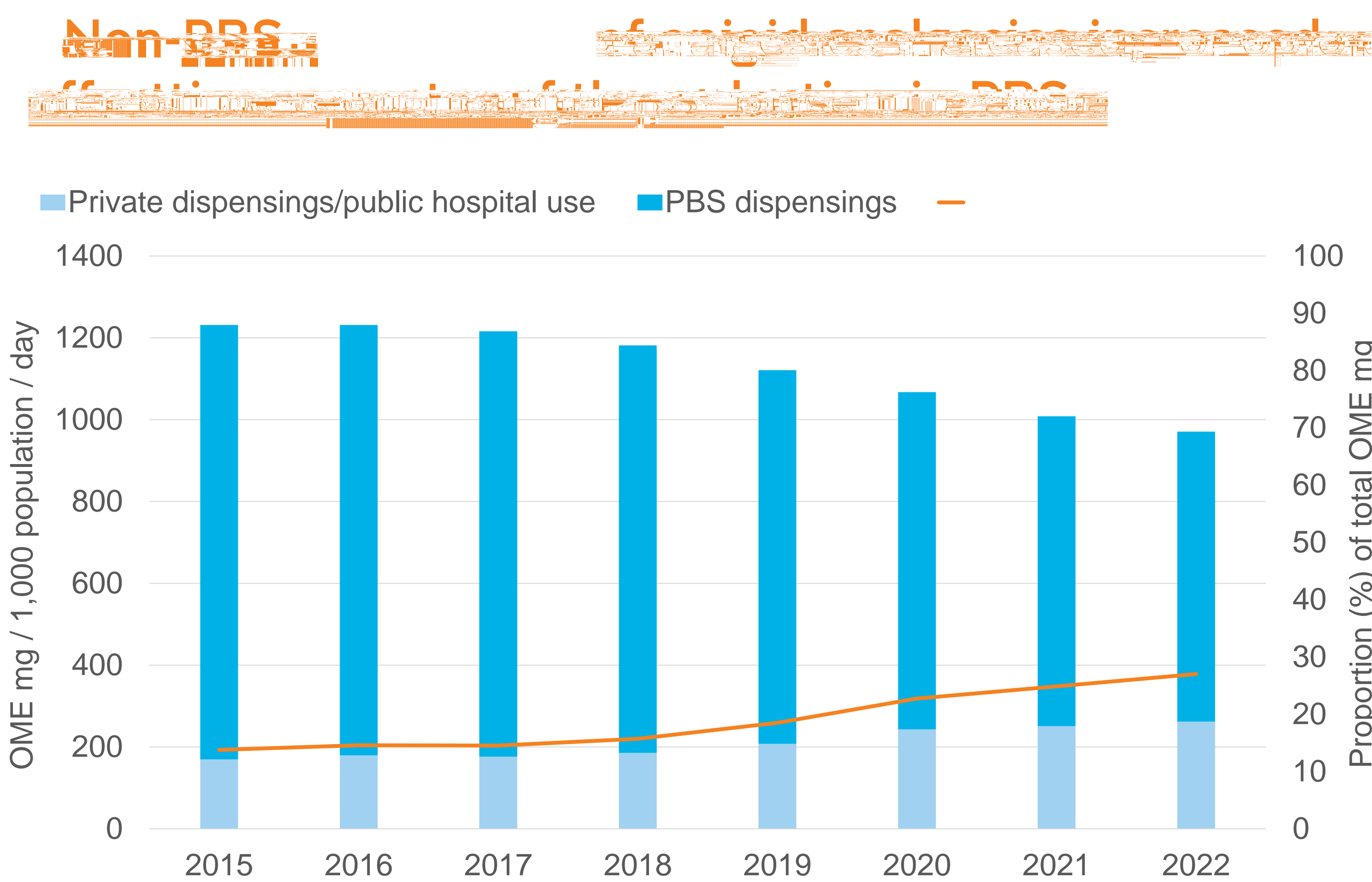


Background: Recent measures to curb use and harms of pharmaceutical opioids in Australia have reduced dispensings

information on trends in private (self-funded) dispensings and public hospital opioid use is not readily available.

We describe eight-year population-level trends in Australia's prescribed opioid analgesic use, estimating PBS dispensing claims, private dispensings and hospital use.



Implications:

Ø Our findings indicate a substantial increase in private use, particularly of immediate release formulations, reasons for which may include accessing opioids not PBS-subsidised and circumventing PBS restrictions for PBS-subsidised opioids.