



Why regional data matters!

Drug Trends pilot in far north Queensland

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Drug Trends

- **Regular** information about Australia's drug markets & trends in drug related harms.
- Enhances the evidence base for development of policy responses & interventions.
- Provides a timely warning system for issues that require further monitoring.

Drug Trends

- Annual interviews with:
 - People who inject illicit drugs (IDRS)
 - People who use ecstasy and related drugs (EDRS)
 - In all capital cities



Drug Trends

- Two very different sentinel samples (QLD 2018)

	EDRS	IDRS
Mean age (years)	21.2 (17- 46)	41.5 (20 - 62)
Most likely to be	Male, single, work/study	Male, single, unemployed
Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander	3%	17%
Completed Year 12	82%	27%
Prison history	1%	54%
In treatment	3%	54%
Use weekly or more	41%	79%

Why a regional trial?

- State based differences
- **Anecdotal reports** of wider differences in other areas:
 - Service providers
 - Key experts (health, law enforcement, support services)
- **Wastewater data** – differences (limitations)

Why a regional trial?

- Seed grant from ISSR (plus support from NDARC)
- Collaboration with QulHN and NSP at Townsville HHS
- One week
- 20 IDRS interviews
- 8 EDRS interviews
- → **Proof of concept**

Why a regional trial?

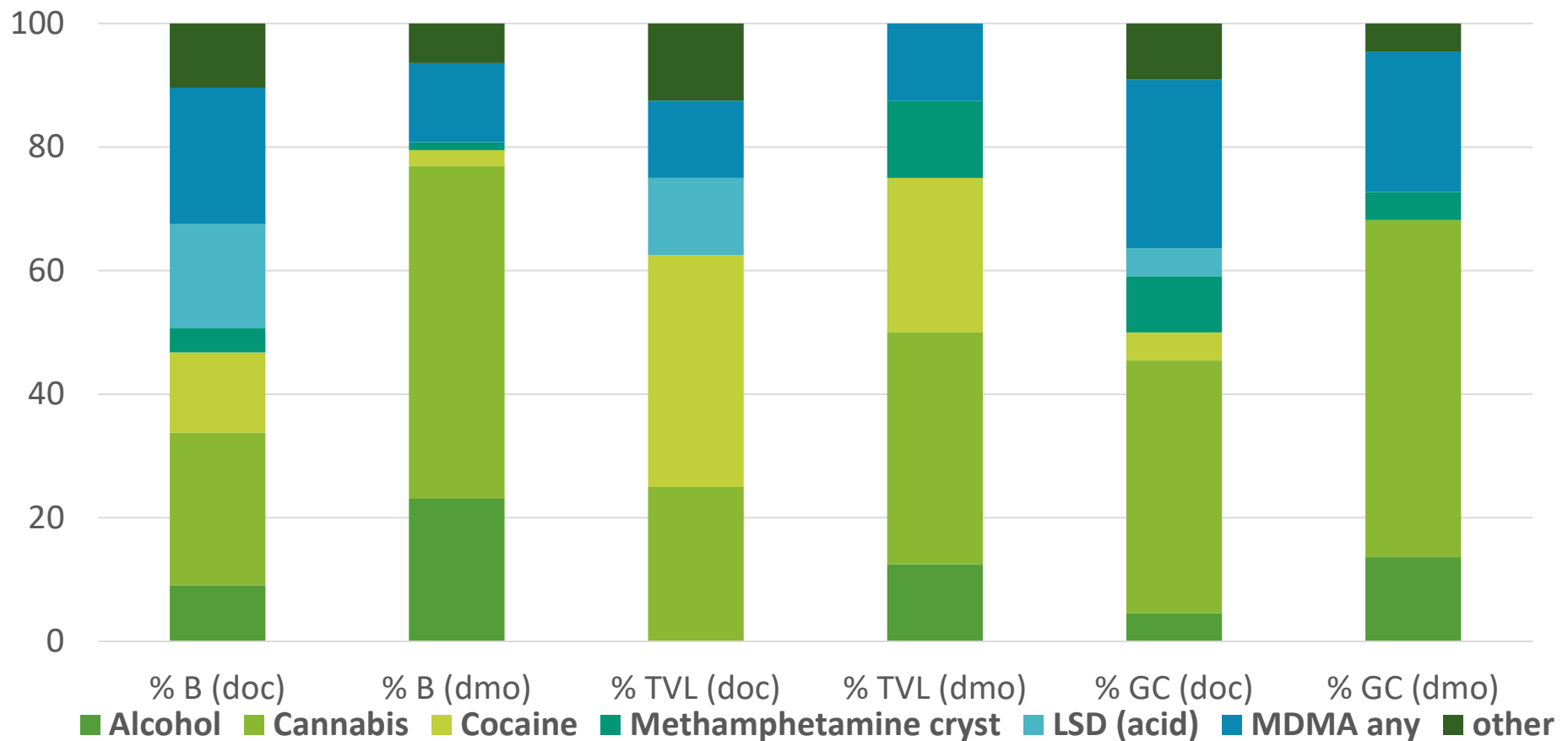
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What did we find?

2019 EDRS: drug of choice vs drug used most often looks different in far north QLD compared to metro QLD.

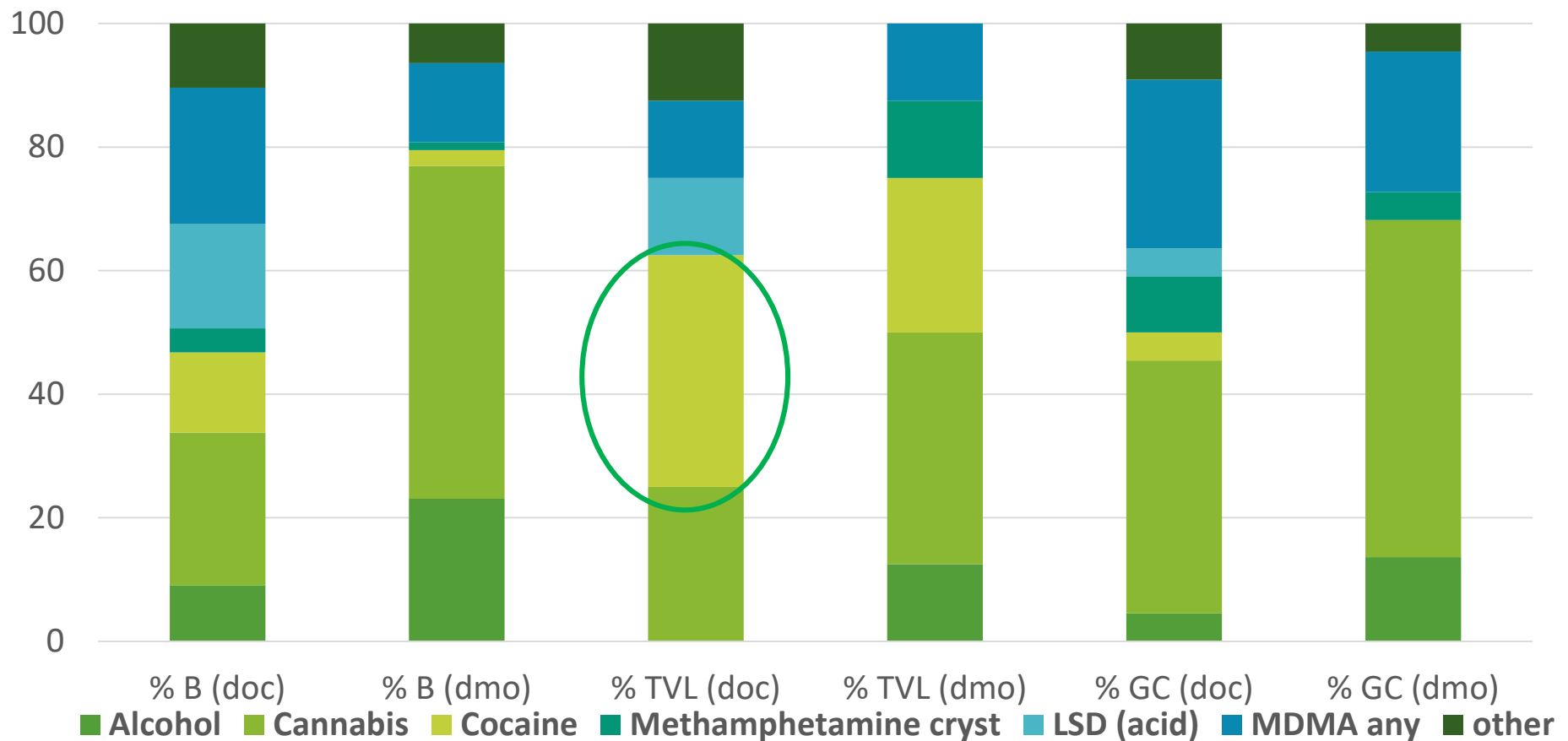
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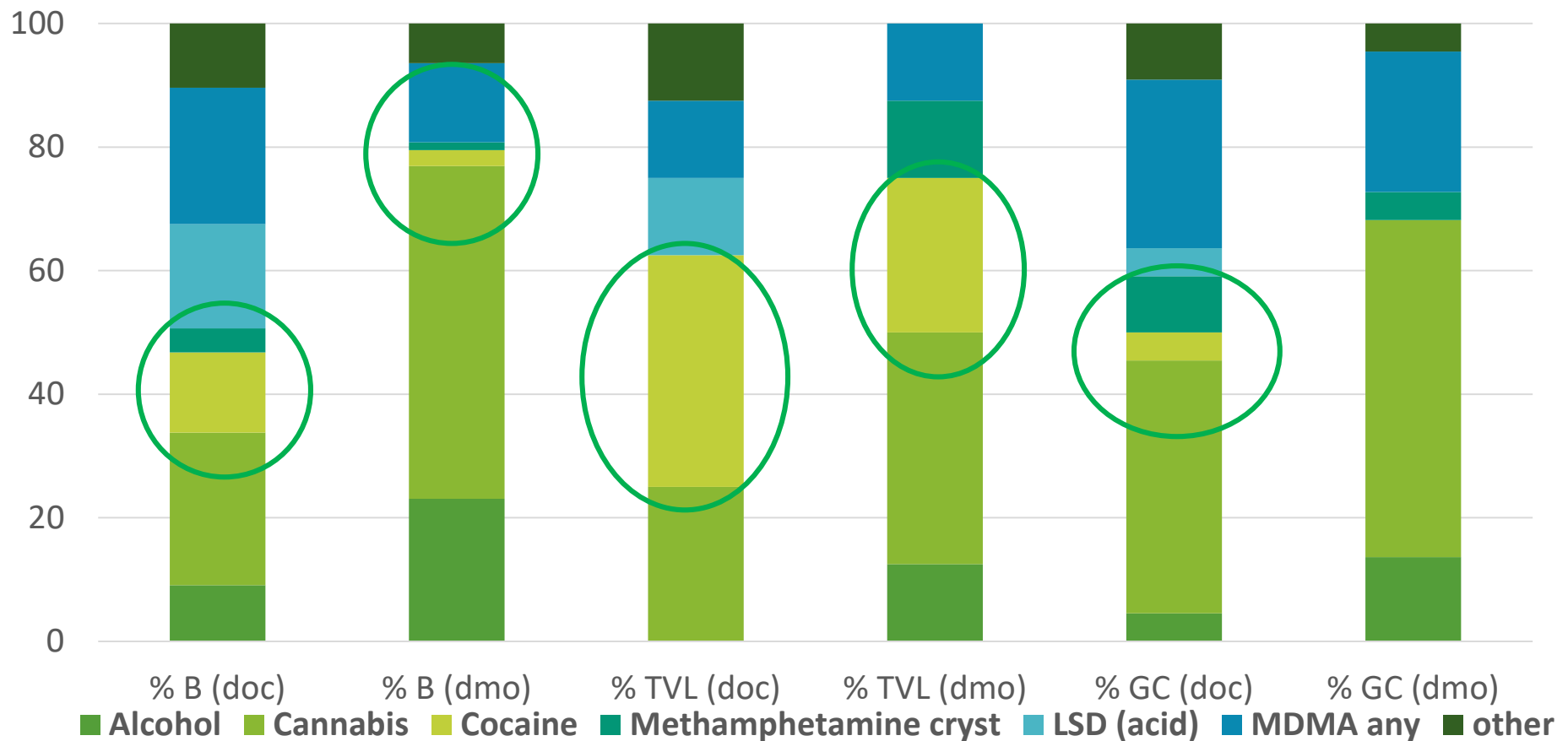
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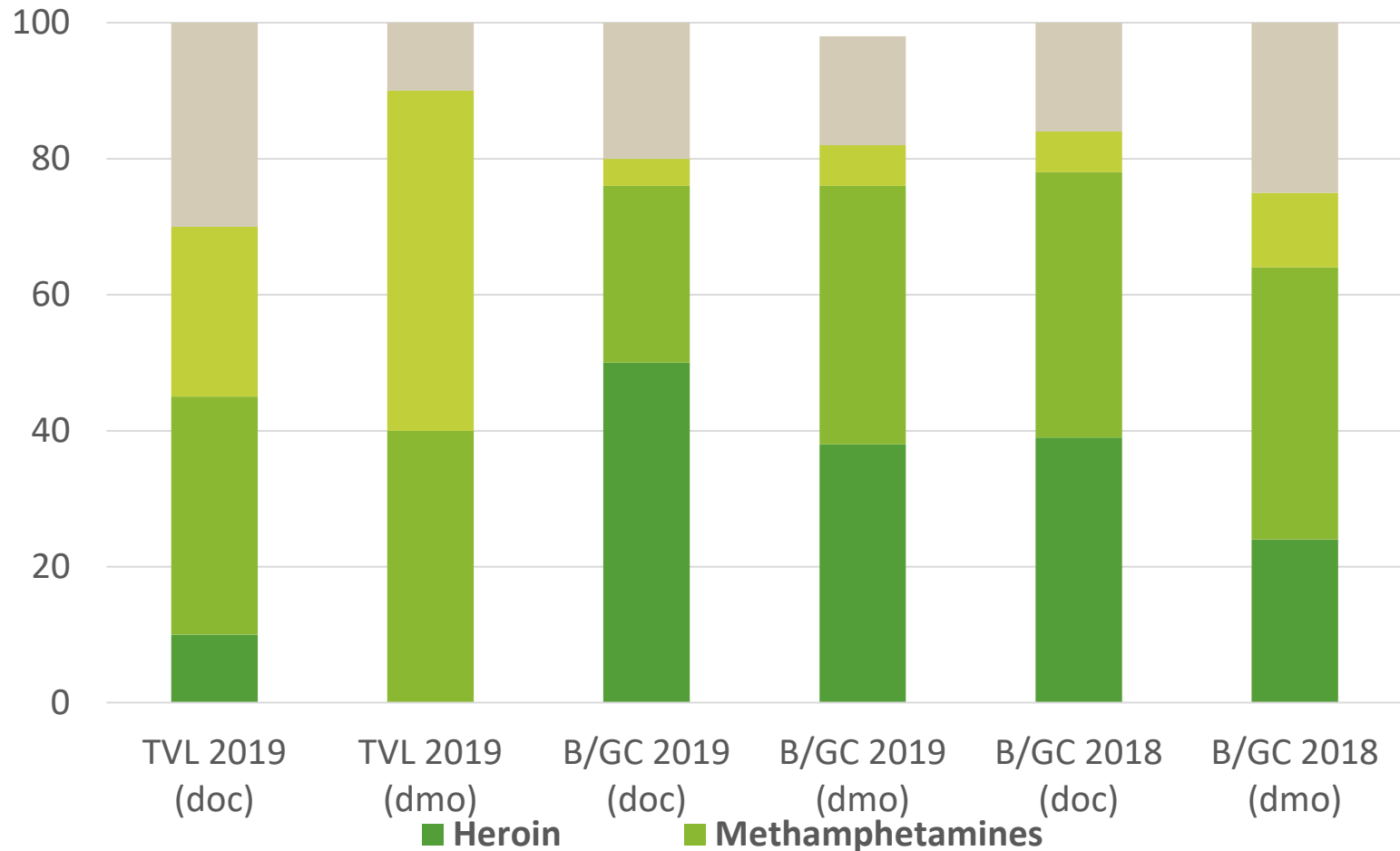
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2019 IDRS: drug of choice vs drug used most often



What did we find?

2019 IDRS: demographics

	TVL	B/GC 2019	B/GC 2018
Median age (range)	44.5 (39.5-52.5)	41 (37-47)	42 (20-62)
% Male	55	67	69
% Aboriginal / Torres Strait Islander	25	13	17
% Heterosexual	80	85	85
% Post-school qual(s)	55	61	43
% Unemployed	80	83	83
Median weekly income	\$330	\$323	\$350
% Gov't benefit main income	95	87	91
% At-risk accommodation	35	49	36
% In treatment	5	58	54

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What does this mean?

1. It means that drug related behaviours in regional areas **are different**
2. Capital-city based data is **not sufficient** to inform service delivery
3. We need more resources (\$\$\$) to run these interviews outside of capital cities.