

Australian Needle Syringe Program Survey: Recent trends in Western Australia

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Acknowledgements

Staff and clients at

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- Western Australian AIDS Council
- HepatitisWA

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Department of Health

ANSPS National Advisory Group

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Australian Needle Syringe Program Survey (ANSPS)

- Annual bio-behavioural sentinel surveillance system
- Self-administered questionnaire & provision of dried blood spot (DBS) for HCV/HIV testing

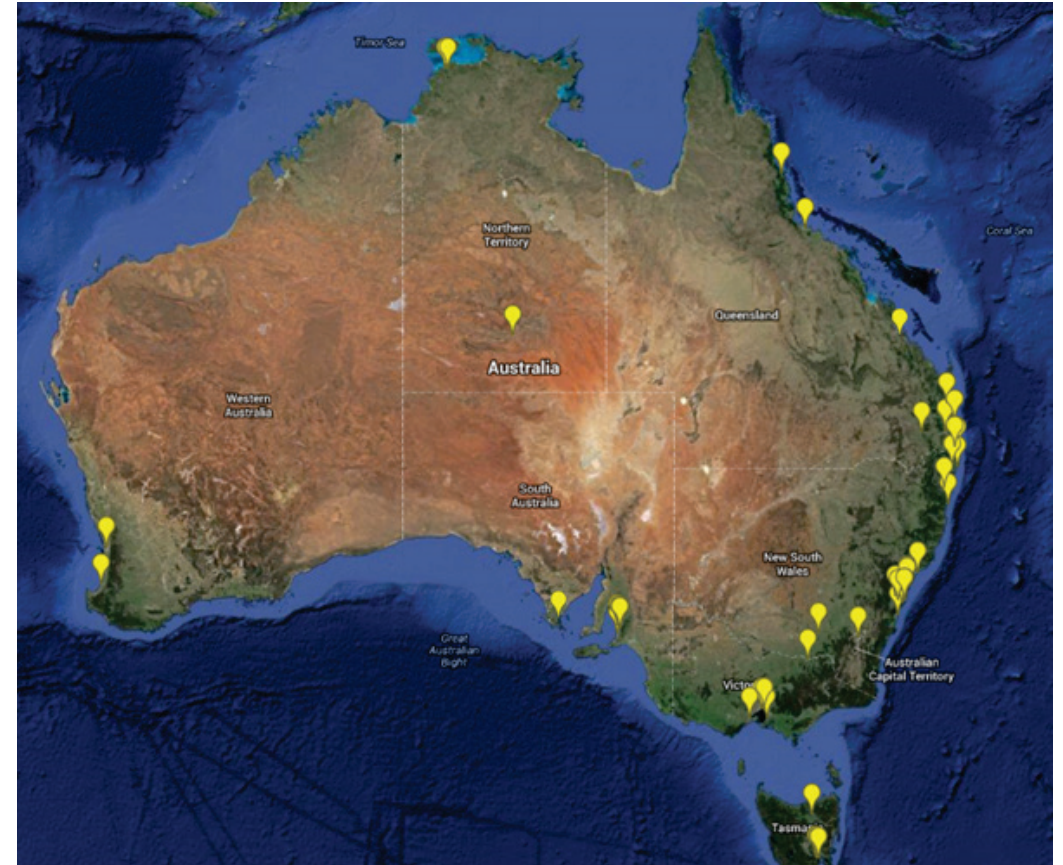
AUSTRALIA

- Conducted at ~50 NSPs nationally
- ~2,500 respondents per annum (pre COVID-19)
~1,500 respondents in 2020 and 2021
~1,800 in 2022

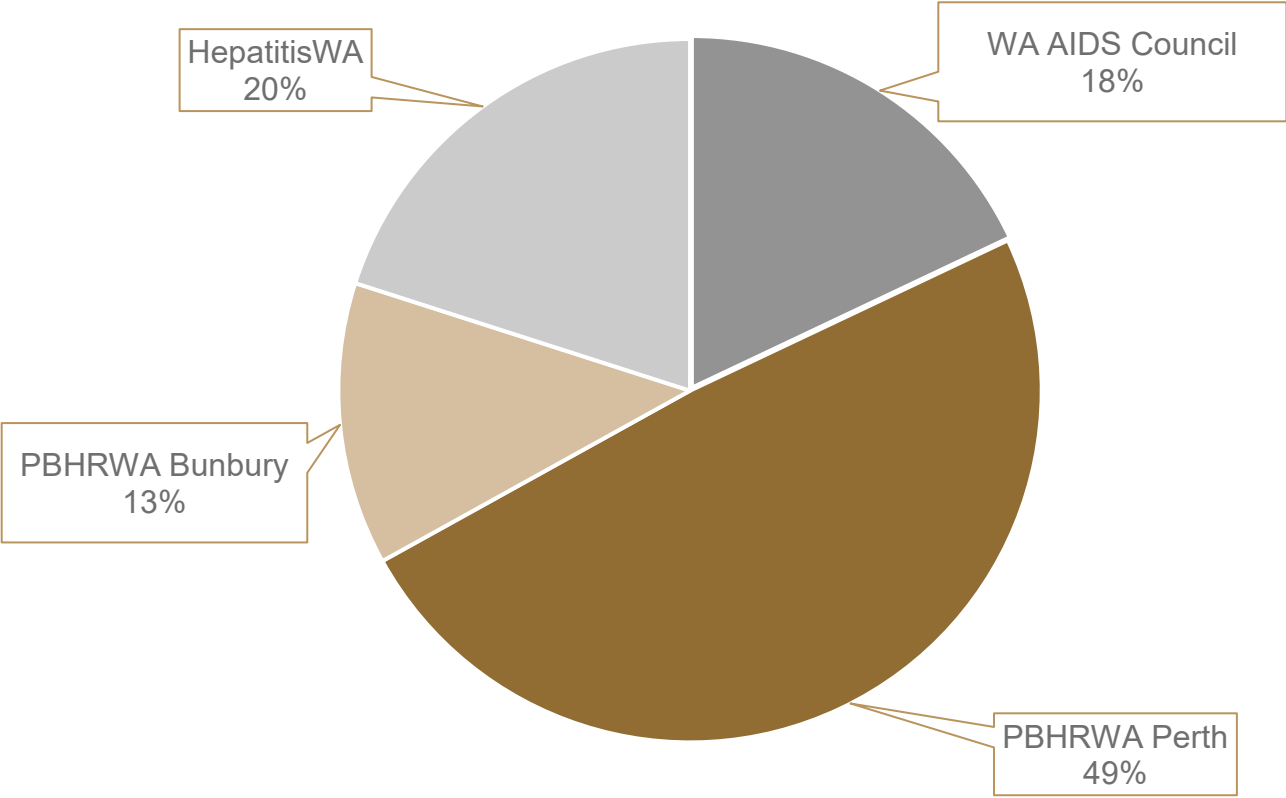
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

- 4 NSP services
- ~500 respondents in WA pre COVID (20% of total)
400-500 respondents in 2020/21 (30% of total)
420 respondents in 2022 (25% of total)

ANSPS demonstrated to be representative of NSP attendees at sentinel sites¹



ANSPS respondents from WA (2018-2022)



Overview of ANSPS respondents from WA (2017-2021)

Demographic characteristics

- Around one third women

Higher proportion women in WA compared to remainder of Australia in most years

- Majority (~80%) identify as heterosexual*
- Median age early 40s (range 19-68 years in 2021)*
- One in three identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander

Significantly higher than the remainder of Australia in all years (except 2017)

- One in two report a lifetime history of imprisonment*
- Between 14-23% report imprisonment in the past 12 months*

* Comparable to the remainder of Australia

Overview of ANSPS respondents from WA (2017-2021)

Drug use characteristics

- Median ~20 years since first injection (range 0-49 years in 2021)*
- Minority (~5%) initiated injection in last three years*
- More than half of respondents reported last injecting methamphetamine in all years

Significantly higher in WA than the remainder of Australia in all years

- One in four reported receptive syringe sharing in the last month^
- Almost two in five reported reuse of syringes in the last month (includes reuse of own syringe)^
- More than half reported injecting in a public location in the last month^

^ Injection risk behaviour significantly higher in WA than the remainder of Australia in all years

* Comparable to the remainder of Australia

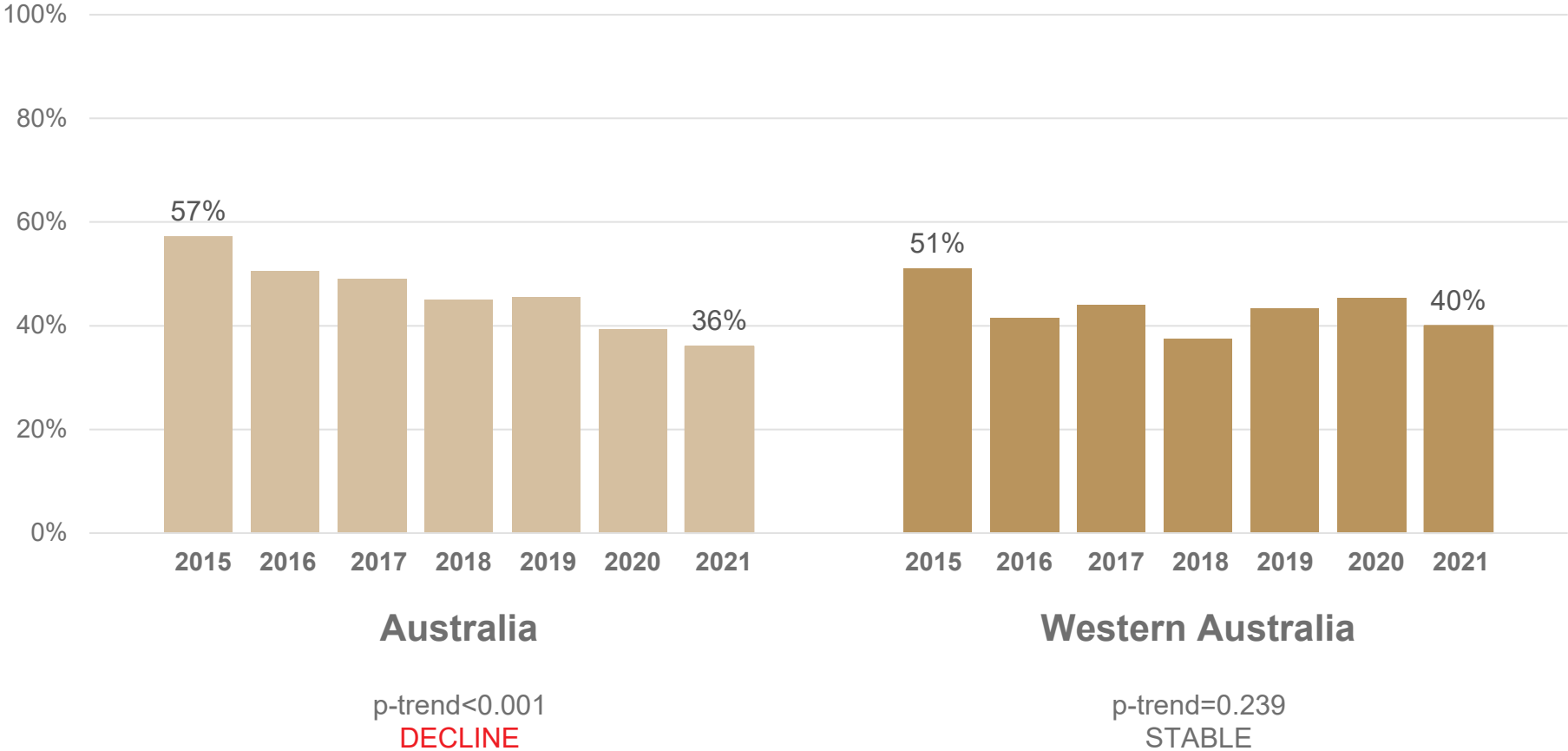
Elimination of HCV among people who inject drugs

Hepatitis C virus (HCV) elimination

- World Health Organisation target to eliminate HCV as a public health threat by 2030, including a goal to reduce HCV incidence by 80%
- Requires widespread uptake of DAA therapy and a corresponding decline in viraemic prevalence among those most at risk of transmission
- Australia's Fifth National Hepatitis Strategy (2018-2022) supports an evidence-based equitable response to HCV
- Western Australia Hepatitis C Strategy 2019-2023 targets include:
 - A. Reduction in newly acquired infection by 60%
 - B. Increase in the proportion of people diagnosed to 90%
 - C. Increase the cumulative proportion of people living with chronic HCV who have initiated DAA treatment to 65%
 - D. Increase use of sterile injecting equipment for every injection episode

Target A: Reduction in newly acquired HCV infection by 60%

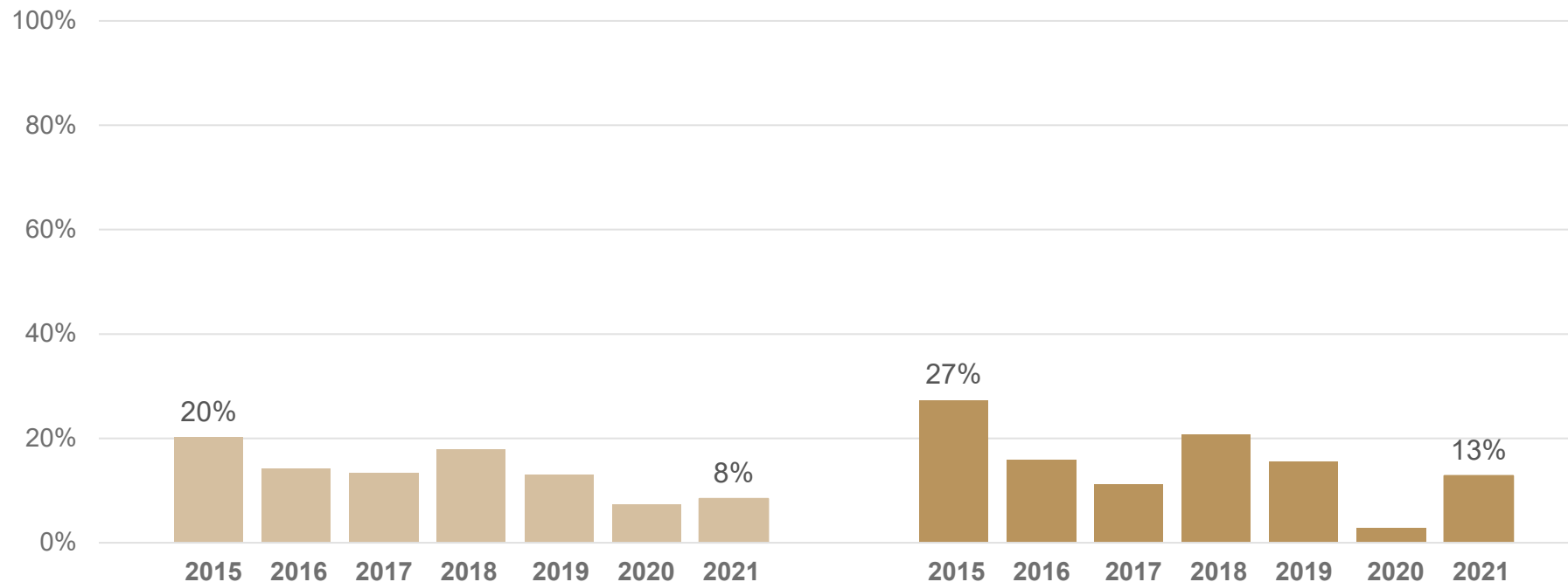
HCV antibody prevalence among ANSPS respondents



Target A: Reduction in newly acquired HCV infection by 60%

HCV antibody prevalence among ANSPS new initiates*

* New initiates defined as <5 years since first injection



Australia

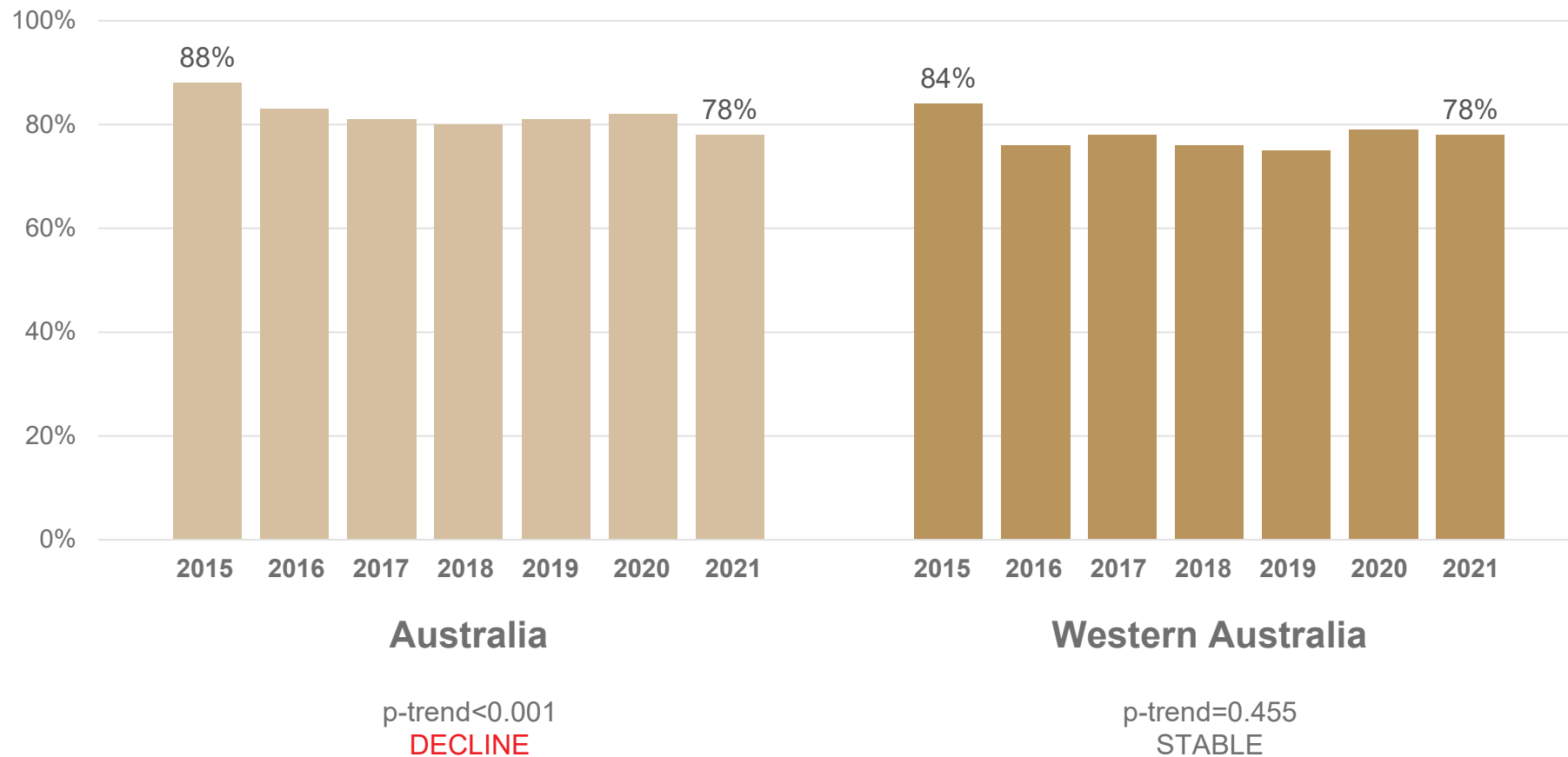
p-trend=0.001
DECLINE

Western Australia

p-trend=0.190
STABLE
(Small sample)

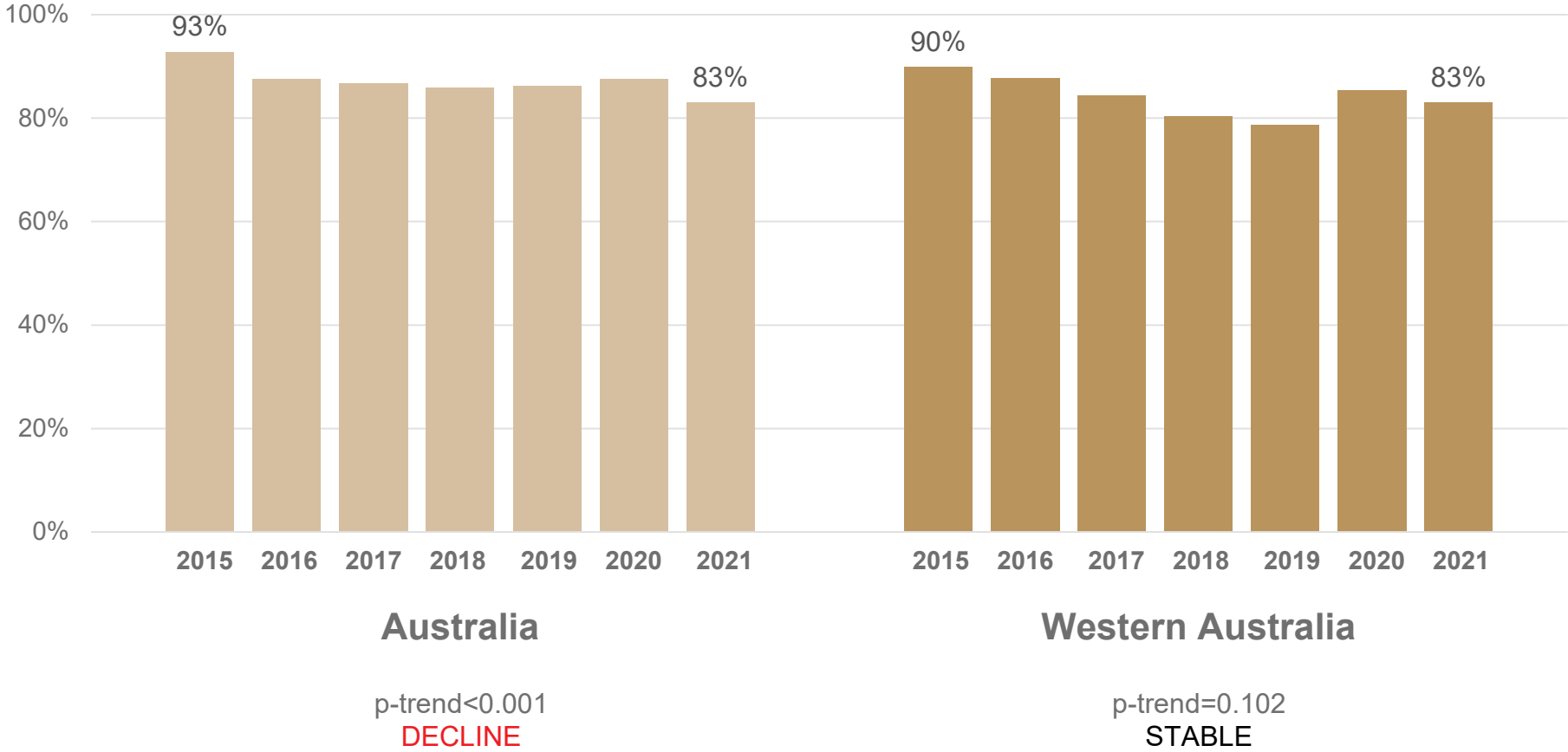
Target B. Increase in the proportion of people diagnosed to 90%

HCV diagnostic testing among ANSPS respondents



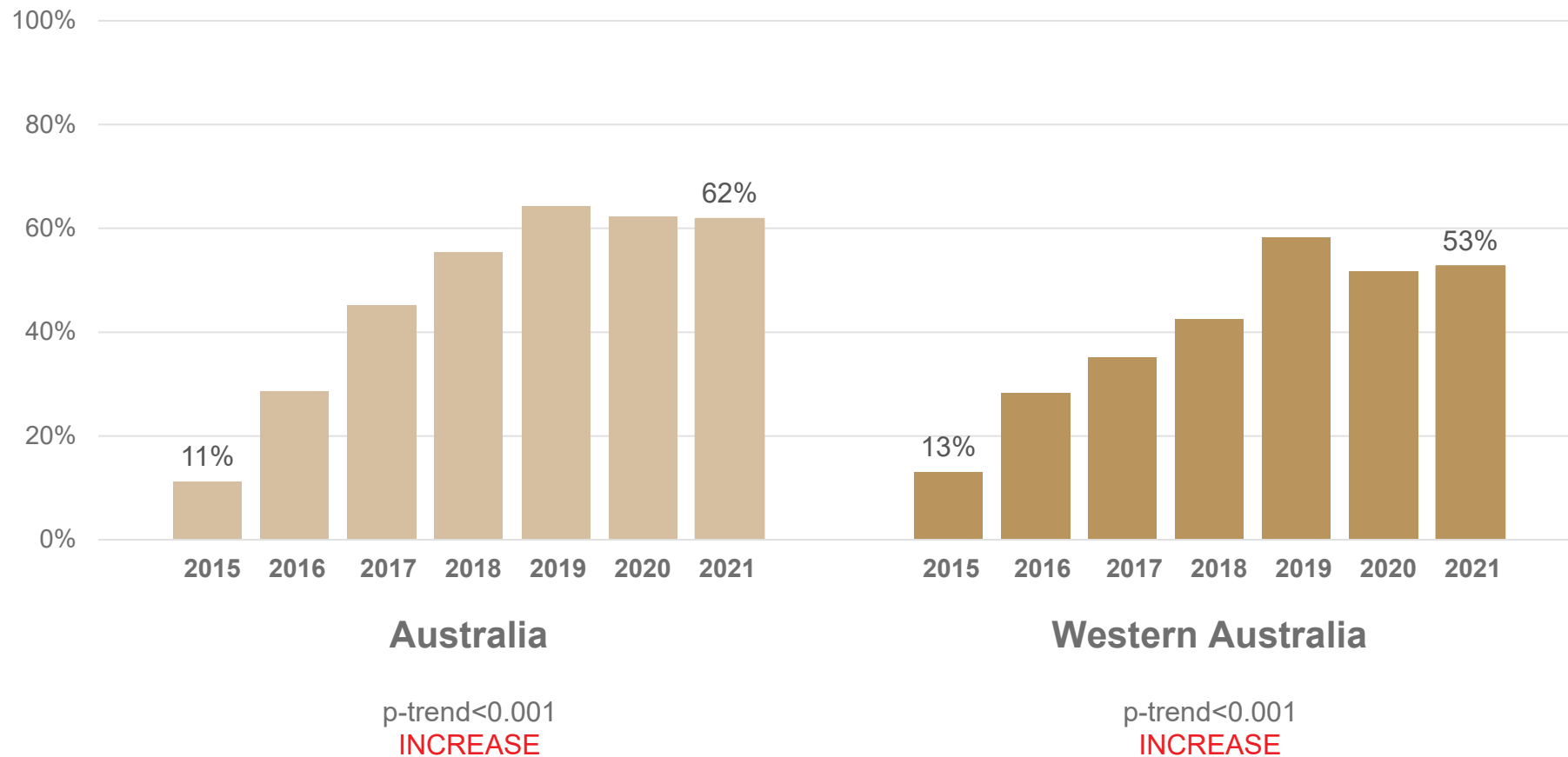
Target B. Increase in the proportion of people diagnosed to 90%

HCV diagnostic testing among HCV exposed ANSPS respondents



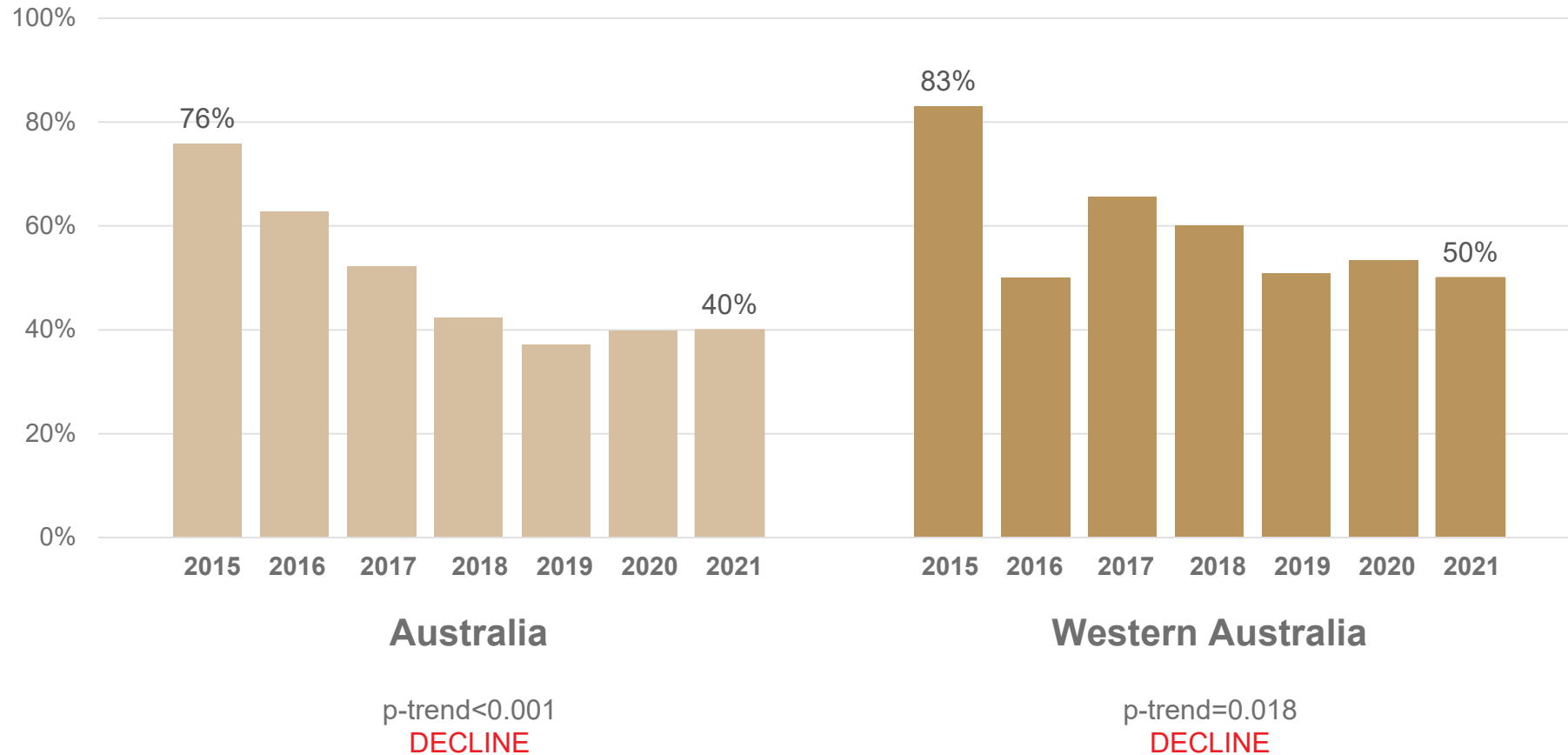
Target C: Increase cumulative proportion of eligible people treated with DAAs to 65%

Cumulative HCV treatment uptake among eligible ANSPS respondents



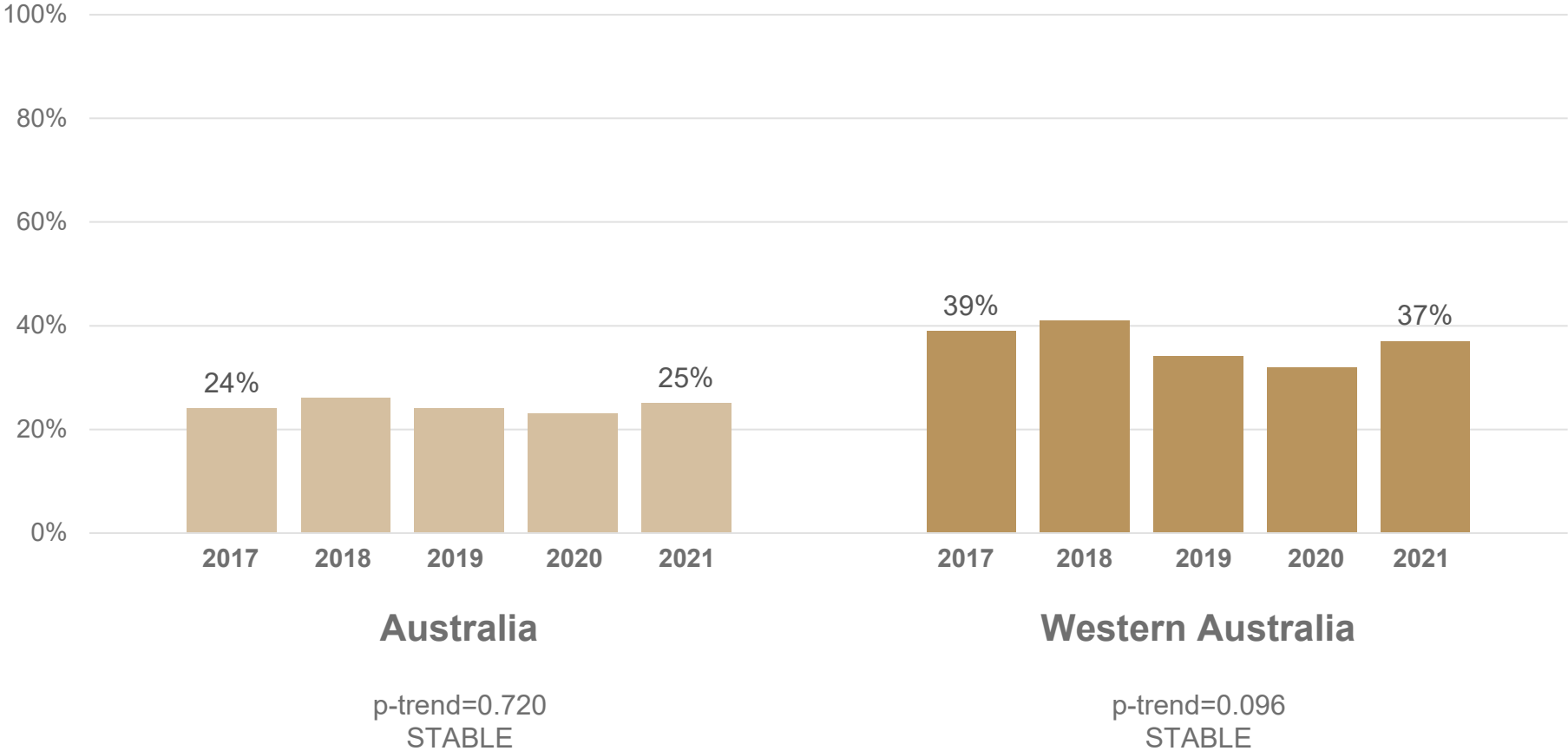
Target C: Increase cumulative proportion of eligible people treated with DAAs to 65%

HCV RNA prevalence among HCV Ab+ ANSPS respondents



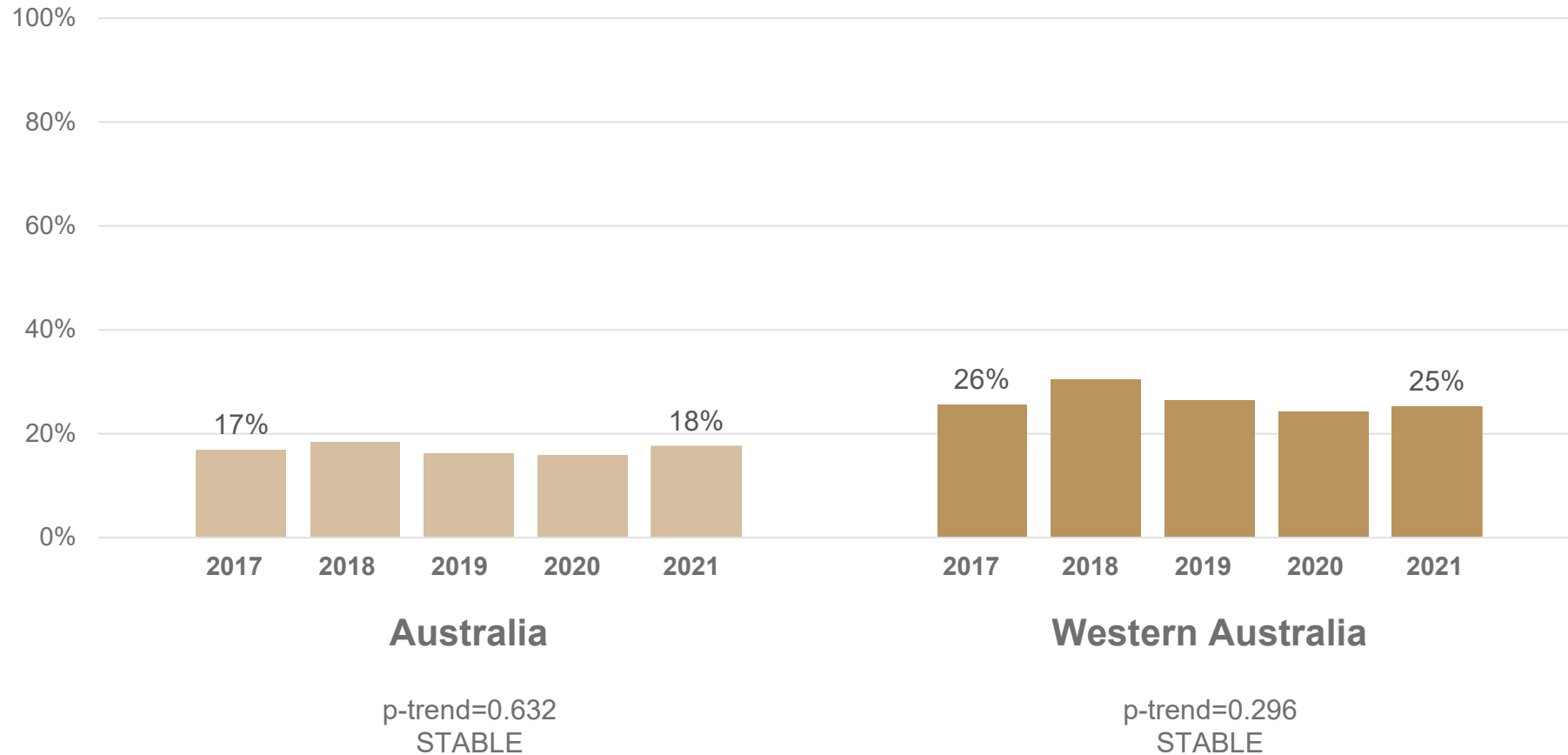
Target D: Increase use of sterile injecting equipment for every injection episode

Reuse of needles/syringes among ANSPS respondents *(includes reuse of own syringe)*



Target D: Increase use of sterile injecting equipment for every injection episode

Receptive syringe sharing among ANSPS respondents



Summary: HCV elimination in Western Australia

- **NEW INFECTIONS AMONG PWID:**
 - HCV antibody prevalence stable, prevalence is low among new initiates ✓
- **HCV DIAGNOSTIC TESTING AMONG PWID**
 - High at ~80%, but should aim for 100% among PWID given risk factors
 - Target of 90% diagnosed (among HCV exposed) almost met ✓
- **DAA INITIATION AMONG PWID**
 - Significant increase in uptake of HCV DAA therapy among PWID ✓
...aim to reach 65% by 2023
- **INJECTION RISK BEHAVIOUR**
 - Receptive sharing of syringes in last month high at 25% ✗
 - Important to lower the pool of infection and injection risk behaviour
↓ risk of primary HCV infection and reinfection