

# PrEP persistence among a cohort of female sex workers in Argentina

EP0413

**María V. Iannantuono**<sup>1</sup>, Gissella Mernies<sup>1</sup>, María M. Sandoval<sup>1</sup>, Mona Loutfy<sup>2</sup>, Cinthia M. Romanelli<sup>1</sup>, Carina Cesar<sup>1</sup>, Agustín Nava<sup>1</sup>, Mariela Ceschel<sup>1</sup>, María E. Esandi<sup>1</sup>, Julián García<sup>1</sup>, Diego Salusso<sup>1</sup>, Marcela Romero<sup>3</sup>, Georgina Orellano<sup>4</sup>, Virginia Salazar<sup>1</sup>, Inés Arístegui<sup>1</sup>, María I. Figueroa<sup>1</sup>, Zulma Ortiz<sup>1</sup>, Pedro Cahn<sup>1</sup>, Adriana Durán<sup>1</sup>, Sharon Walmsley<sup>5</sup>, Valeria Fink<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup>Fundación Huésped, Research Department, Buenos Aires, Argentina, <sup>2</sup>Women's College Hospital, University of Toronto, Toronto, Canada, <sup>3</sup>Asociación de Travestis, Transexuales y Transgénero de Argentina, Buenos Aires, Argentina, <sup>4</sup>Sindicato de Trabajadorxs Sexuales de Argentina, Buenos Aires, Argentina, <sup>5</sup>University Health Network, Toronto, Canada

## BACKGROUND

- **Oral PrEP** was implemented in Argentina in **2021**.
- **Female sex workers (FSW)** face substantial **barriers** to accessing HIV prevention services, including **PrEP**.

## OBJECTIVE

- To assess the PrEP persistence and associated factors among FSW.

## METHODS

- **MAS por Nosotras** is a **prospective cohort of FSW**, conducted at a NGO in **Argentina**, built through collaboration with the Ministry of Health of Buenos Aires City, and a Canadian research team, to evaluate the sexual and reproductive health of FSW.
- Each visit included collection of psychosocial and medical information, including **HIV testing**.
- **PrEP was offered** to those testing negative.
- **PrEP persistence**= The time to first-PrEP-discontinuation. Persistence probabilities were estimated through Kaplan-Meier curves for participants starting PrEP at-or-after study enrolment. Factors associated with PrEP discontinuation were analyzed using logistic regression models.

Substance use and knowledge of PEP related to low persistence on PrEP among female sex workers.

## CONCLUSIONS

- **Persistence on PrEP was low among females sex workers. Substance use and previous knowledge of PEP were associated with PrEP discontinuation.**
- **Further research to improve PrEP persistence among females sex workers, with a gender-focus-approach, as part of a comprehensive HIV prevention package is warranted.**



## RESULTS

From June 2023–March 2024, 200 FSWs were included: **101 CGW** and **99 TGW**

- **30 (34,4%) TGW** and **2 (3%) CGW** had known HIV diagnosis.
- **4 TGW** and **1 CGW** learned about their HIV diagnosis at baseline.
- Of the 163 without HIV, **19** were **already** on **PrEP** at baseline, **16 TGW** and **3 CGW**.

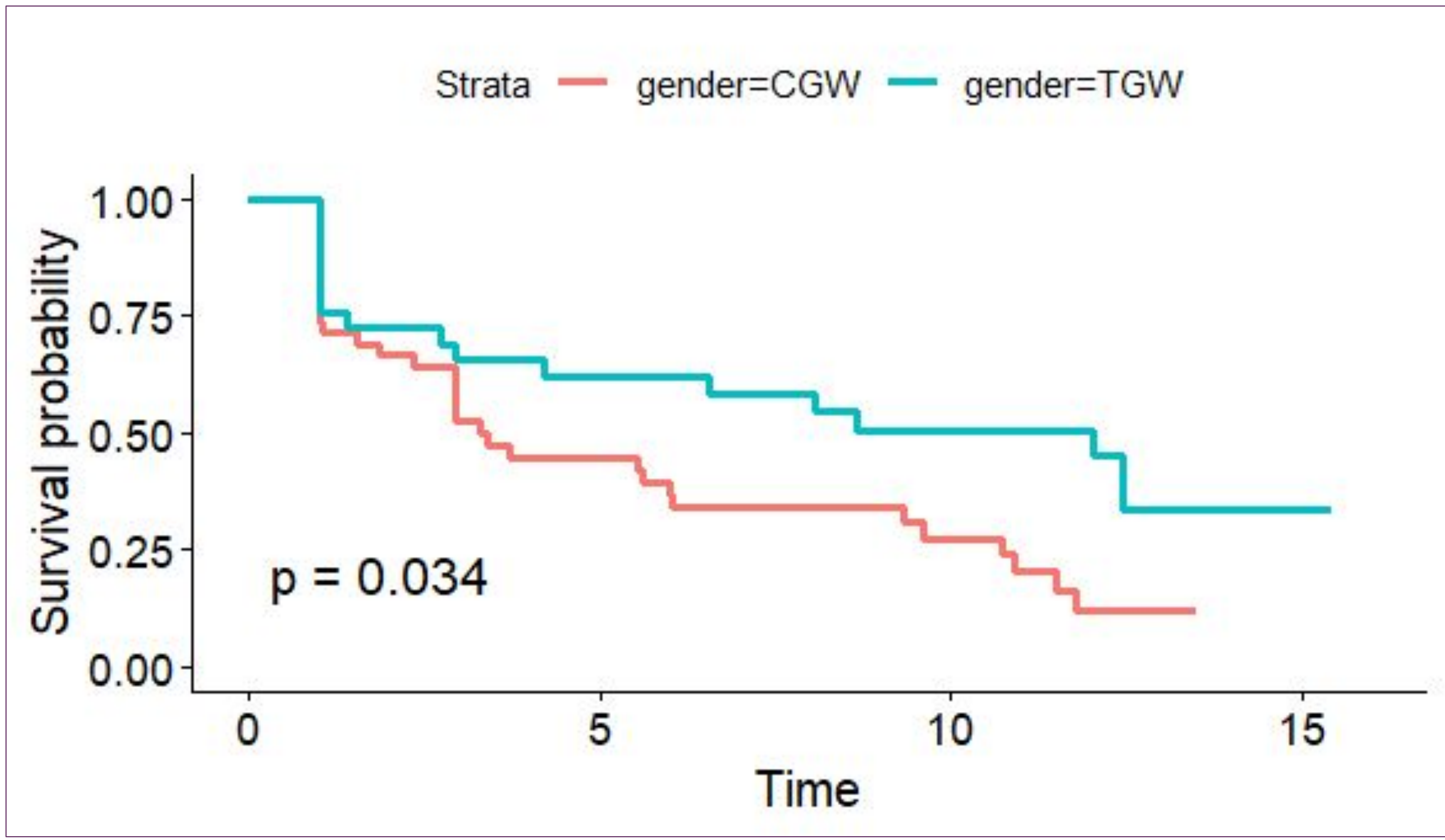


Table 1: Characteristics of participants initiating PrEP

	CGW n=42	TGW n=29	p
Age (years; median-IQR)	38 (34–47)	26 (24–36)	<0.001
History of STIs n (%)	7 (20%)	16 (57%)	0.002
Substance use in the previous year n (%)	20(57%)	20(83%)	0.034
PEP knowledge n (%)	12 (29%)	4 (14%)	0.2
PEP use n (%)	3 (7,1%)	1 (3,4%)	0.6
PrEP knowledge n (%)	9 (21%)	15 (52%)	0.011
PrEP use n (%)	2 (4,8%)	1 (3,4%)	>0.9

**Figure 1: PrEP persistence curve according to gender**  
The **median follow-up time** was 4.3 months (IQR:1–10.5). **Among the 71 FSWs who initiated PrEP, 22 (31%) persisted.**  
**Bivariate analysis: CGW had higher risk of PrEP discontinuation than TGW [OR: 0.97 (0.77–1.22), p=0.04].**

Variable		N	Estimate	p
gender	CGW	28	Reference	
	TGW	22	-0.00 (-0.32, 0.32)	0.99
Age		50	0.02 (-0.00, 0.03)	0.06
Substance use	No	16	Reference	
	Yes	34	0.47 (0.11, 0.82)	0.01
Residency	Buenos Aires City	34	Reference	
	Suburbs of Buenos Aires City	16	0.04 (-0.25, 0.32)	0.81
Born in Argentina	No	15	Reference	
	Yes	35	-0.14 (-0.42, 0.15)	0.36
Education level	High school or higher	27	Reference	
	Lower than high school	23	-0.12 (-0.38, 0.13)	0.35
STIs	No	32	Reference	
	Yes	18	-0.11 (-0.41, 0.18)	0.45
Knowledge on PEP	No	40	Reference	
	Yes	10	0.40 (0.06, 0.74)	0.03
Knowledge on PrEP	No	31	Reference	
	Yes	19	-0.12 (-0.42, 0.17)	0.43

**Table 2: Multivariate analysis:** The probability of **PrEP discontinuation** was **higher** among those who **used substances** [OR: 1.59 (1.12–2.27), p=0.01] and those who **knew about PEP** [OR:1.49 (1.06–2.10), p=0.03].

Funding: IDRC Woman Rise Project 110045–01.



**Join our scientific community.**  
Scan the QR and fill in your data to receive information about our studies.



Contact: [maria.iannantuono@huesped.org.ar](mailto:maria.iannantuono@huesped.org.ar)  
[www.huesped.org.ar](http://www.huesped.org.ar)