



# Hepatitis C testing and treatment among people who inject drugs

findings from the  
2013 Illicit Drug Reporting System (IDRS)

Medicine

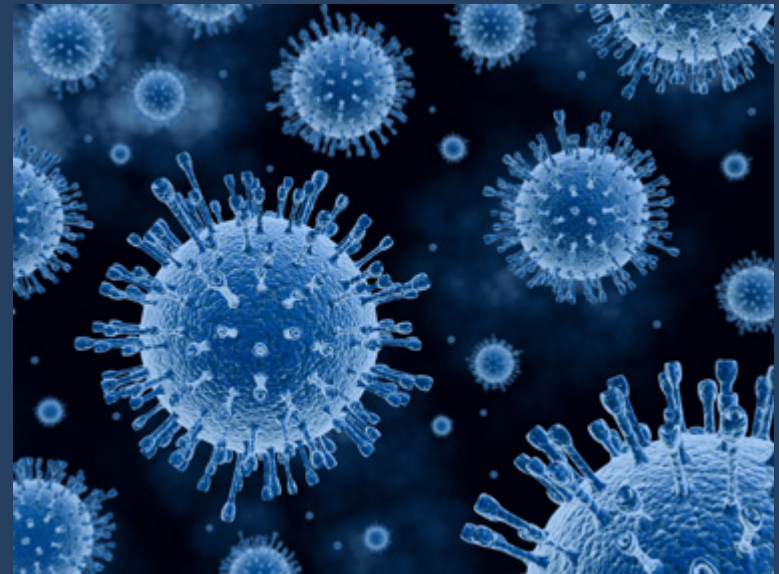
National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre

Kerryn Butler & Lucy Burns  
National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre,  
University of New South Wales

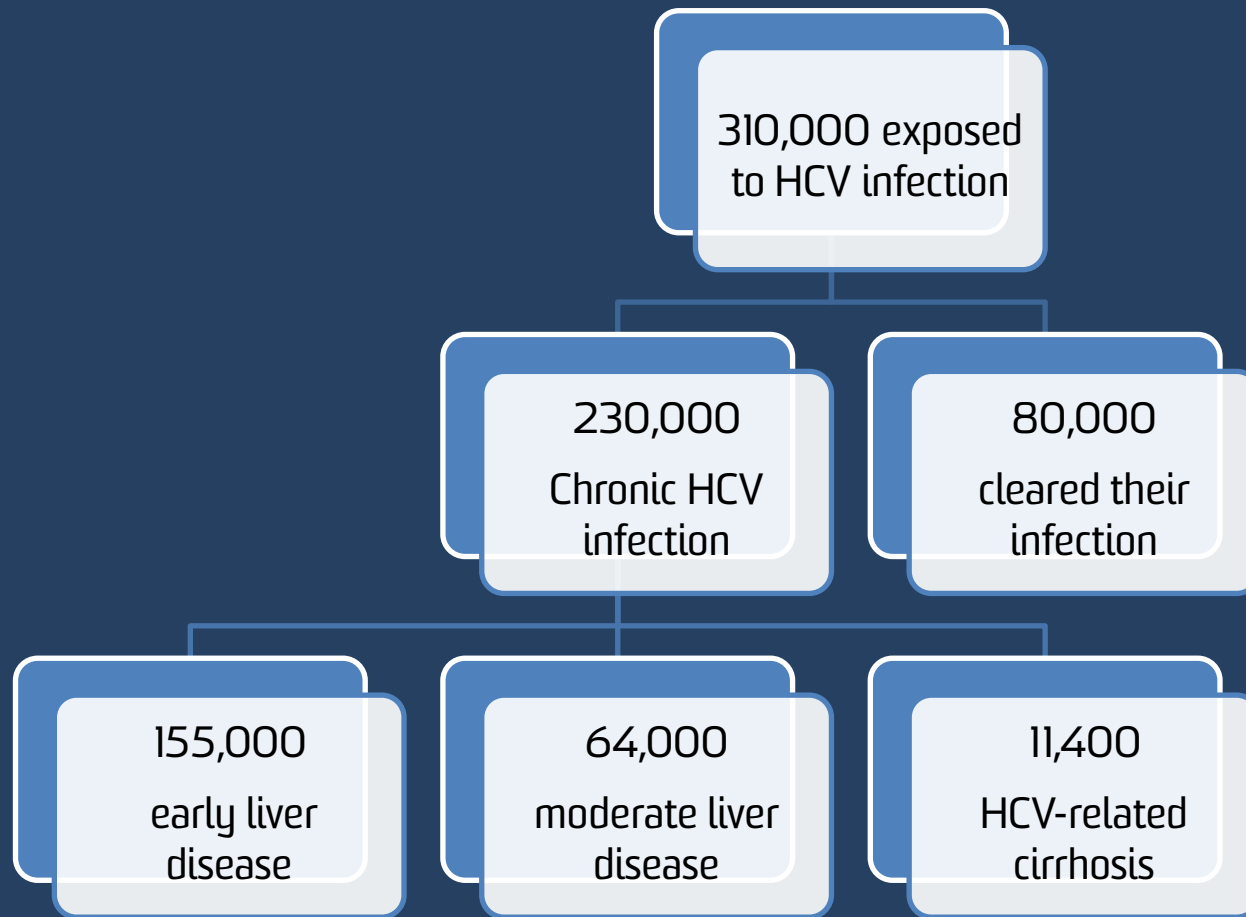


# Hepatitis C (HCV) Testing and Treatment

- Prevalence and mortality
- Natural history
- Testing
- New treatments
- IDRS population (and limits)
- Results
- Implications and further research



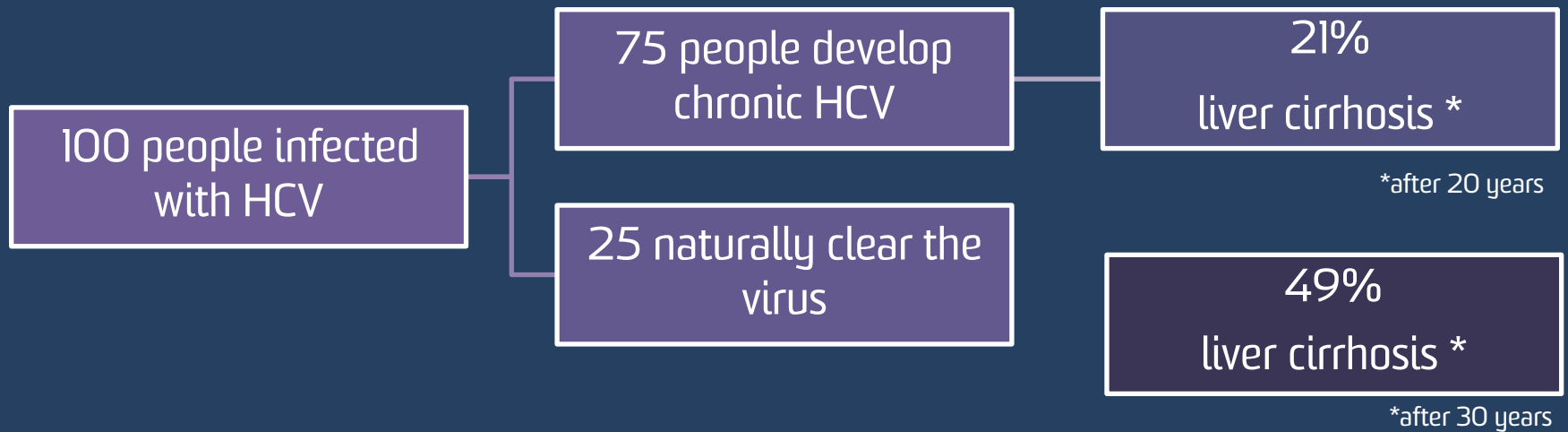
# Prevalence and mortality (Australia)



Kirby Institute (2014)



# Natural history



Thein et al (2008)



# Hepatitis C testing

- Access to treatment
- Health promotion
- Harm reduction
- Uptake of drug treatment
- Injecting risk behaviour



# National Hepatitis C Testing Policy

## Hepatitis C antibody screening test

- To determine exposure to HCV infection, this test screens for HCV antibodies.

## Hepatitis RNA (PCR viral detection test)

- Current infection is determined by qualitative testing for HCV RNA.

## PCR viral load, PCR genotype

- How much of the virus is present and what strain or genotype.

# New treatments

Previous  
treatments

**Pegylated interferon + ribavirin**

Current  
treatments

**DAA's (boceprevir or telaprevir) +  
pegylated interferon + ribavirin**

Next wave  
treatments

**2<sup>nd</sup> gen. DAA's + pegylated interferon +  
ribavirin. \*\***



# IDRS survey population and research limits

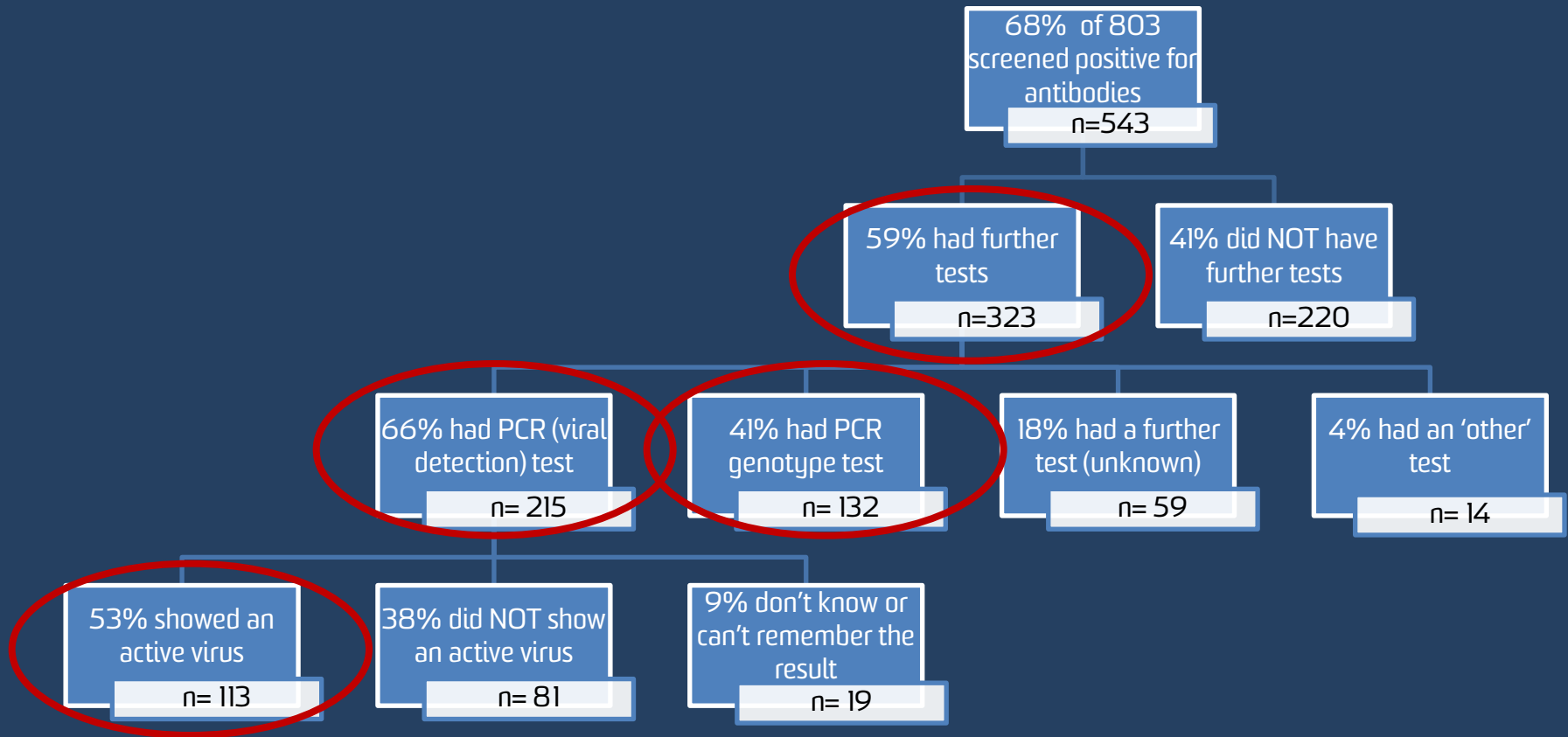


- Interviews with PWID regularly in each capital city of Australia (n=900)
- Interviews with key experts
- Analysis and examination of indicator data sources related to illicit drugs.

IDRS	2013
Male	64%
Mean age	40 years
Unemployment	84%
Prison history	56%
Current drug treatment	47%



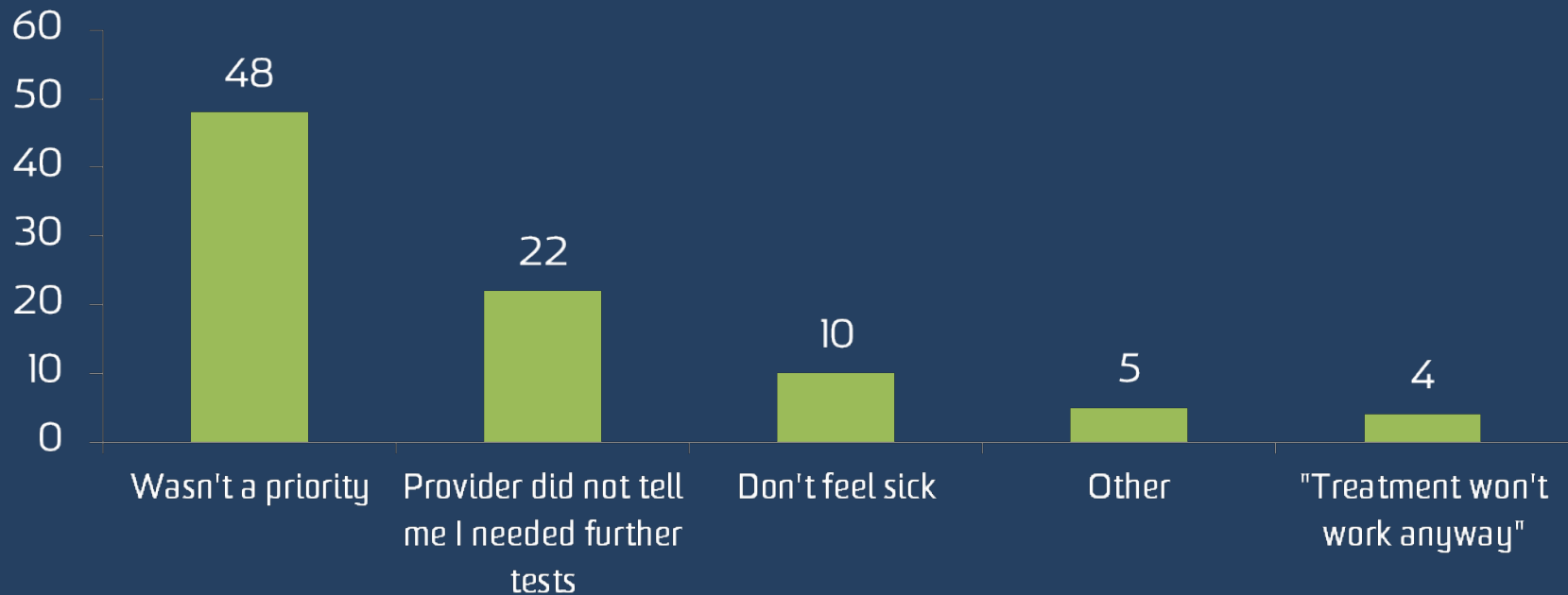
# Results



# Results

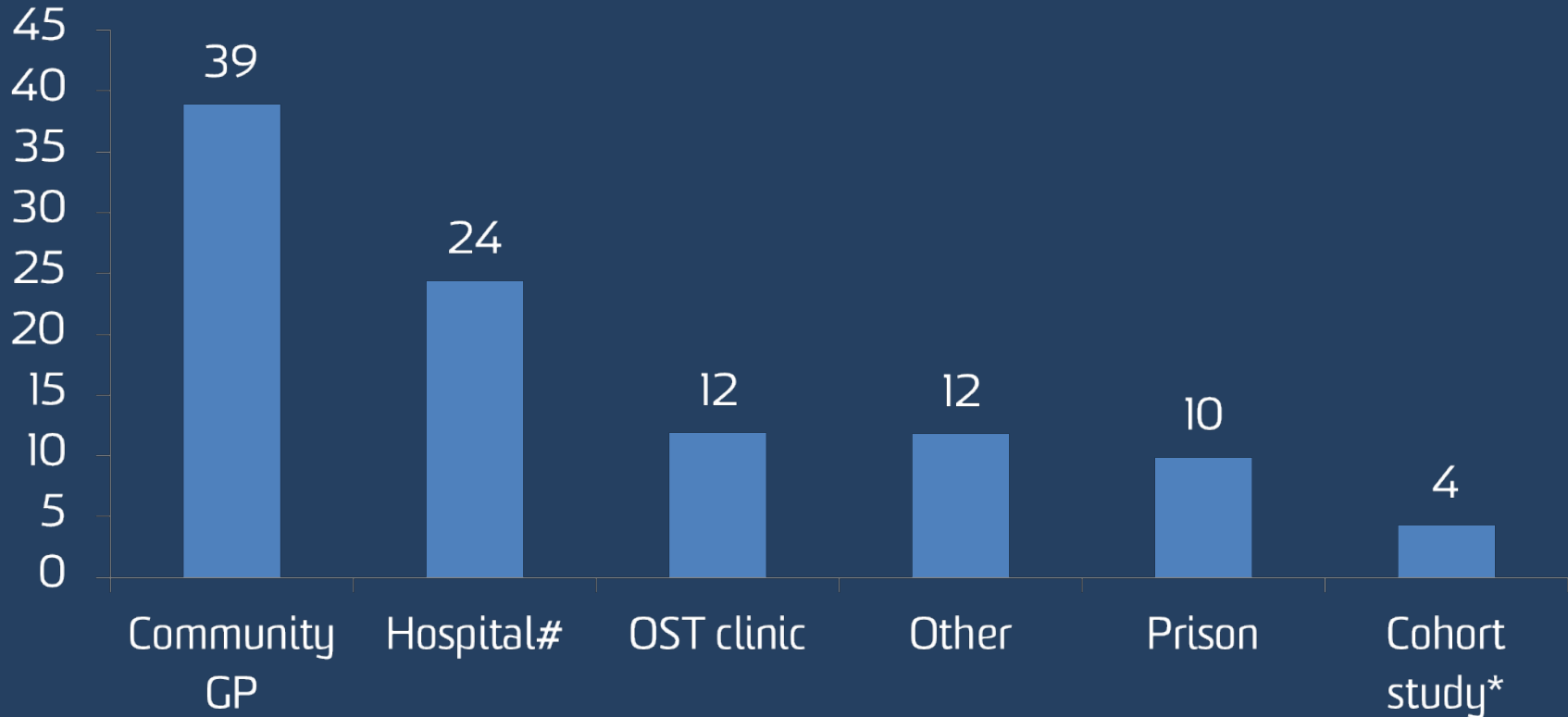
40% of participants who screened positive for antibodies **did NOT** go on to have any further testing done.

Reason for no further testing  $n=220$



# Results

Last location tested (n=303)



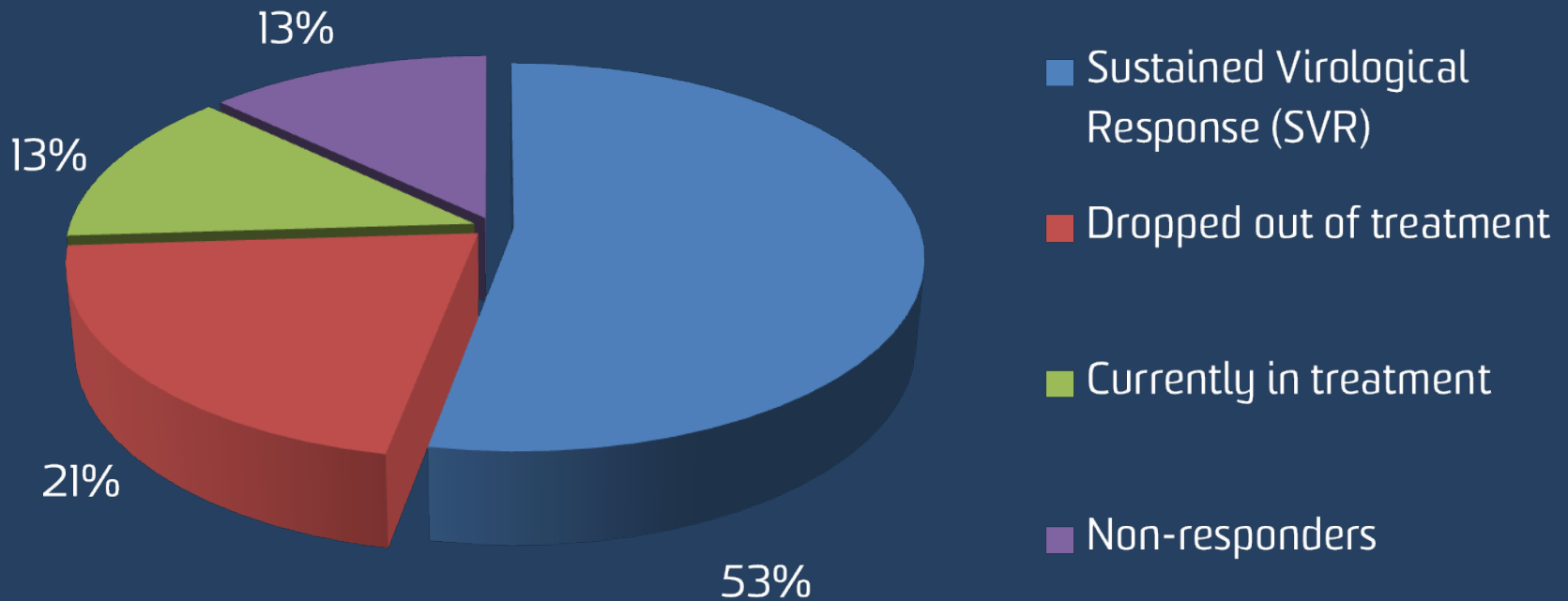
# Hospital including specialist liver clinic

\* Cohort study in Melbourne



# Results

Response to treatment (n=24)



# Results

- 67% were aware of the recently available triple therapy
- Three-quarters indicated they would consider it if it was suitable
- Fear of side effects was the most often cited reason for those not willing to consider triple therapy.

Telaprevir



Pegylated interferon



Boceprevir



# Implications and further research



40% of those that screened positive to HCV antibodies did **NOT** go on to have any further testing.

# THANK YOU



Kerryn Butler

[kerryn.butler@unsw.edu.au](mailto:kerryn.butler@unsw.edu.au)



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