

# Attitudes Toward Time-based and Behaviour-based Blood Donation Policies Among HIV-negative GBM in Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver

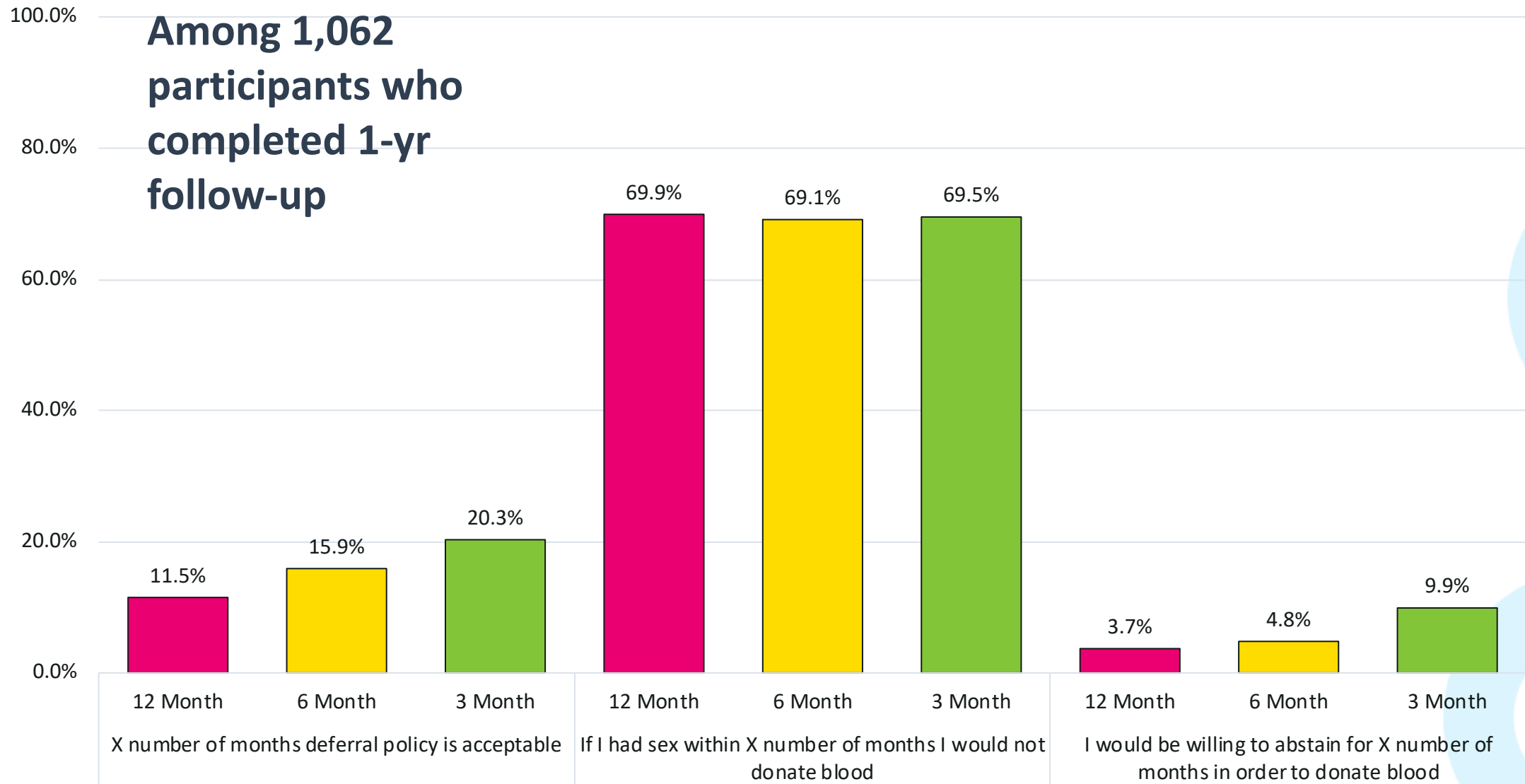
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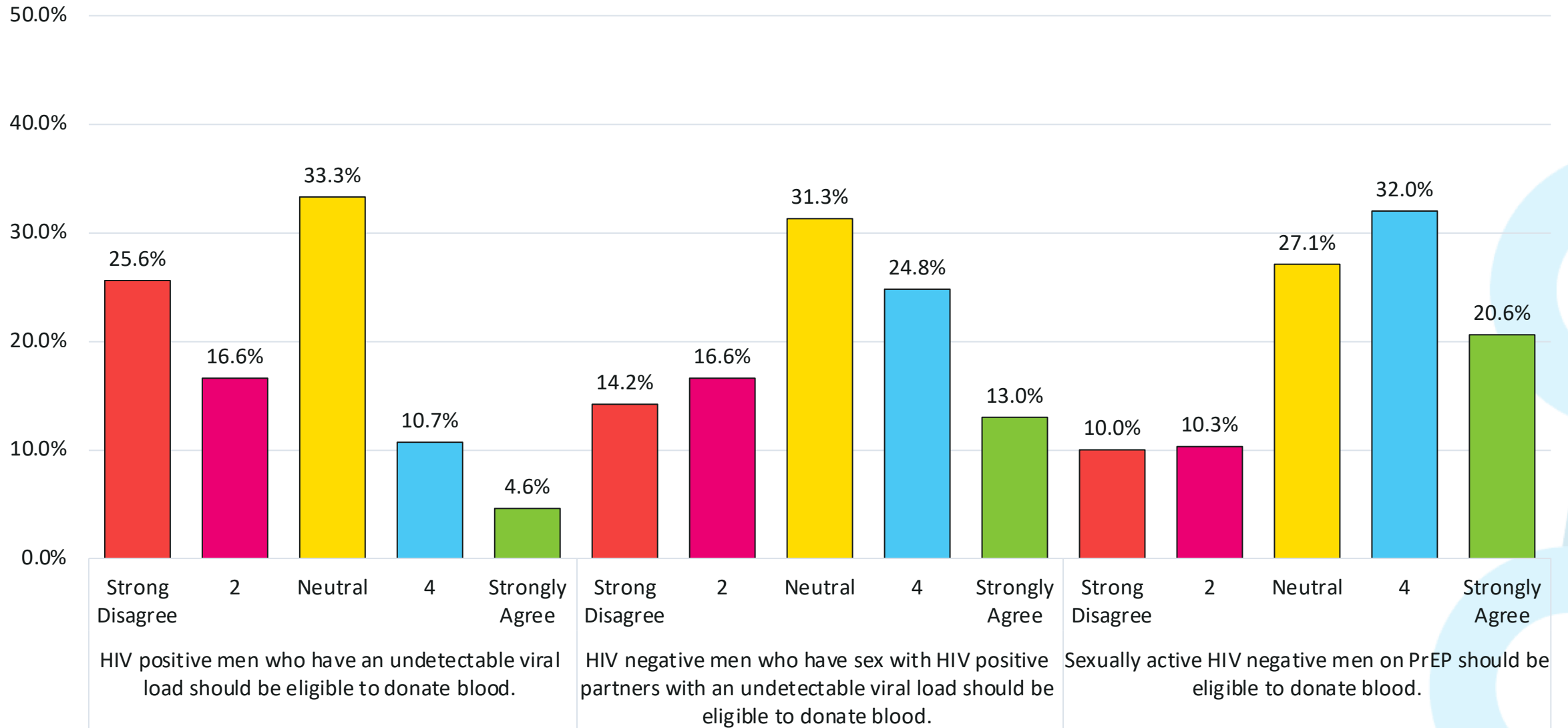
# Engage Canadian Blood Services (CBS) Study

- ▶ The recently-changed Canadian policy (as of May 2019) is to defer men from donating blood if they have engaged in oral or anal sex with another man in the past 3 months. **We examined attitudes among HIV-negative GBM toward time-deferral based policies and behaviourally-based policies.**
- ▶ Engage is a mixed-method cohort study conducted in Vancouver, Toronto, and Montreal that used respondent driven sampling to recruit a baseline sample (Recruitment period for CBS study/1 yr follow-up: February 2018 – ongoing)
- ▶ To date we have recruited 2,009 (V = 622, T = 419, M = 968) HIV-negative/unknown 16+ year-old cisgender and transgender men who reported having sex with another man in the past 6 months.
- ▶ Participants complete a computer-assisted questionnaire in French or English and biomedical testing (i.e., STBBI tests)
  - ▶ Questionnaire included items about comprehension and acceptability of current and alternative behaviour-based blood donor screening questions

# Results



# Results



# Discussion

- ▶ Only a minority of men would donate blood under a time-based MSM deferral.
- ▶ Only a minority found a time-based deferral policy to be acceptable.
  - ▶ A majority of men found behaviourally-based policies to be acceptable.
- ▶ The majority of GBM in the Engage Study would comply with any of the 3 policies assessed (they would not attempt to donate).
- ▶ Future Directions:
  - ▶ Predictors of recent seroconversion between baseline and wave 2 (the CBS wave)
  - ▶ Predictors of syphilis infection at wave 2
  - ▶ Create mathematical models of HIV transmission to examine how to partition the MSM population such that one or more groups would have a risk estimate for incident HIV infection comparable to that of currently non-deferred groups