



DRUG TRENDS

Ecstasy dependence, risk behaviours, and health service utilisation in Australian consumers.

Rosie Swanton¹, Daisy Gibbs¹, Raimondo Bruno², Antonia Karlsson¹, Julia Uporova¹, Georgia Kelly¹, Paul Dietze³, Caroline Salom⁴, Simon Lenton⁵, Louisa Degenhardt¹, Michael Farrell¹ and Amy Peacock^{1,3}

¹National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre, University of New South Wales Sydney, Australia

²University of Tasmania, Hobart Australia

³Burnet Institute, Melbourne, Australia

⁴Institute for Social Science Research, The University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia

⁵National Drug Research Institute, Curtin University, Perth, Australia



Background

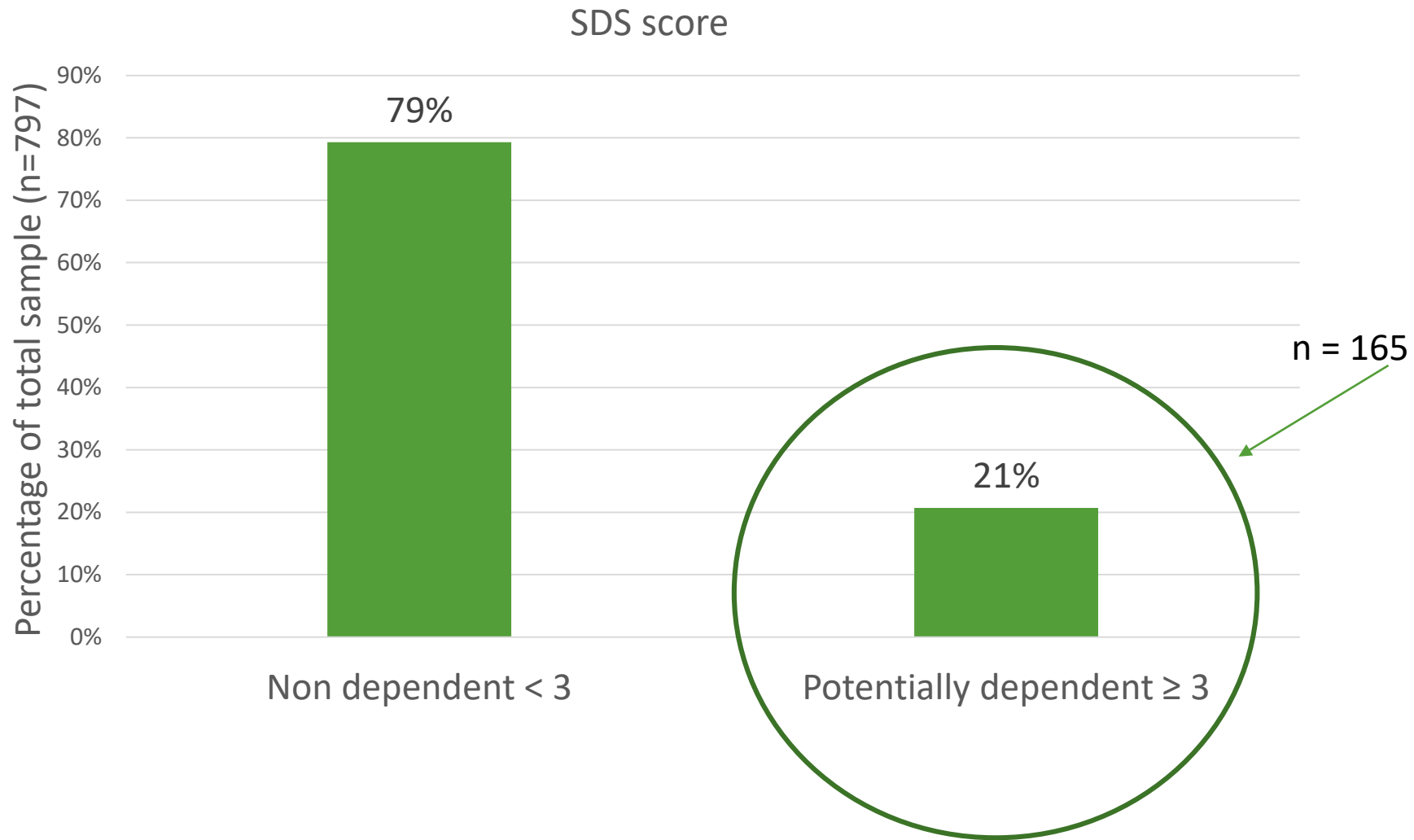
- In Australia, Ecstasy is one of the most commonly used drugs.
- In the 2016 annual household survey, 2% of 14+ adults reported ecstasy use in the previous 12 months, 11% reported ever having used it.
- Ecstasy as a drug of dependence is a debated topic, but there is some evidence suggesting developing dependence is possible.
- We wanted to understand if those with a higher SDS were engaging in risk and protective behaviours in similar or different ways to those with a lower SDS.

2019 EDRS sample

- Predominantly young, well-educated males
- Median age = 21
- 50% live in the family home
- Median 12 days of ecstasy use in the previous 6 months (~fortnightly)



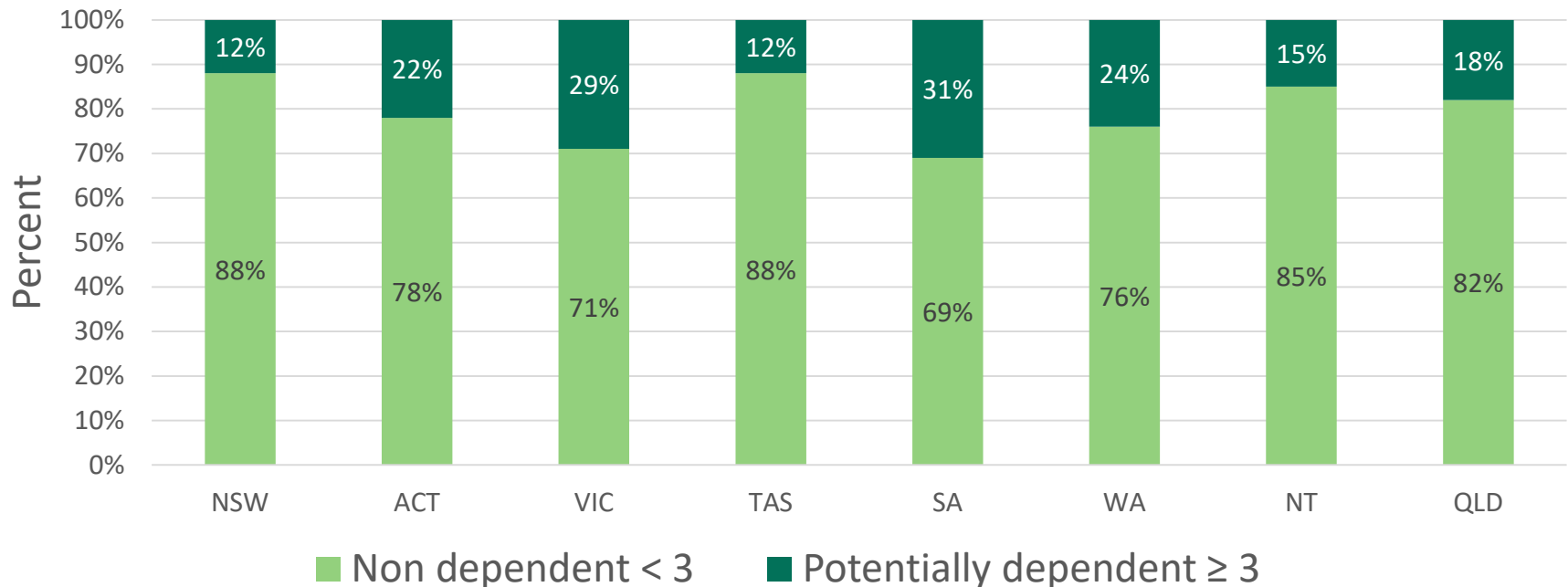
Drug Trends



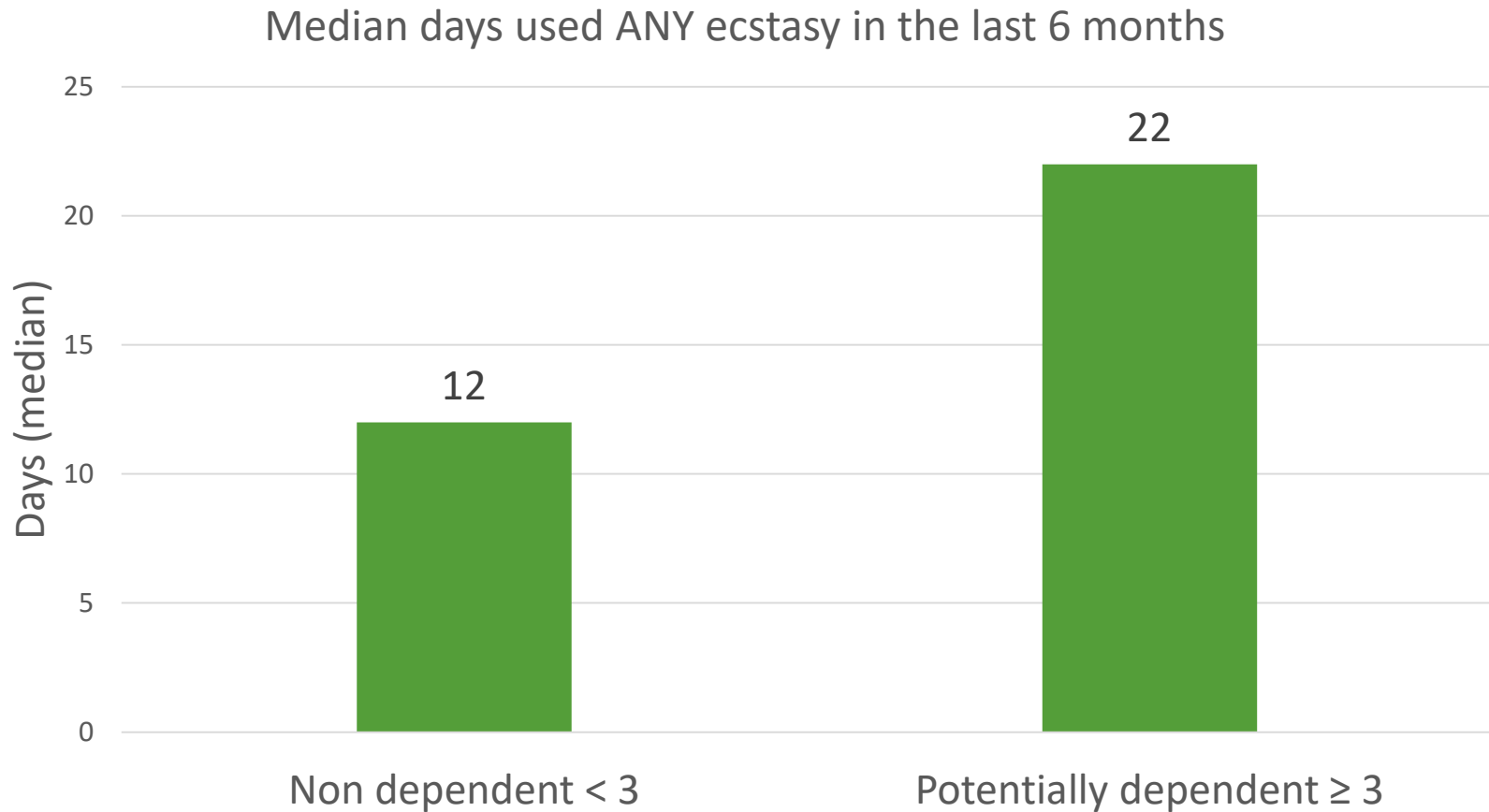
2019 Demographics

	SDS < 3	SDS ≥ 3
Gender	59% male	61% male
Age	Median 22 (IQR 19-26)	Median = 20 (IQR18-23)

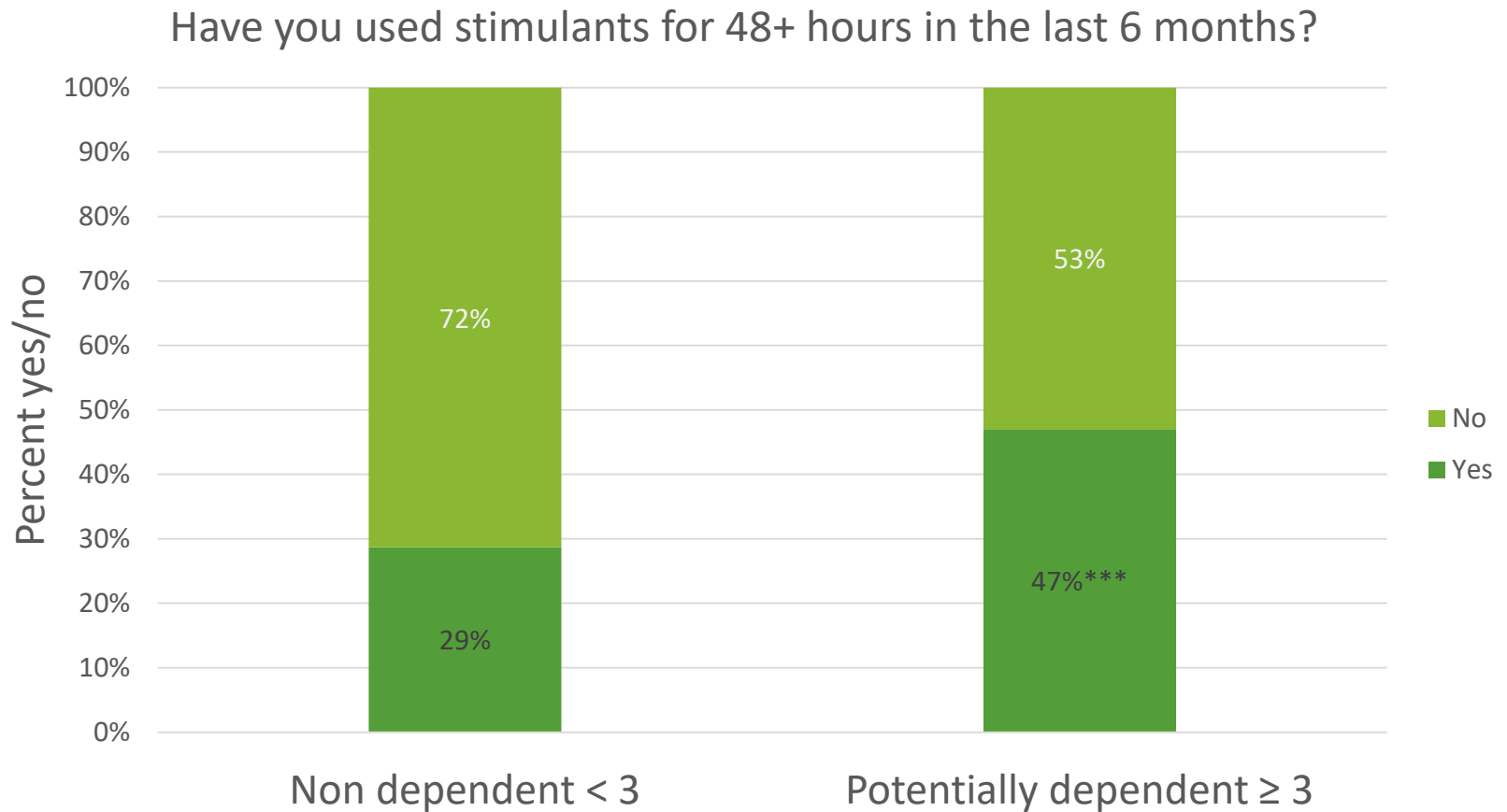
SDS score <3 and ≥3 by state



Some trends...

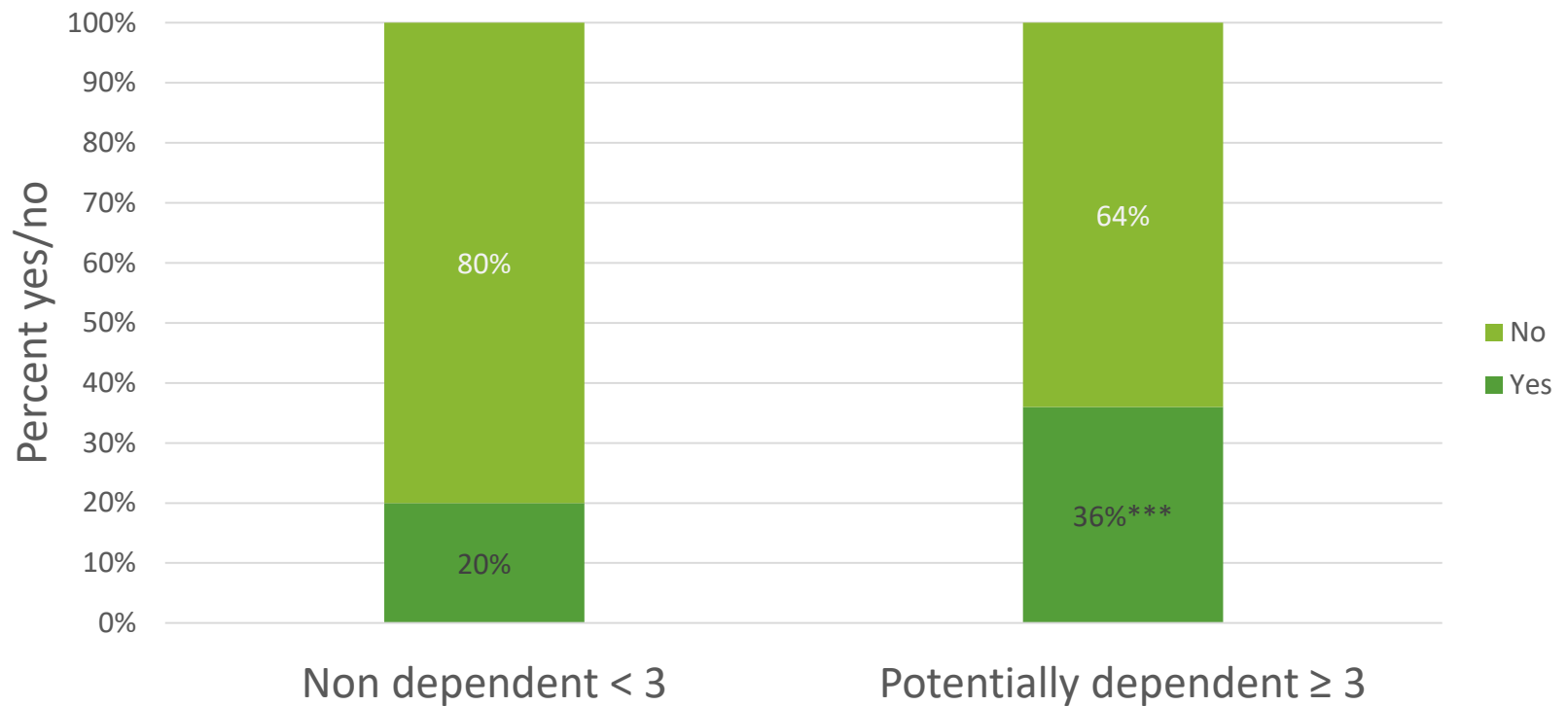


Some trends...



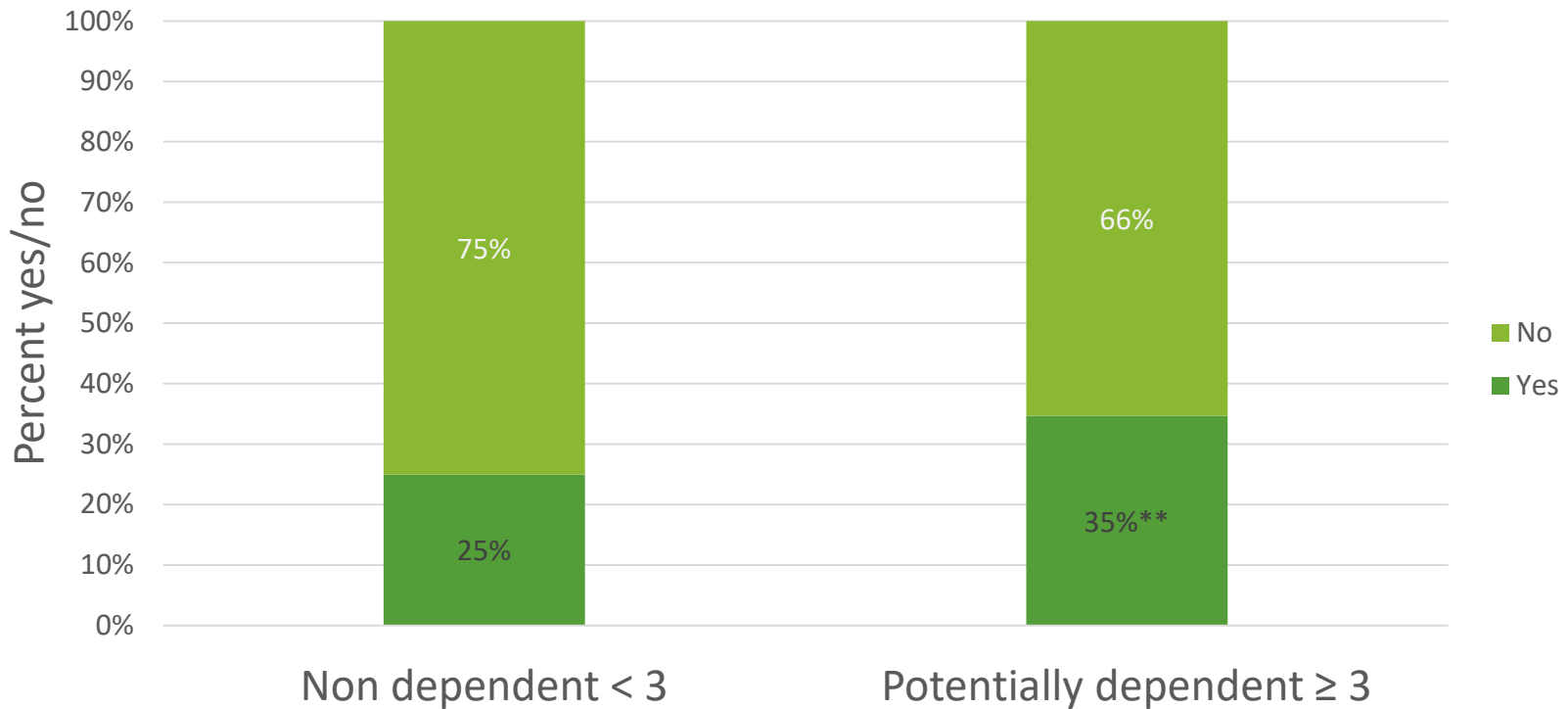
Some trends...

Have you ever had an acute adverse event while using stimulants?



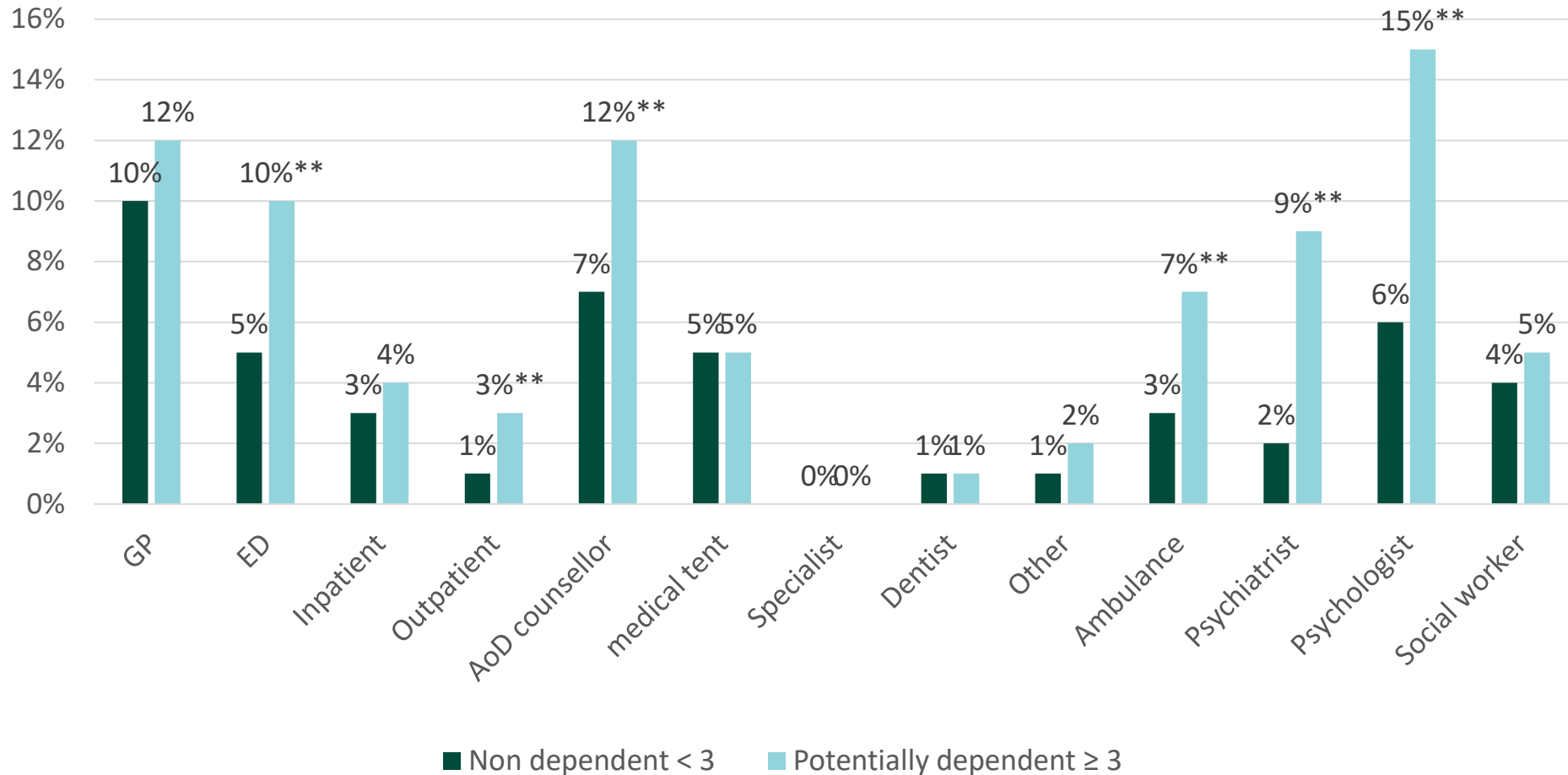
Some trends...

Have you accessed any health services for AOD support in the last 6 months?



Type of help accessed

% of each group who answered 'yes' to accessing health services for AoD



To Conclude

- People screening positive for potential ecstasy dependence have different drug behaviours, and different help seeking behaviours.
- Accessing both emergency and longer-term community care at higher rates.
- Potential for engaging this group in health services/harm reduction strategies in a different manner to the non-dependent group.
Potential to transition them from acute care to community care.
- Current harm reduction related to ecstasy use is focused on acute effects of the drug, and while this is important, these findings support continued development of longer-term initiatives that connect people with potential ecstasy dependence to health education and treatment/support.