

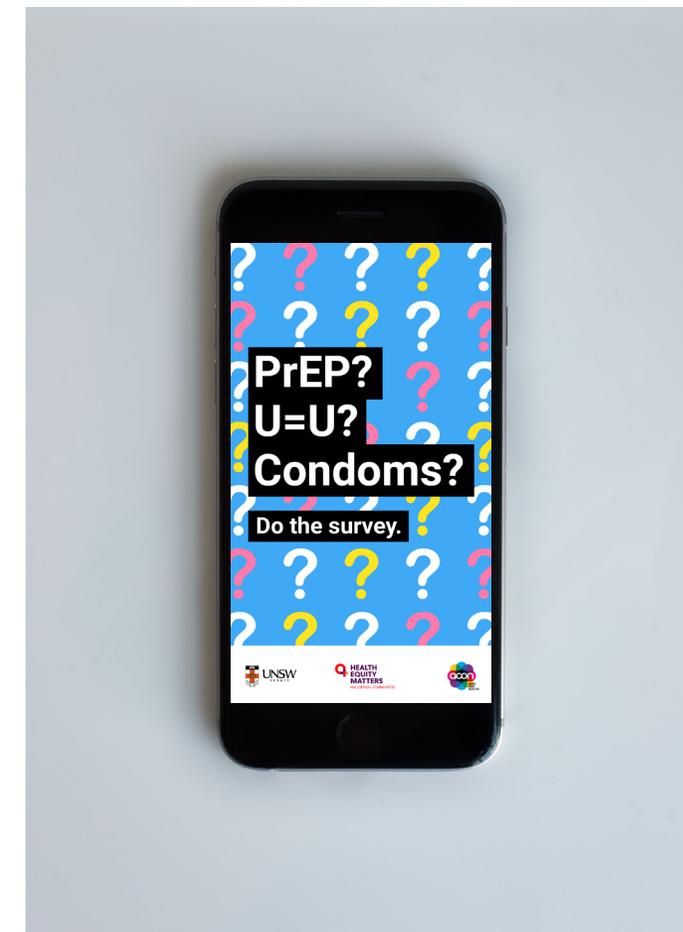
# PrEPARE Project 2023: overview of key findings

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# Method

- National, online survey of gay men, bi+ and queer people conducted every two years since 2011 (participants aged 16+ included from 2021)
- Designed to assess attitudes to HIV prevention (particularly PrEP and TasP) to guide implementation
- Core questions, supplemented by new topics every 2 years
- 2023 recruitment sources: direct email (31%), Instagram (31%), Facebook (25%) and Grindr (12%).

# Sample overview

	2023
Total participants	<b>N=2,046</b>
Median age (years)	<b>35.0</b>
Gay-identified	<b>82%</b>
Cisgender male	<b>95%</b>
Australian born	<b>70%</b>
HIV status & PrEP use	
Untested/unknown	<b>10%</b>
HIV negative	<b>37%</b>
HIV negative on PrEP	<b>46%</b>
PLHIV	<b>7%</b>
STI diagnosis (last 12m)	<b>27%</b>

ns = not statistically significant; a p value <.05 means the difference between groups is unlikely due to chance

# Sample overview (cont'd)

## State:

New South Wales: 32%

Victoria: 28%

Queensland: 19%

WA: 8%

Other jurisdictions: 13%

## Area:

Living in inner metro\*: 48%

Outer metro: 29%

Regional / remote: 20%

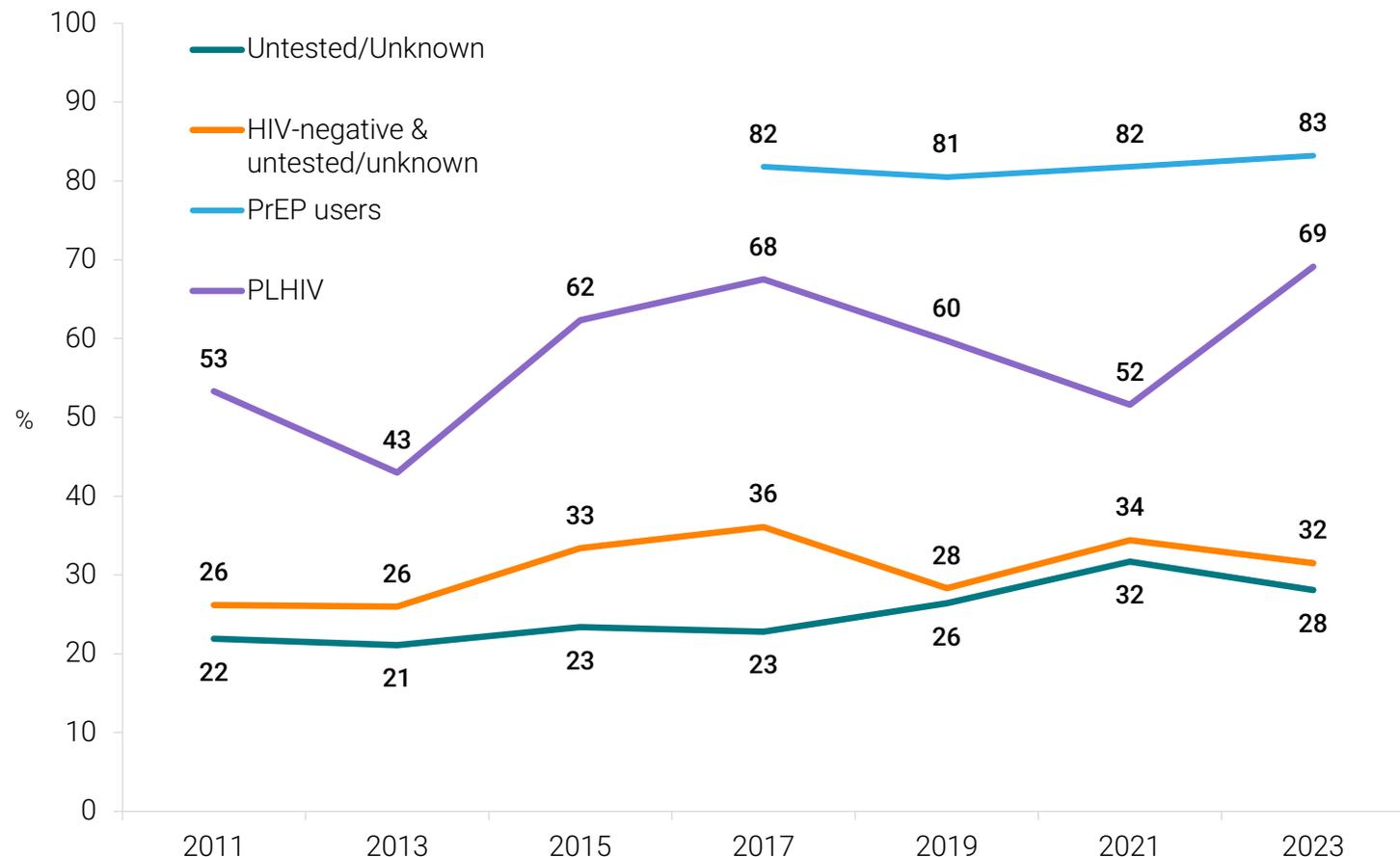


\*Inner metro includes postcodes in/adjacent to capital city CBDs

# Sex in the previous six months

- 90% reported sex with male (cis or trans) partners
  - 80% of the sample had male partners only
- 7% reported female (cis or trans) partners
- 7% reported non-binary partners  
(Similar levels to 2021)

# Condomless sex with casual male partners

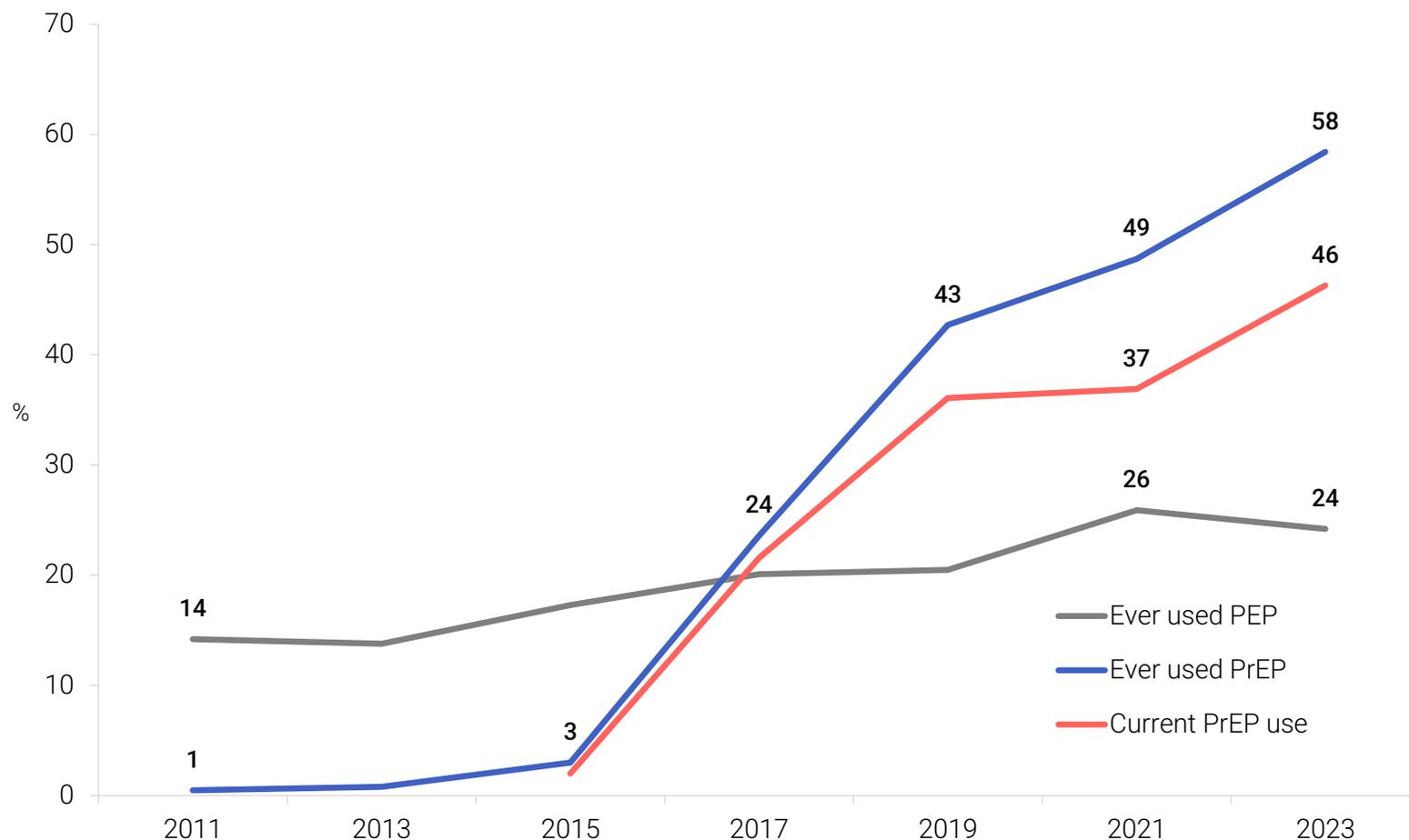


Condomless sex remained highest among PrEP users and PLHIV.

Less than one third of HIV-negative and untested HIV status participants reported CAS; relatively stable since 2019.

\*PrEP users prior to 2015 were omitted due to relatively small group sizes. Recall period is the last 6 months.

# Use of PEP and PrEP



Lifetime PrEP use has steadily increased to 58% in 2023 ('ever used PrEP')

Current PrEP use increased to 46%.

Lifetime PEP use remained stable 2021–23.

# Reasons for stopping PrEP

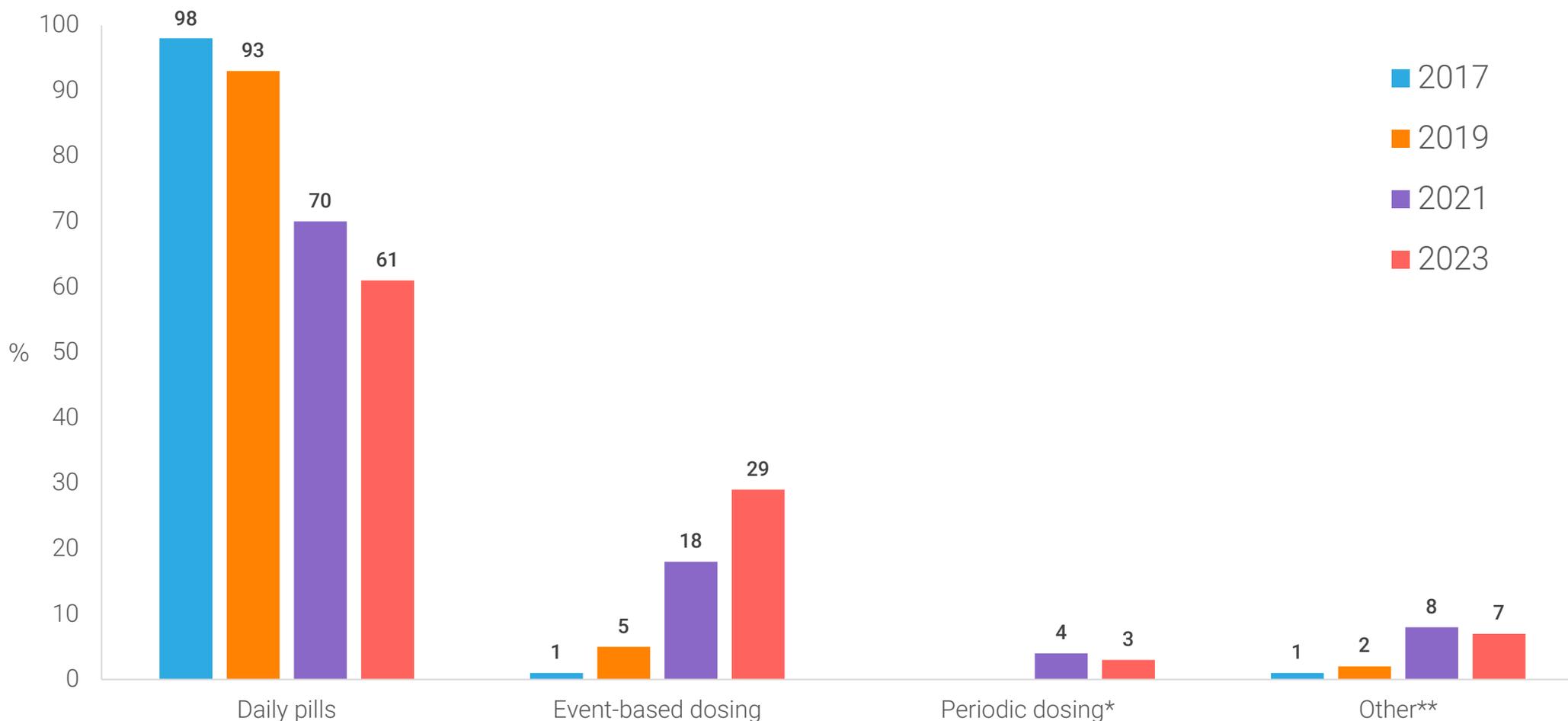
I was having less sex	49%
I was in a monogamous relationship	31%
I had side effects from the medication	18%
I was no longer at risk of HIV	18%
I couldn't afford it	15%
I ran out of pills OR didn't have a prescription	14%
I was concerned about taking medication	12%

Denominator includes HIV negative/untested HIV status participants who had stopped PrEP temporarily and permanently (n=236).

Less sex and a monogamous relationship have remained the most common reasons since 2019.

\*Reasons not mutually exclusive.

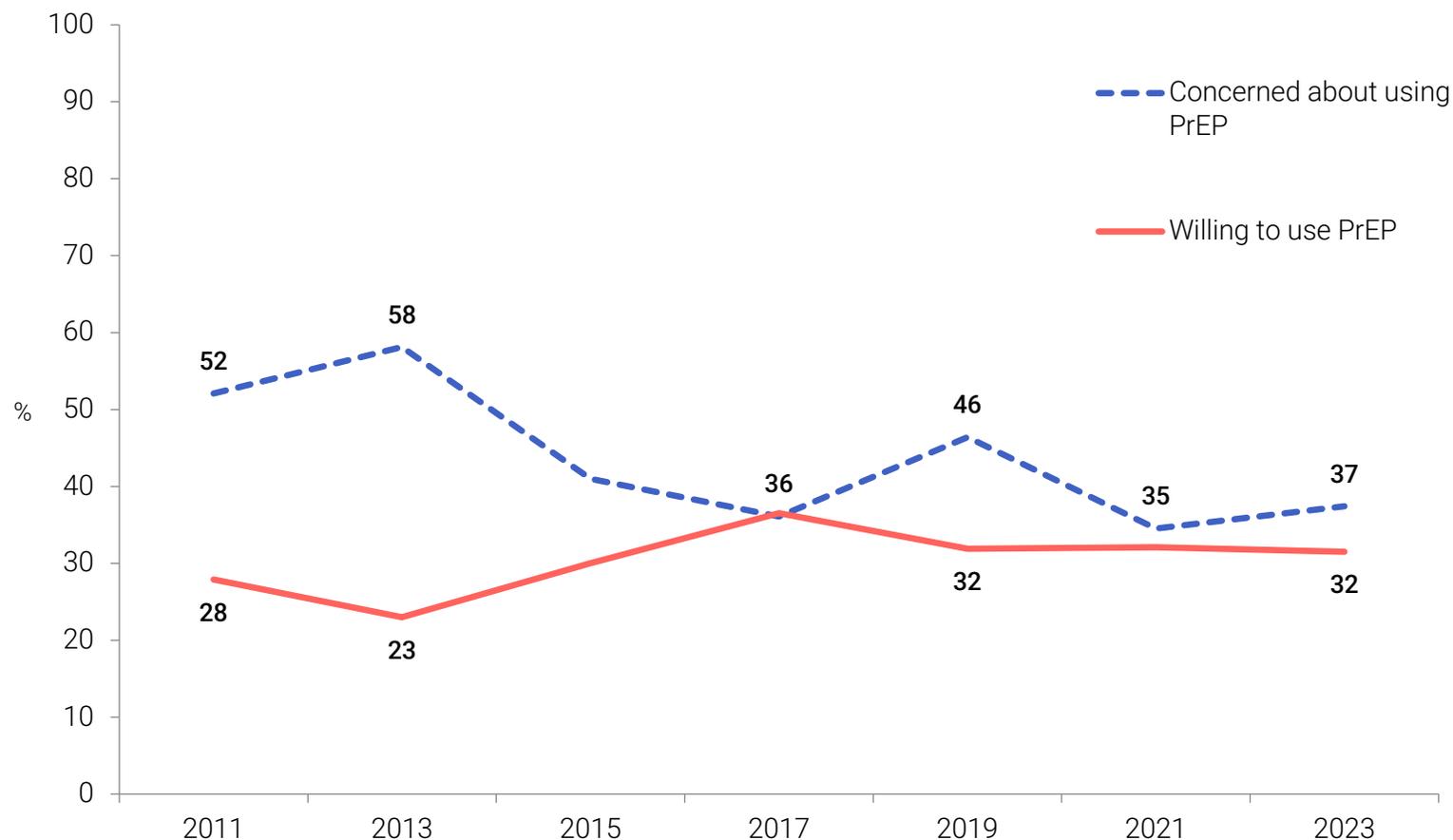
# PrEP dosing (2017–2023)



n=242 (2017), n=441 (2019), n=513 (2021), and n=1,008 (2023)

\*Periodic dosing was included from 2021. \*\*Other includes 'temporarily stopped' in 2021–23 and 'every other day' in 2017-19.

# Willingness to use and concern about using PrEP



Willingness to use PrEP has remained stable at 32% since 2019.

Concern about using PrEP decreased from 46% in 2019 and remained stable between 2021–23.

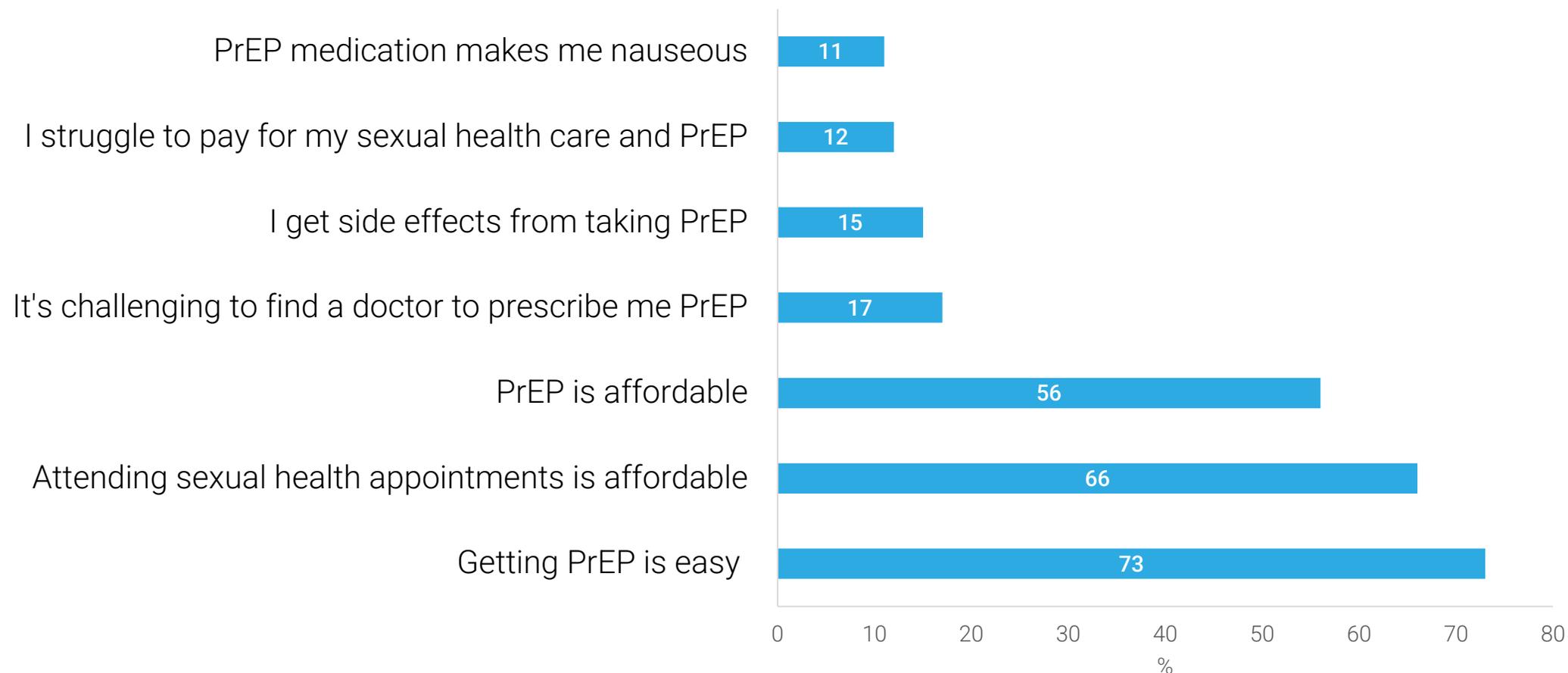
Denominator is HIV-negative and untested/unknown HIV status participants who have never taken PrEP (n=724 in 2023).

# PrEP-suitable participants

Most common reasons for not using PrEP*	
Not having enough sex	39%
Not comfortable talking to a doctor	34%
Using condoms	33%
Concerns about side effects	32%
Concerns about long-term medication	30%
Not knowing how to get PrEP	29%

Denominator is PrEP-suitable participants who had never taken PrEP (n=251).  
 PrEP suitability approximated from [ASHM 2019](#) guidelines.

# PrEP access and side effects



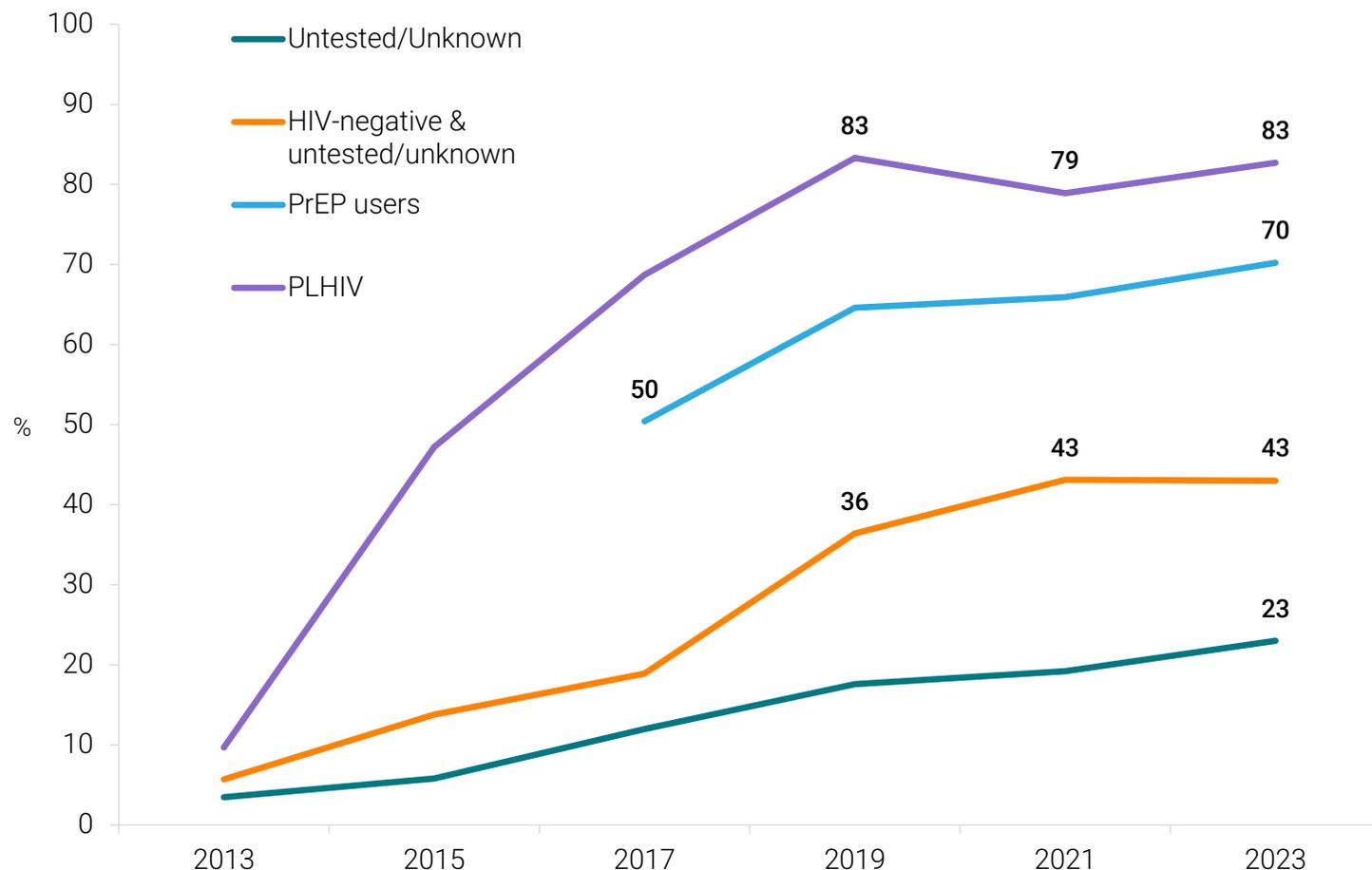
Recent PrEP users; n=1,008 in 2023. Proportions represent agree/strongly agree responses from a Likert-type scale. Note that more than 60% of PrEP users had incomes over \$80,000 per annum.

# Preferred PrEP dosing strategies

	Non-PrEP-users	PrEP users	p value
	N=960	N=947	
Most preferred strategy			<.001
Monthly pill	28%	29%	
Long-acting injection	16%	26%	
Event-based dosing	31%	14%	
Daily pills	9%	13%	
Long-acting removable implant	12%	17%	
Other/none	4%	1%	

\*Participants were told to assume all methods were available and equally effective.

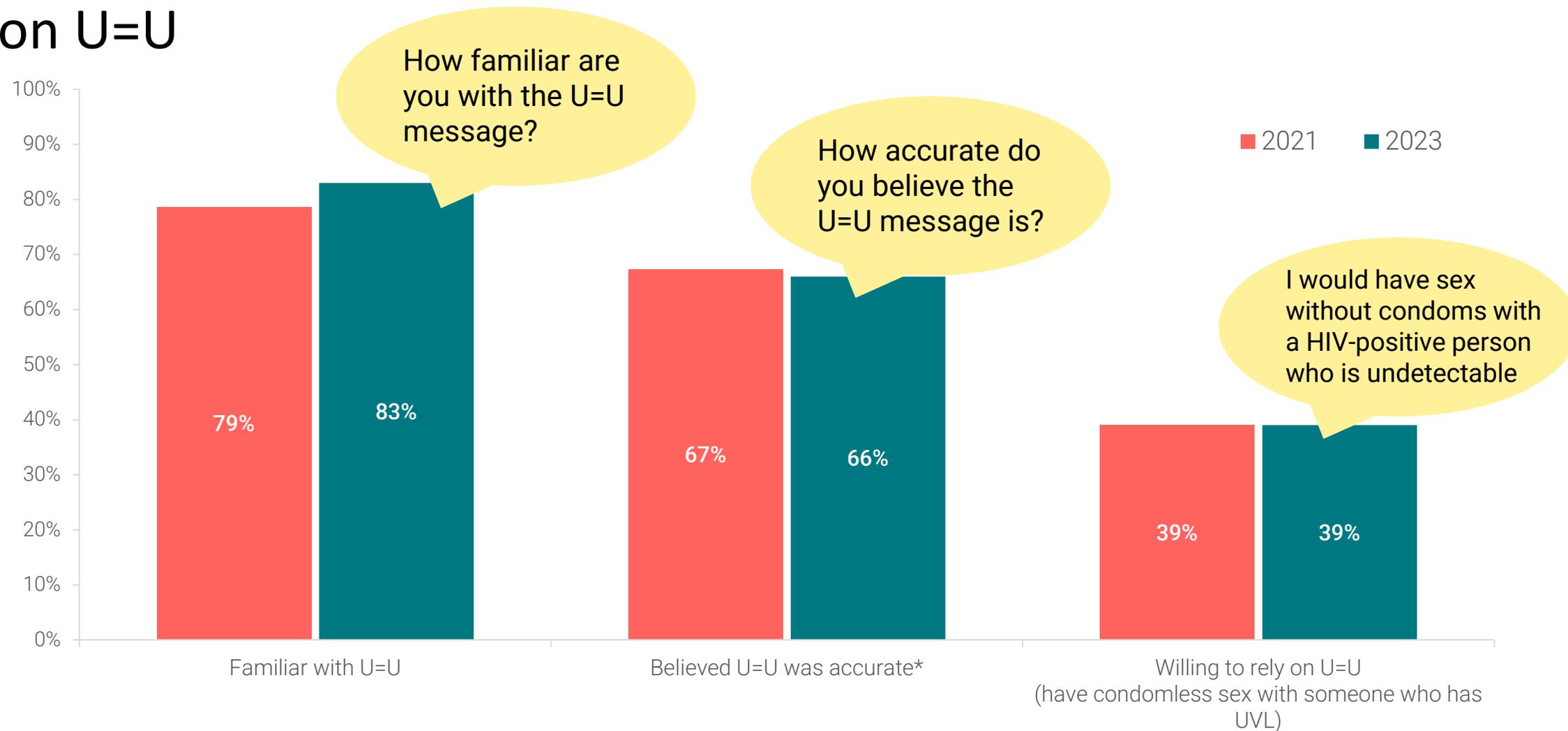
# Belief that HIV treatment prevents transmission



Belief in TasP has increased overall but plateaued among PLHIV and HIV-negative participants between 2019–23.

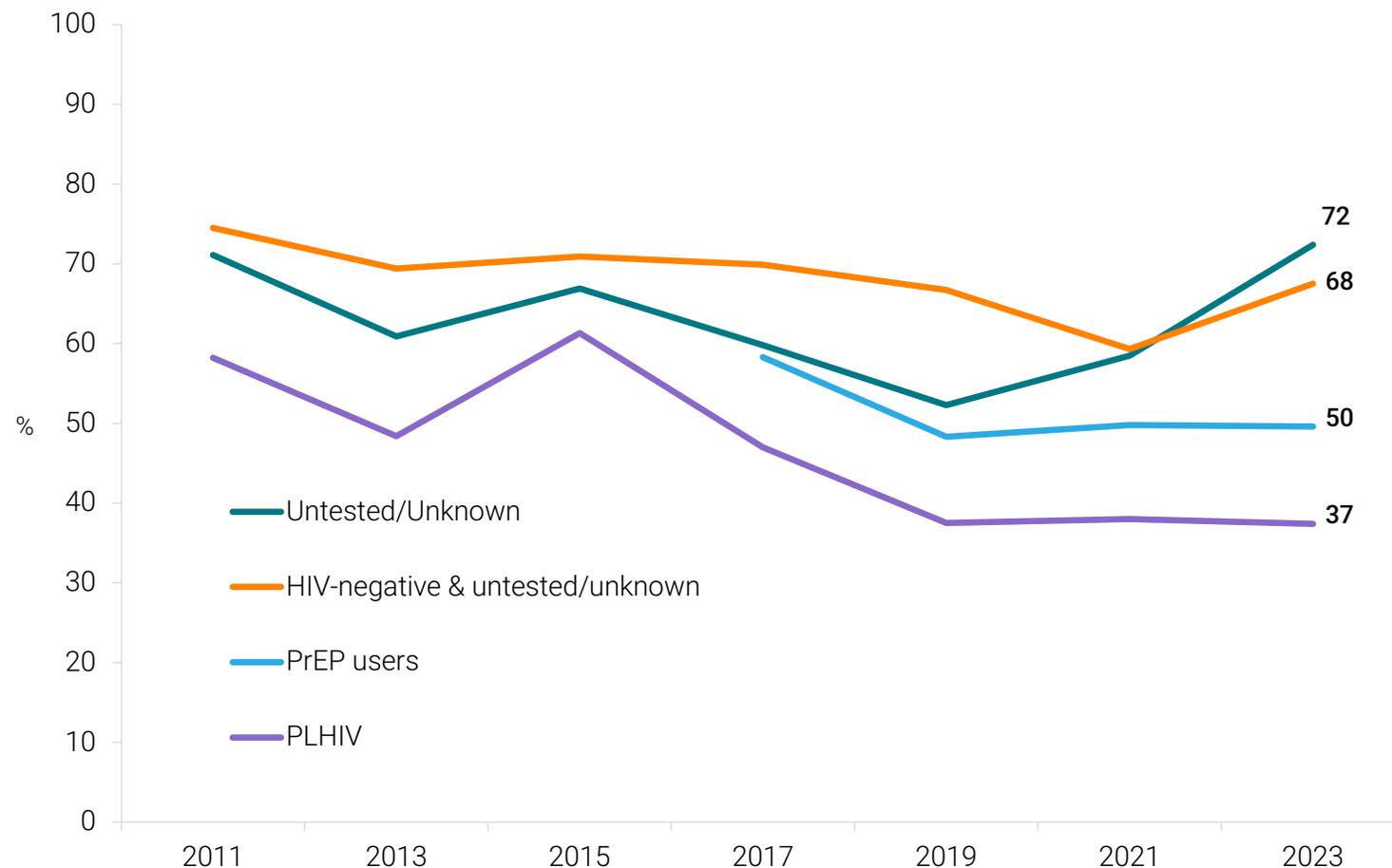
In 2023, we removed one item about the ability of TasP to ‘end the HIV epidemic.’ Adjusted scores are presented for 2013–23.

# Familiarity, perceived accuracy and willingness to rely on U=U



N=2,046 for familiarity & willingness to rely on U=U; only familiar participants asked about perceived accuracy (n=1,696 in 2023).

# Confidence discussing condoms



Confidence discussing condoms plateaued among PrEP users and PLHIV between 2019–23.

Confidence increased among HIV-negative and untested men since 2021.

N=2,046 (2023).

# Acceptability of different STI prevention strategies

	N=1,280	N=2,046
Condoms	49%	45%*
Regular low dose antibiotics (STI-PrEP)	50%	54%
Antibiotic pill after sex (STI-PEP)	70%	75%
Gargling with mouthwash after sex (2021 only)	76%	—
Douching after sex (2021 only)	13%	—

\*Participants were advised that not all strategies were efficacious.

# Doxy-PEP use & concern about antimicrobial resistance

	N=2,046
Ever used antibiotics (abx) for STI prevention	8%
Familiar with antimicrobial resistance (AMR)	42%
Concerned about AMR (among those familiar)	76%

Of people who had ever used abx for STI prevention (n=157):

- 34% stopped permanently; 31% stopped temporarily; 19% were taking Doxy-PEP; 8% Doxy-PrEP; 7% were taking abx another way
- 47% were prescribed antibiotics by their doctor; 37% used abx they already had; (non-exclusive categories)
- Lifetime abx use for STI prevention higher among PLHIV and PrEP users.

# Summary

- Recent PrEP use increased to 46%.
- Increase in event-driven dosing (29% in 2023)
- Willingness to use PrEP stable at 32% since 2019 (concern at 37%)
- Barriers to PrEP remain not wanting to talk to a doctor, not having enough sex, concern about side effects/medication
- Stopping PrEP associated with less sex, monogamous relationships
- Strong interest in alternative dosing strategies (e.g. especially long-acting PrEP)
- Belief in TasP/awareness of U=U remains concentrated among PLHIV and PrEP users
- Confidence discussing condoms with partners has increased among HIV-negative participants not on PrEP and untested participants
- Strong interest in Doxy-PEP and evidence of existing off-label use

# Acknowledgments

- We thank all participants who completed questionnaires and the current and former members of the PrEPARE Project reference group
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**For recent publications:**  
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