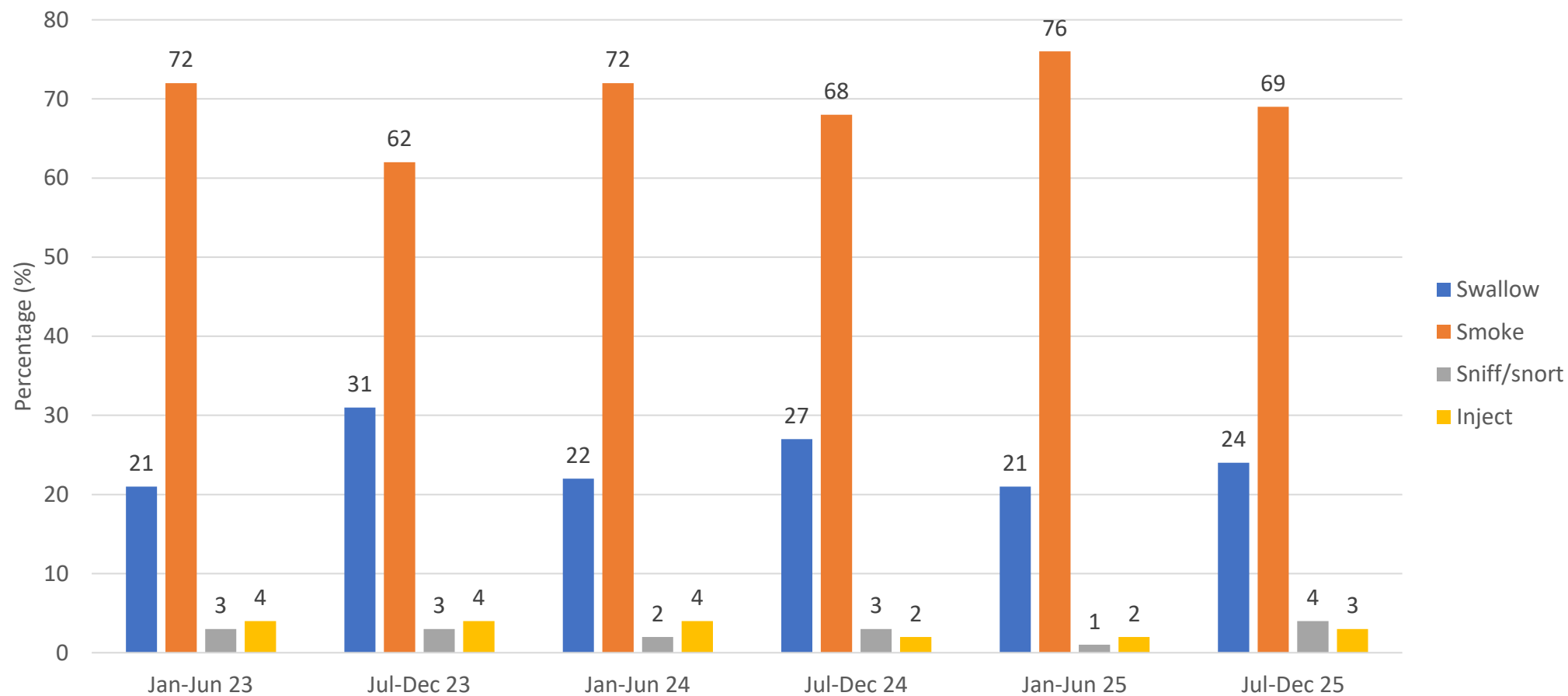
Jul-Dec 25

Mean Age of Initiation  
Mean Age

Treatment Delay	
	No of years
MA	7
Crack/Cocaine	8
Heroin/Opiates	13
Alcohol	16
Dagga	6



# ROUTE OF ADMINISTRATION (ALL SUBSTANCES)



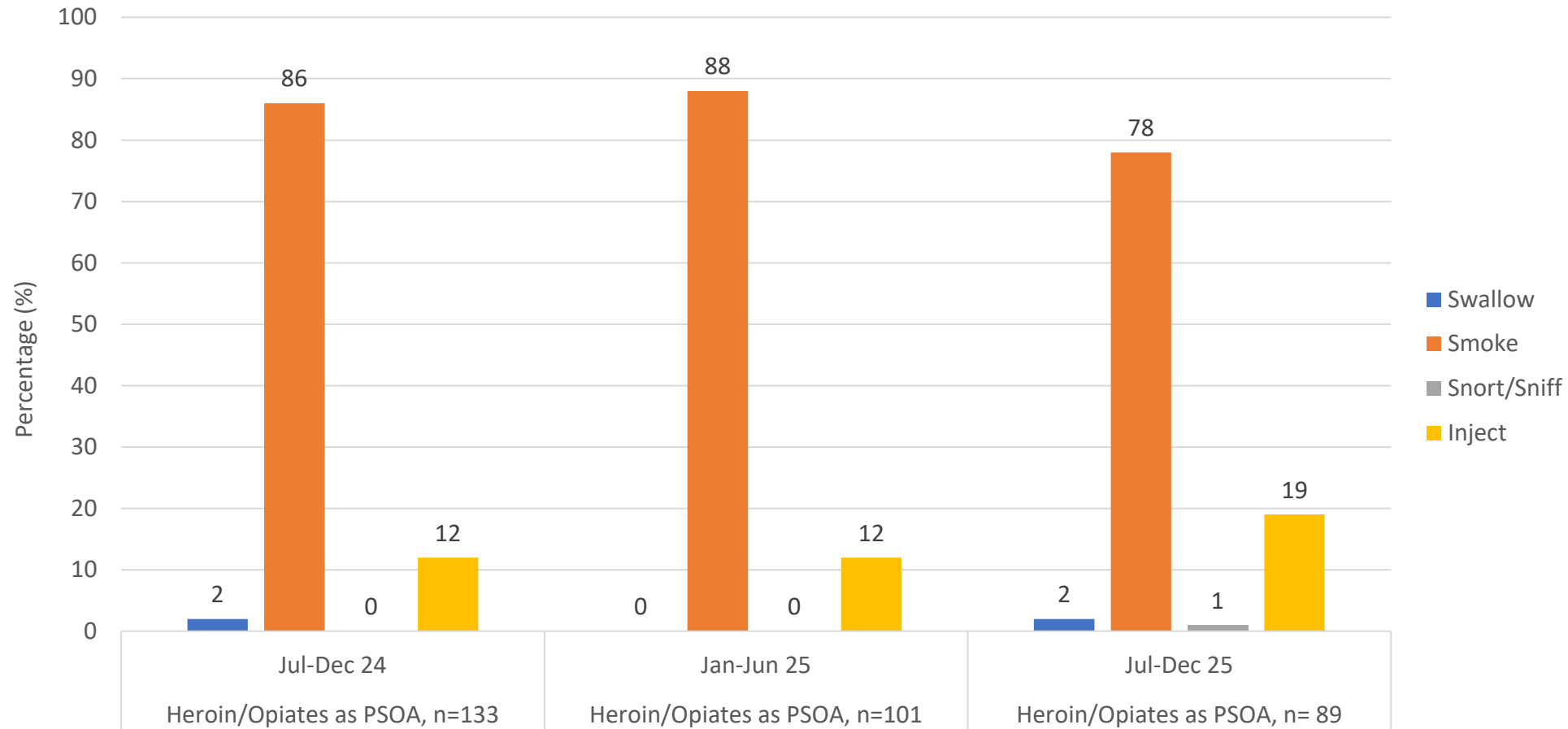
# ROUTE OF ADMINISTRATION (HEROIN/OPIATES)



# SACENDU

SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNITY EPIDEMIOLOGY NETWORK ON DRUG USE

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



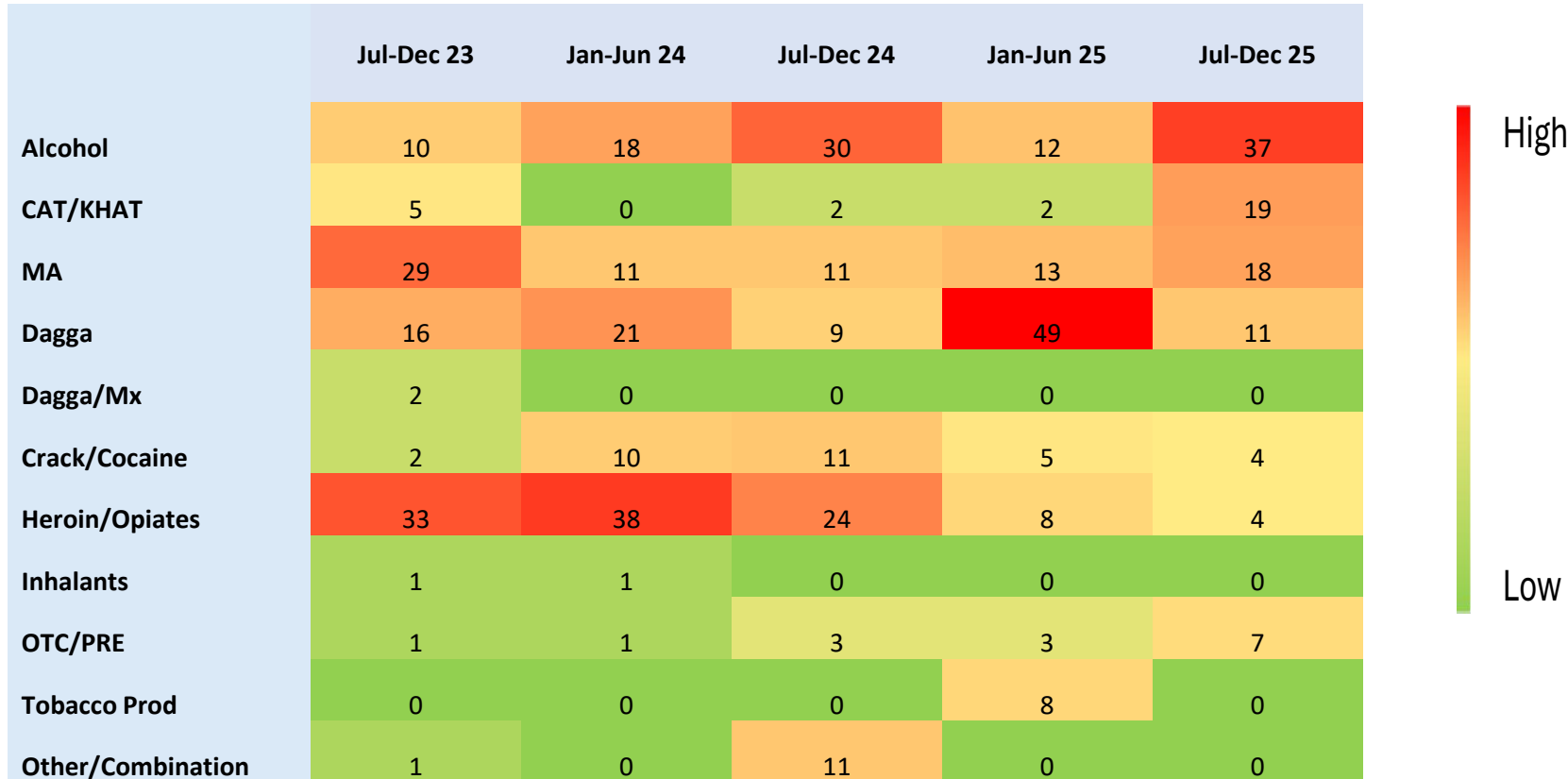
# READMISSION BY SELECTED PRIMARY SUBSTANCE OF USE



# SACENDU

SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNITY EPIDEMIOLOGY NETWORK ON DRUG USE

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



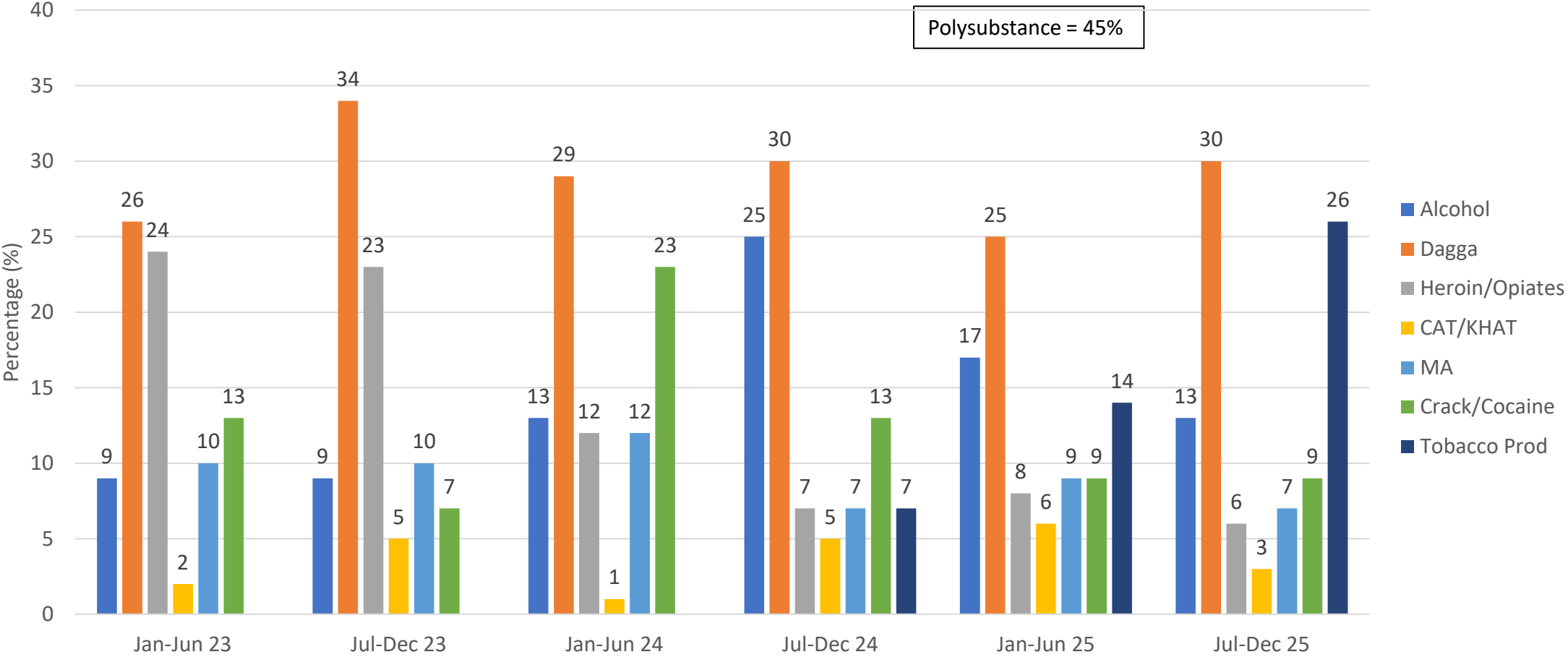
# SELECTED SECONDARY SUBSTANCES OF USE



# SACENDU

SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNITY EPIDEMIOLOGY NETWORK ON DRUG USE

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



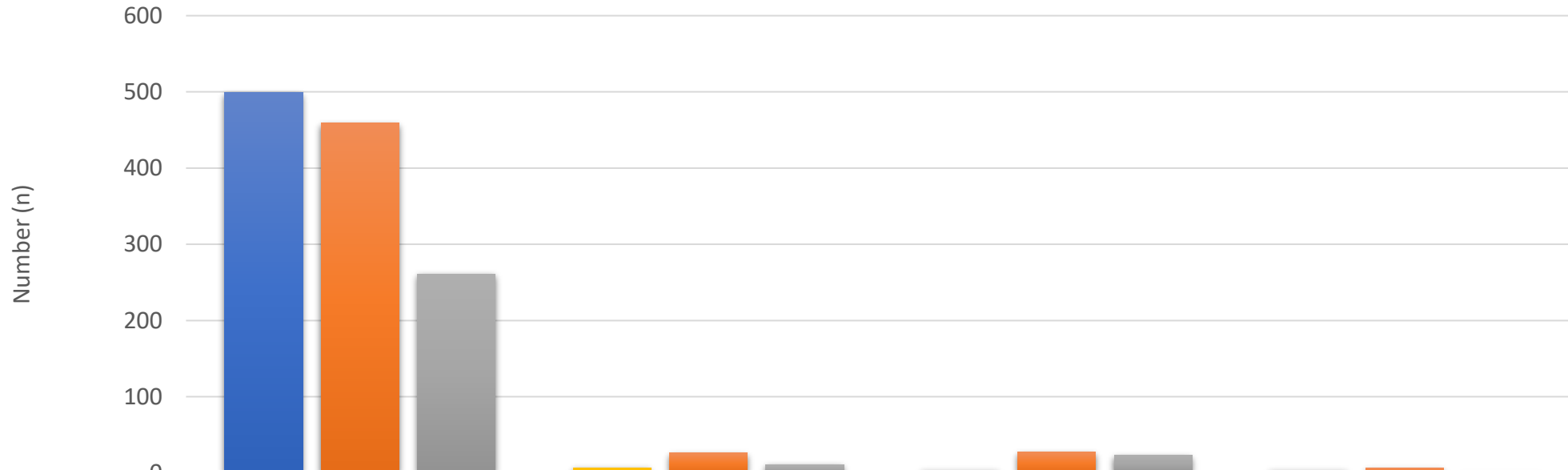
# TOBACCO PRODUCTS



# SACENDU

SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNITY EPIDEMIOLOGY NETWORK ON DRUG USE

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



	Cigarettes	Hookah pipe	E-cigarettes/Vape	Other
■ Jul-Dec 24 (n=522, 74%)	499	7	4	4
■ Jan-Jun 25 (n=511, 55%)	459	26	27	6
■ Jul-Dec 25 (n=401, 43%)	261	11	23	0





# SACENDU

SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNITY EPIDEMIOLOGY NETWORK ON DRUG USE

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

# HEALTH-RELATED CONSEQUENCES



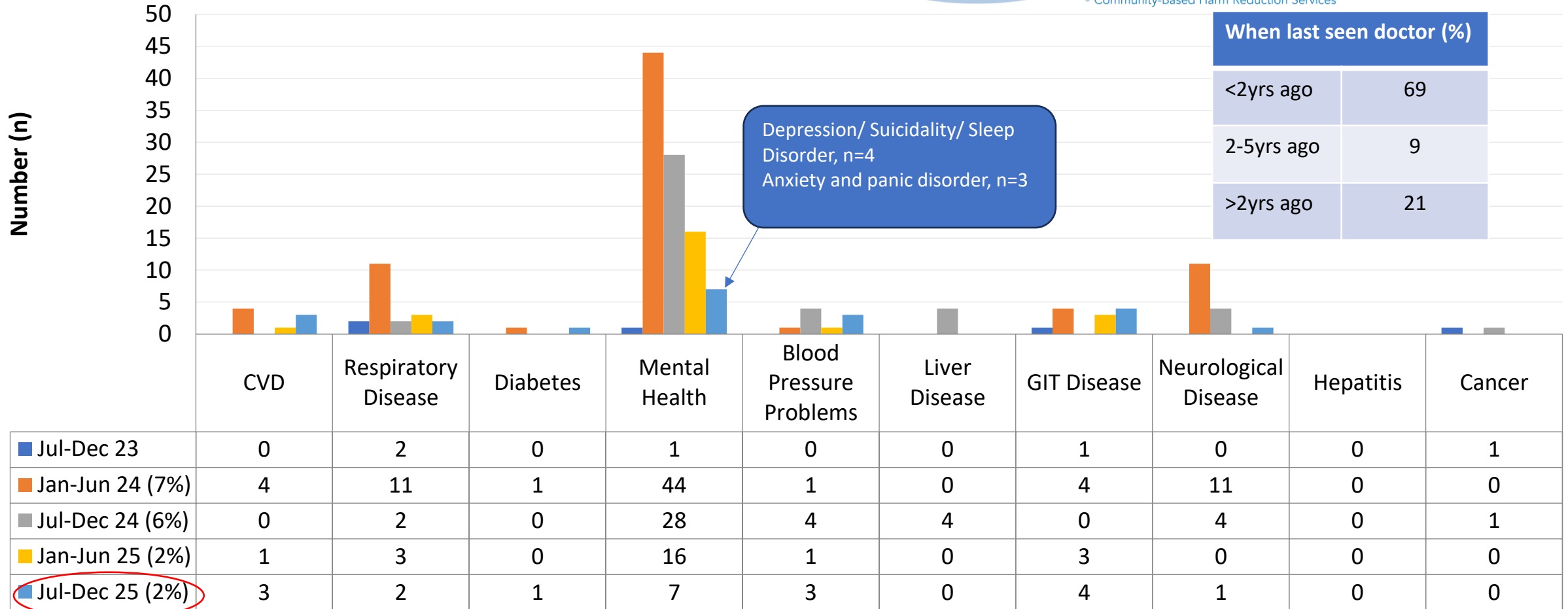
# Number of NCDs



# SACENDU

SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNITY EPIDEMIOLOGY NETWORK ON DRUG USE

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



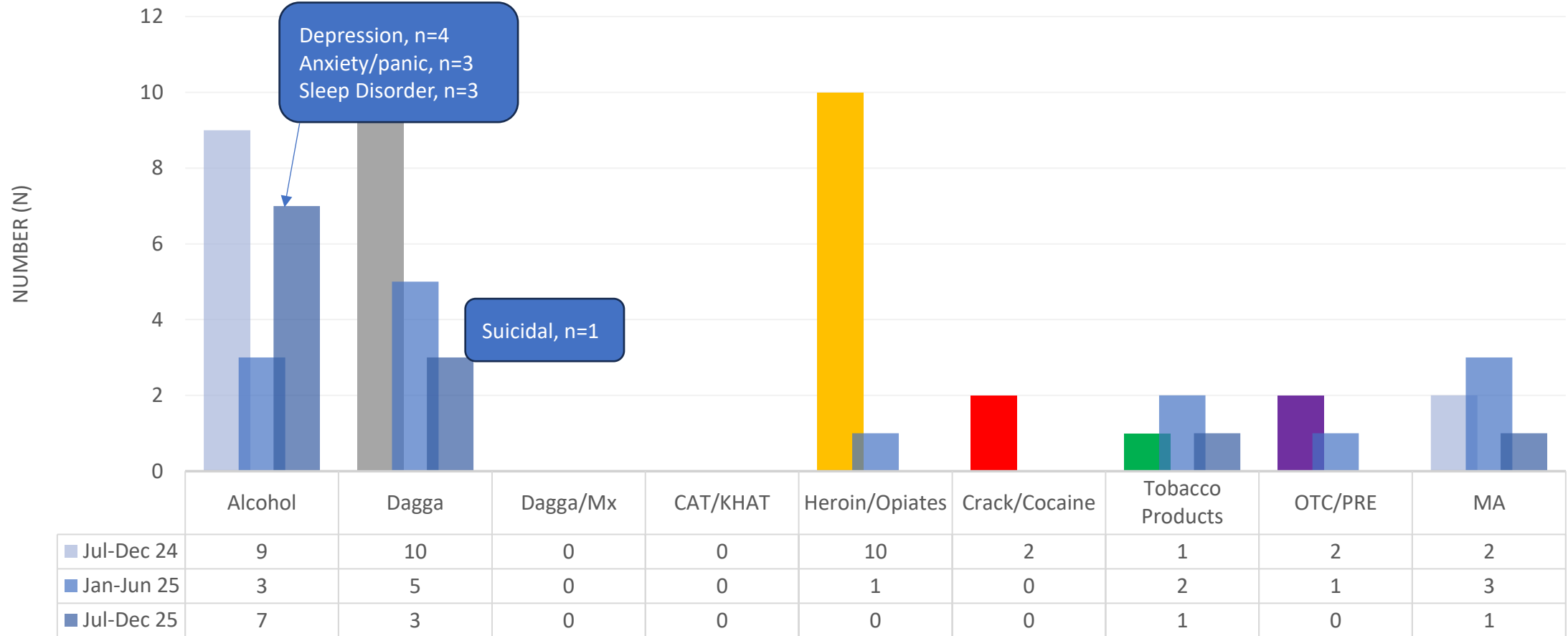
# NCD BY SELECTED PRIMARY SUBSTANCE



# SACENDU

SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNITY EPIDEMIOLOGY NETWORK ON DRUG USE

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





# SACENDU

SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNITY EPIDEMIOLOGY NETWORK ON DRUG USE

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

## PERSONS $\leq 18$ YEARS



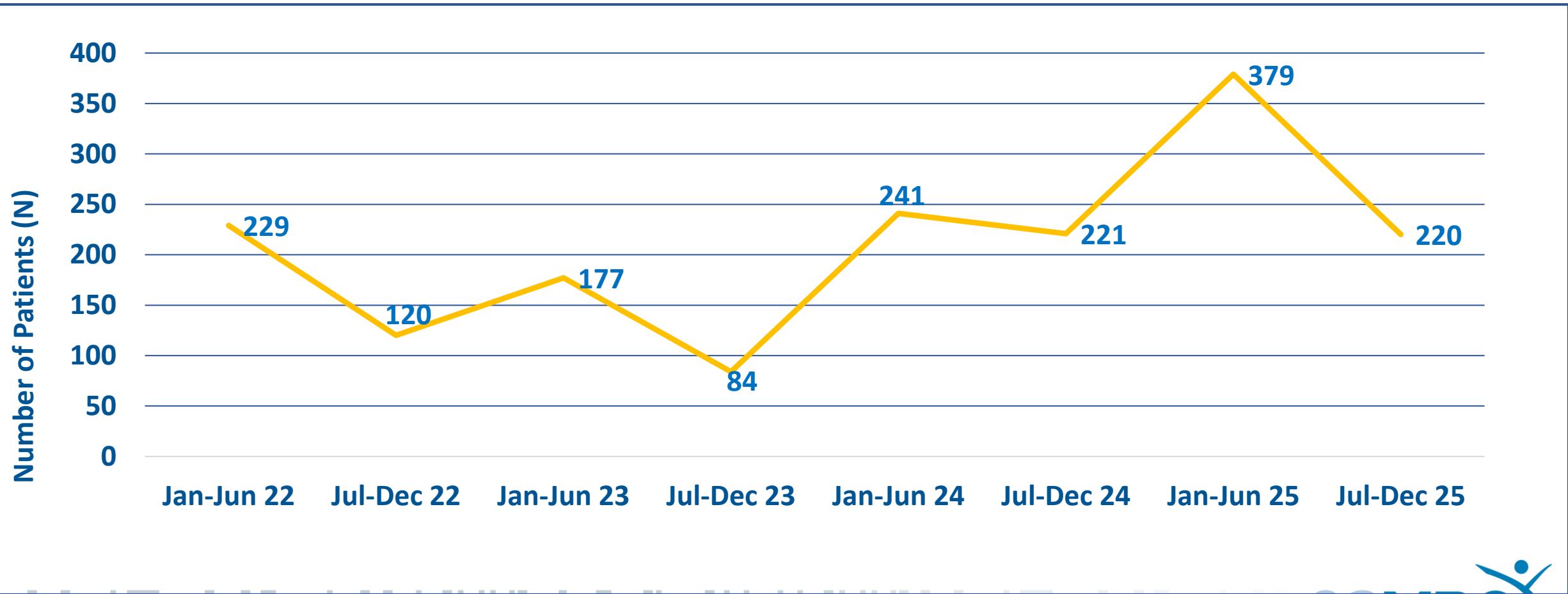
# NUMBER OF PATIENTS IN TREATMENT (31%)



# SACENDU

SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNITY EPIDEMIOLOGY NETWORK ON DRUG USE

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



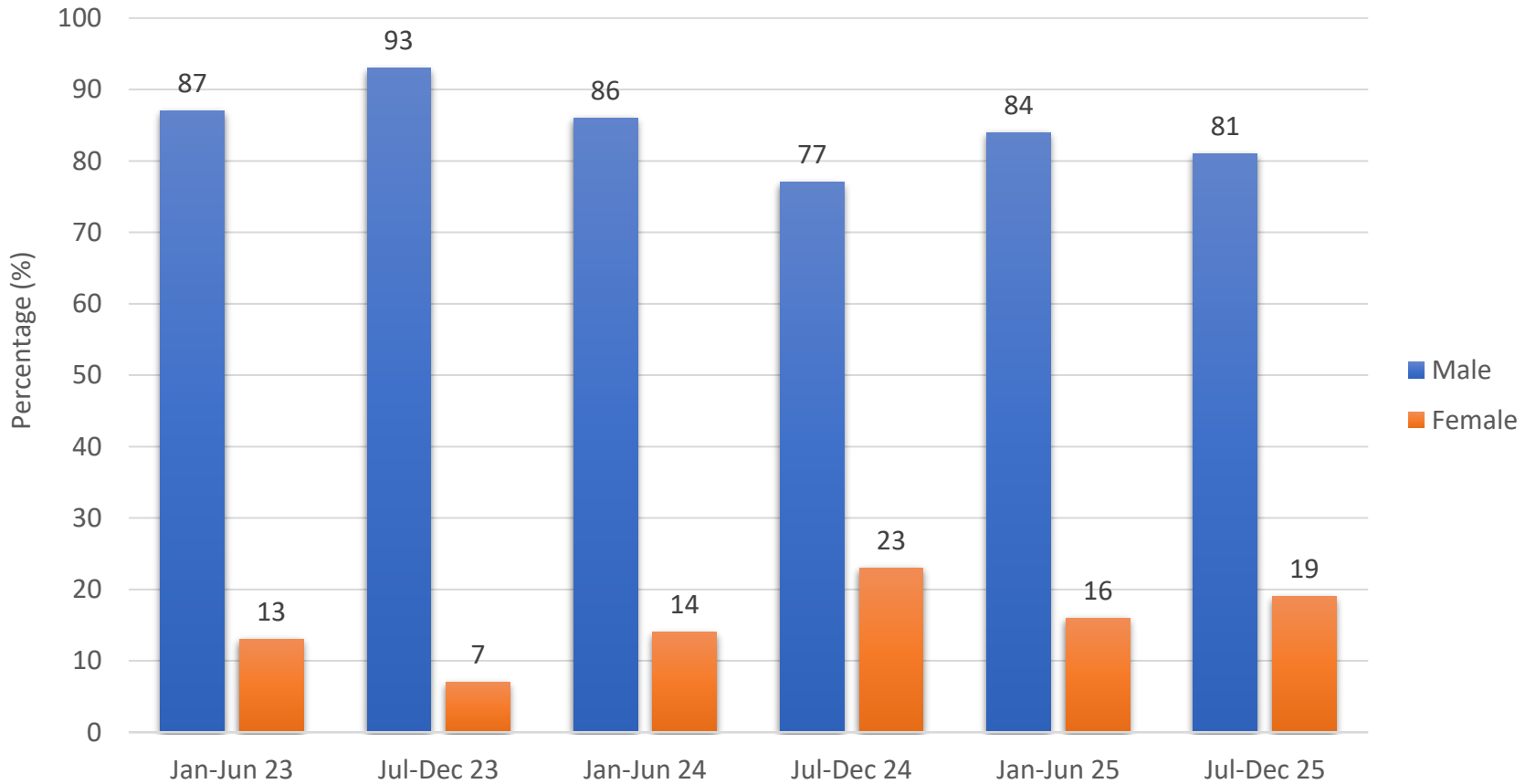
# GENDER



# SACENDU

SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNITY EPIDEMIOLOGY NETWORK ON DRUG USE

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



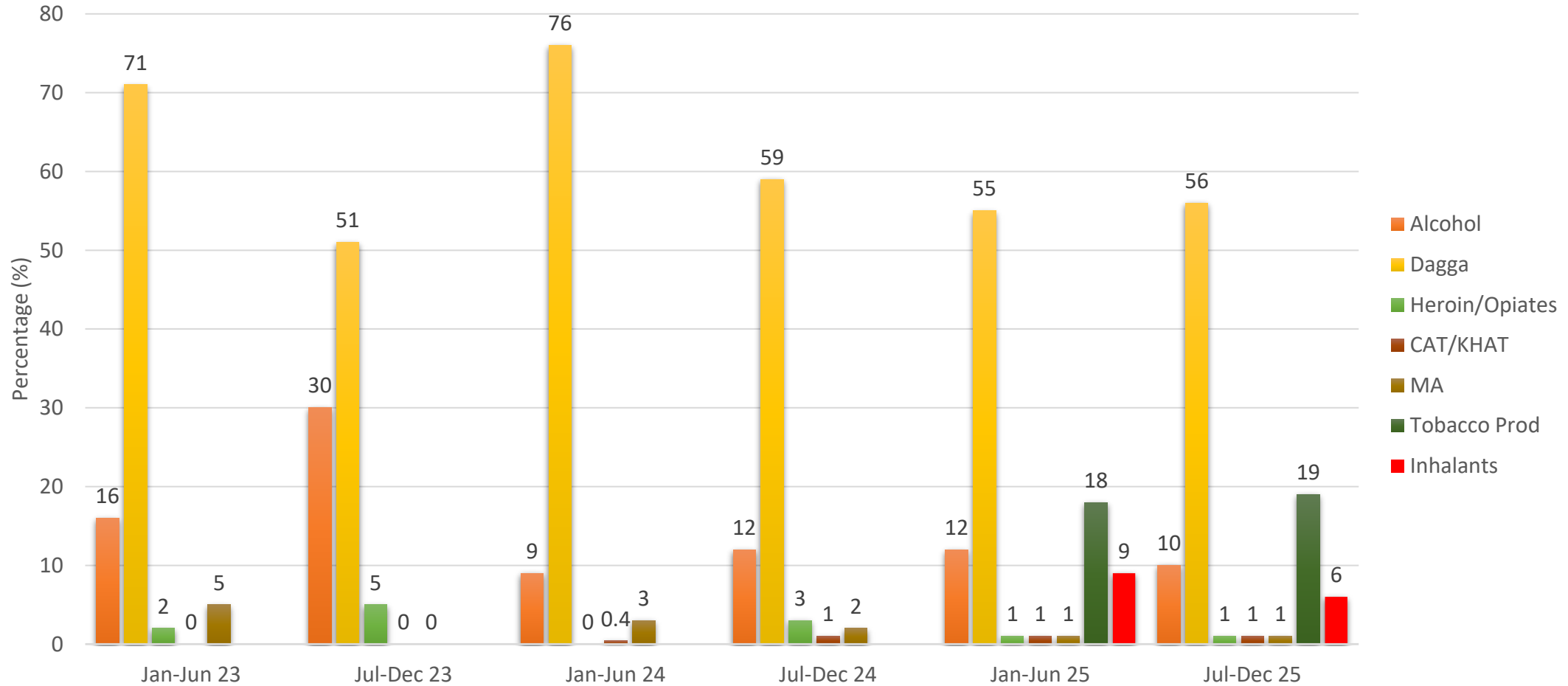
# SELECTED PRIMARY SUBSTANCES OF USE



# SACENDU

SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNITY EPIDEMIOLOGY NETWORK ON DRUG USE

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



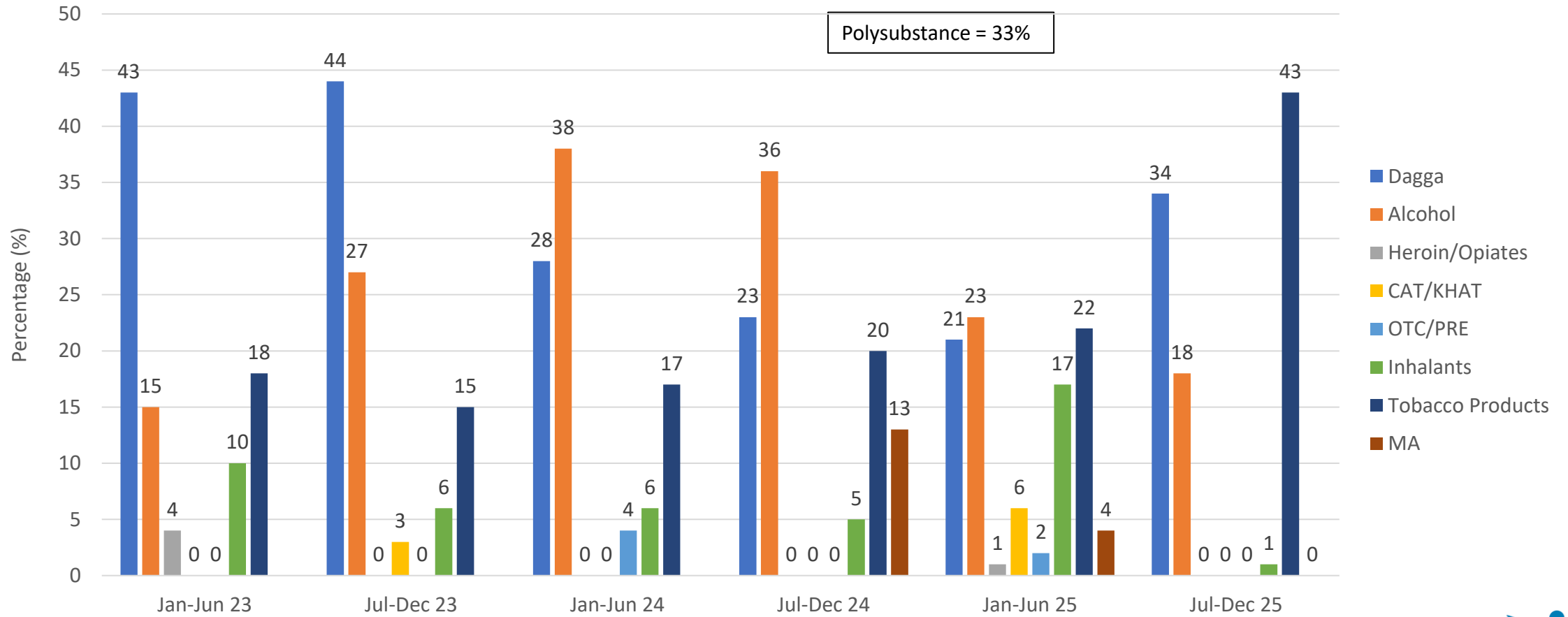
# SELECTED SECONDARY SUBSTANCES OF USE



# SACENDU

SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNITY EPIDEMIOLOGY NETWORK ON DRUG USE

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



# SUMMARY

- Nationally, NR accounted for 10% of admissions; age- and sex-adjusted population estimates show the admission rate at 6.1 per 100,000 population indicating that the NR has a higher admission rate compared to KZN, EC, and CR.
- Drop in admissions from 931 to 701 – Mpu 87% and Limp 13%.
- Mostly males aged 15-19 years admitted to treatment. Admissions for persons 15-19 years decreased from 41% in 24a to 28% current period.
- Population-adjusted rates confirmed that males (10.7 per 100,000) far outweigh access to treatment compared to females (1.7 per 100,000)
- Majority were unemployed versus previous period when most were scholars/students.
- Admissions were mainly first-time admissions (96%) on a voluntary basis (99%).
- Repeat treatment episodes were mostly experienced once through outpatient/community-based services.
- Majority of readmissions were for males 40-44 years for alcohol misuse vs 25a when readmissions were mainly for males aged 15-19 years who presented with misuse of dagga.
- Most persons in treatment had stable living conditions and lived with parents/relatives.
- Referrals were mainly by family friends (32% increasing from 19%), followed by school (30% decreasing from 45%).
- Low HIV testing rate (43%). Drop in youth (15-19yrs) testing rates from 35% to 25%. Almost 60% reported they did not want to undergo future testing.
- Similar to the previous period, dagga (35% decrease from 44%) the most frequently reported primary substance, followed by alcohol (23% increase from 19%). Heroin increased from 11% to 13% over the last 2 periods.
- Alcohol was the commonly reported secondary substance (37%); polysubstance rates was 45%.

# SUMMARY

- Rates for substance use during pregnancy remain low but this is most likely an under-representation.
- Similar to previous periods, dagga was associated with the youngest age at time of admissions (mean age: 23 years) and youngest age of initiation (mean age: 17 years).
- Alcohol was associated with the longest treatment delay (126years) – consistent trend. Longer treatment delay also for heroin/opiates (13yrs). Dagga (6yrs), MA (7yrs) and crack/cocaine (8yrs) had shorter treatment access delays.
- Use of tobacco products reported by 43% of persons accessing treatment, downward trend since 24b.
- NCDs rates remain low (2%); mostly mental health problems indicated.
- Two-thirds of individuals in treatment were funded by family friends (increase from 49%). State declined from 36% to 19% this period.
- Adolescent  $\leq 18$  years:
  - Drop in admissions among youths, although youths still comprise a sizeable proportions of overall admissions at 31%
  - Majority were males.
  - Dagga (56%) and tobacco products (19%) remained the most common substances of use – persistent trend
  - 33% indicated polysubstance use.

## REFERENCES:



# SACENDU

SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNITY EPIDEMIOLOGY NETWORK ON DRUG USE

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

- 1) Swanepoel L. The causes of relapse amongst young African adults following in-patient treatment for drug abuse in the Gauteng Province. *Social work (Stellenbosch. Online)* vol.52 n.3 Stellenbosch, 2016.
- 2) Pinedo M, Zemore S, et al. Women's barriers to specialty substance abuse treatment: a qualitative exploration of racial/ethnic differences. *J Immigr Minor Health*. 2020; 22(4): 653-660. doi: 10.1007/s10903-019-00933-2
- 3) Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). Addressing the Specific Needs of Women for Treatment of Substance Use Disorders. Advisory. Publication No. PEP20-06-04-002.
- 4) Opsal A. et al. Readiness to change among involuntarily and voluntarily admitted patients with substance use disorders. *Subst Abuse Treat Prev Policy*. 2019; 14:47. doi: 10.1186/s13011-019-0237-y
- 5) Stats SA. Quarterly Labour Force Survey (QLFS) Q1: 2024
- 6) Kamarulzaman A, Altice F.L. The challenges in managing HIV in people who use drugs. *Curr Opin Infect Dis*. 2015; 28(1): 10-16. doi: 10.1097/QCO.000000000000125
- 7) Muravha T, Hoffman CJ, et al. Exploring perceptions of low-risk behaviour and drivers to test for HIV among South African youth. *PLOS ONE*. 2021; 16(1): e0245542. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0245542>
- 8) WHO. A technical brief: HIV and young people who inject drugs. Geneva, Switzerland: World Health Organization, 2015.





# SACENDU

SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNITY EPIDEMIOLOGY NETWORK ON DRUG USE

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

**For more information, contact us:**



<https://www.samrc.ac.za/intramural-research-units/ATOD-sacendu>



[nancy.hornsby@mrc.ac.za](mailto:nancy.hornsby@mrc.ac.za) / [jodilee.erasmus@mrc.ac.za](mailto:jodilee.erasmus@mrc.ac.za) / [kamogelo.moletsane@mrc.ac.za](mailto:kamogelo.moletsane@mrc.ac.za)



[021 938 0398](tel:0219380398)





# SACENDU

SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNITY EPIDEMIOLOGY NETWORK ON DRUG USE

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

**Thank You**  
**Baie Dankie**  
**Enkosi Kakhulu**  
**Ngiyabonga**

