

Rising PrEP use coincident with net increase in prevention coverage and range of risk reduction strategies used by Australian gay and bisexual men

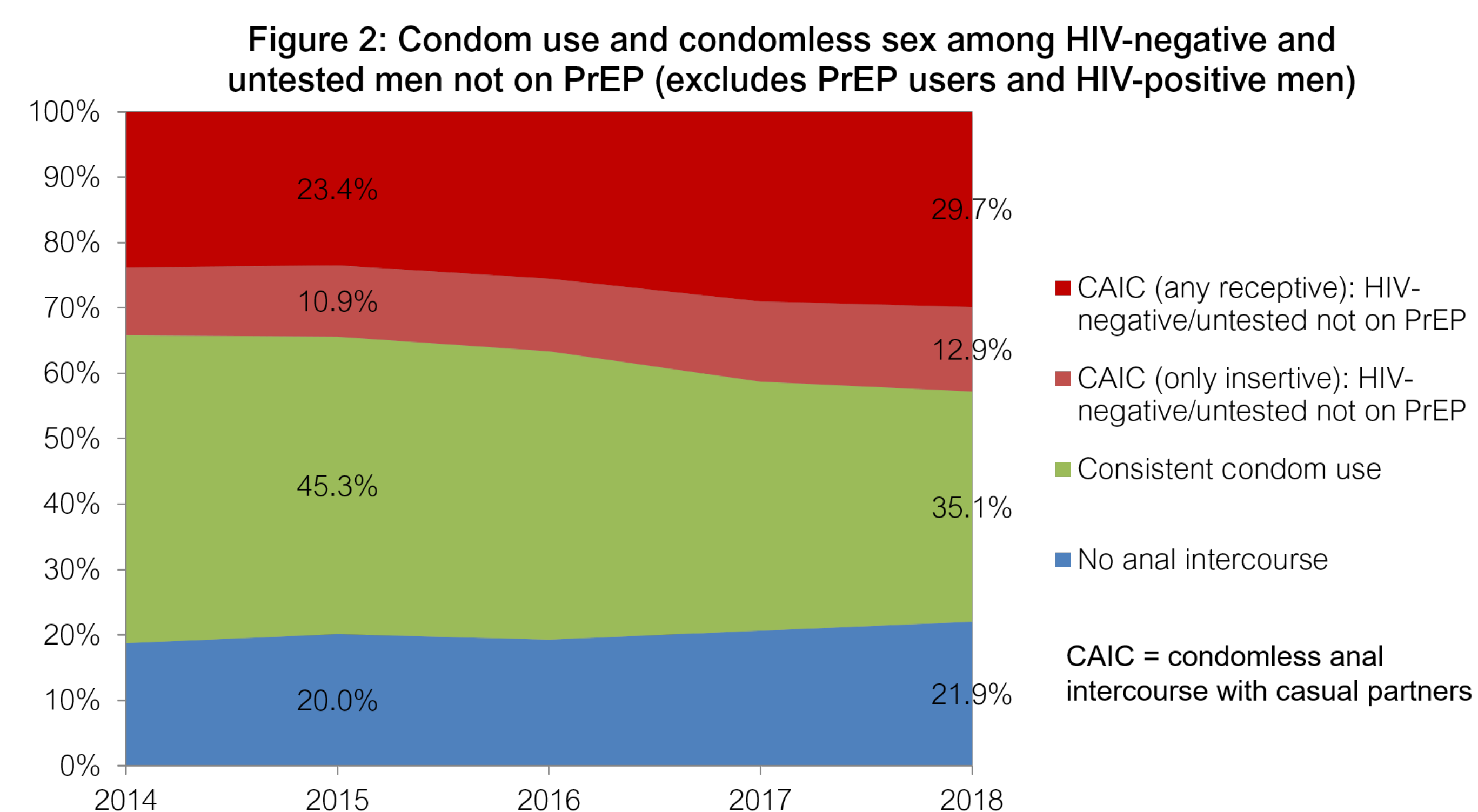
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BACKGROUND

PrEP use by Australian gay/bisexual men has rapidly risen, prompting changes in the range of prevention strategies used. In this national analysis, we considered the degree of prevention coverage by all strategies (including condoms, PrEP and undetectable viral load, UVL). This included preferentially having condomless sex with PrEP users ('PrEP sorting') or HIV-positive men with UVL.

METHODS

Using national data from the Gay Community Periodic Surveys (2014–18), we analysed trends in sexual practices with casual male partners. We repeated the analysis focusing on non-PrEP-users (excluding HIV-positive men and PrEP users) and assessed trends in HIV risk reduction strategies during condomless anal intercourse with casual partners (CAIC). Trends were tested using logistic regression.



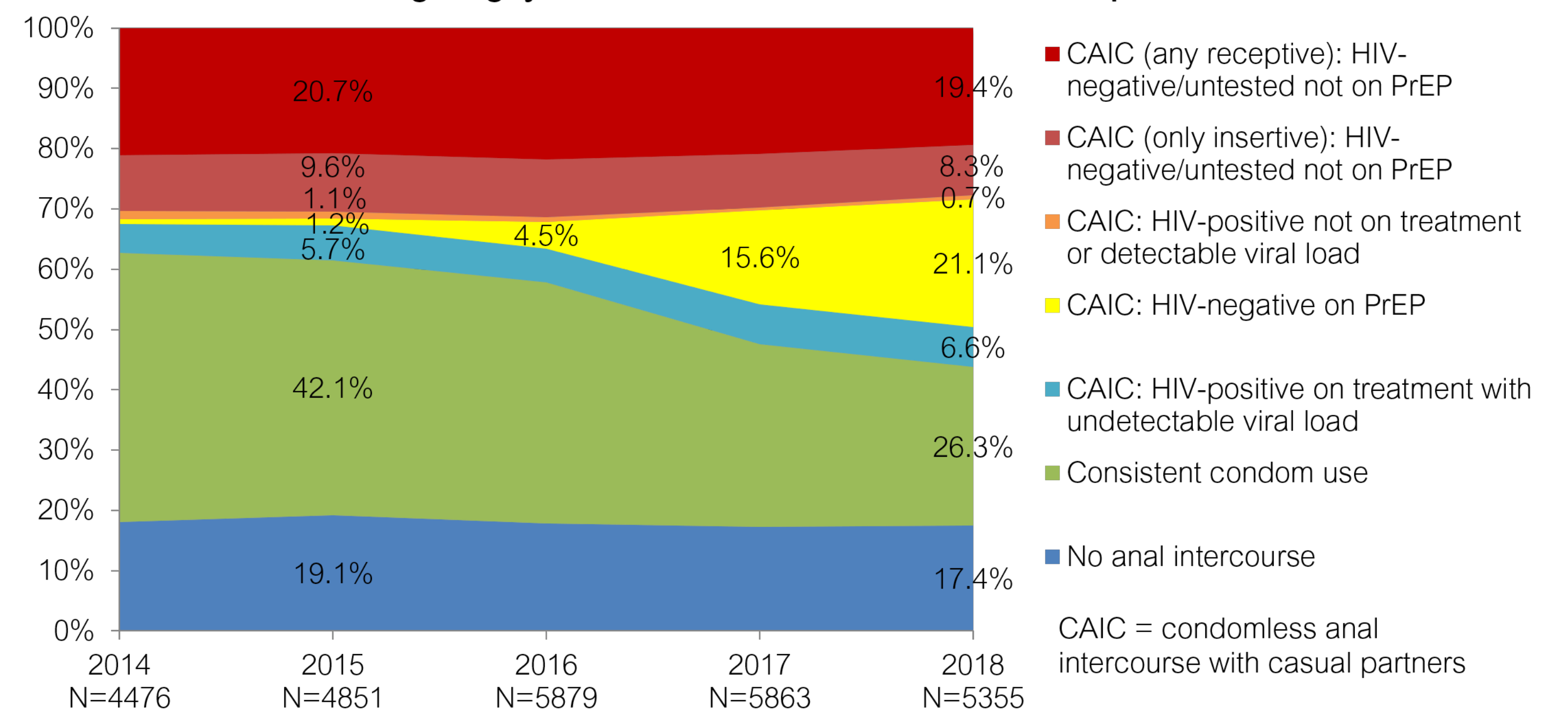
CONCLUSION

Rising PrEP use by Australian gay and bisexual men has slightly increased net prevention coverage ('safe sex') during casual sex, even as consistent condom use has declined. This is occurring concurrently with declining HIV incidence in some jurisdictions. Minorities of non-PrEP-users increasingly use PrEP sorting and UVL to mitigate risk but serosorting (a less effective strategy) remains more common.

Disclosure of interest

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Figure 1: Condom use, condomless sex and antiretroviral-based prevention among all gay and bisexual men with casual male partners



RESULTS

26,424 men with casual partners participated during 2014–18, among whom net prevention coverage increased from 68.1% in 2014 to 71.3% in 2018* (see Figure 1).

This included consistent condom use (44.6% in 2014 to 26.3% in 2018*), HIV-negative men using PrEP during CAIC (0.7% to 21.1%*), and HIV-positive men with UVL having CAIC (4.8% to 6.6%*).

Non-PrEP-users having CAIC (the 'at risk' group, shown in red) decreased from 30.3% to 27.7% ($p < .01$).

Excluding PrEP users and HIV-positive men (see Figure 2), consistent condom use by non-PrEP-users fell (46.8% to 35.1%*).

Among non-PrEP-users who had CAIC (Figure 3), the proportion who reported frequent serosorting (matching HIV status) was stable (49.9% in 2014 and 49.3% in 2018), PrEP sorting increased (21.1% in 2017 to 30.3% in 2018*), as did the use of UVL (9.7% to 14.8%*).

* $p < .001$

Figure 3: Risk reduction strategies used during condomless anal intercourse with casual male partners by HIV-negative and untested men not on PrEP (excludes PrEP users and HIV-positive men)

