

Heroin trends in UK/England

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Available data

- Population surveys
- Prevalence studies
- Treatment data

Population surveys

- Consistent reports of 0.1% use of heroin
- No discernable trend
- Not considered robust data in relation to opiates (more reliable for drugs such as cannabis)

National prevalence estimates

- Based on capture/recapture methods
- Use treatment and criminal justice datasets
- Only available for 'opiates', not heroin (heroin is majority of opiate use)
- Limited number of years
- Show significant decrease in opiate prevalence between 2006/07 (273,123) and 2008/09 (262,428)

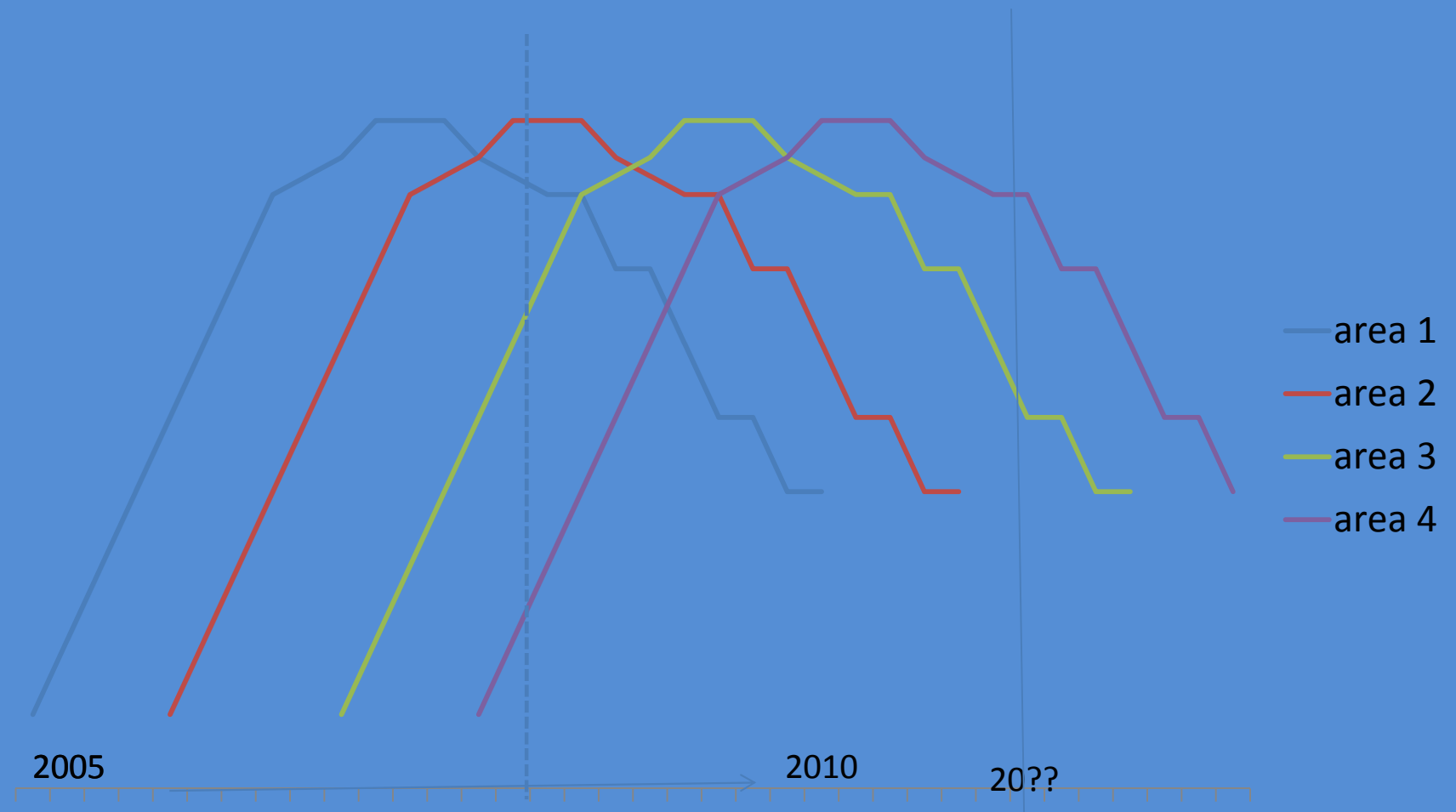
Prevalence by area and age

- Not same for all regions – 2 down, 2 up, 5 non-significant change
- Could reflect same trends in use but starting at different times
- Not same for all age groups
 - 15 to 24 yrs, sig decrease
 - 25 to 34 yrs, sig decrease
 - 35 to 64 yrs, sig increase

Prevalence patterns

- Pattern of use of opiates different in different parts of the country
- Decrease in areas where it first became common, still increasing in others
- Ageing population?
- Yes, but not in all parts of the country

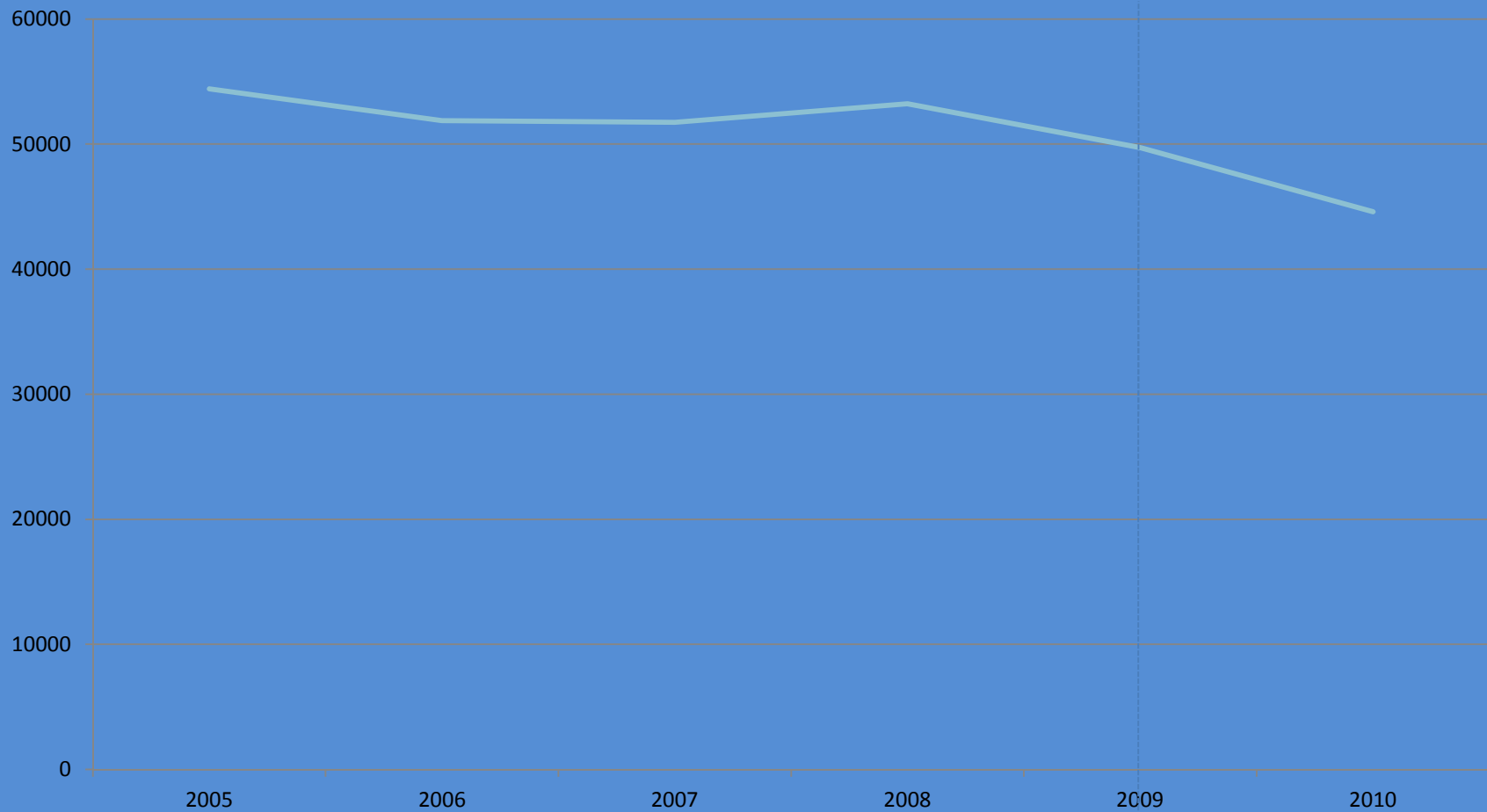
Single point of measurement/different patterns of use



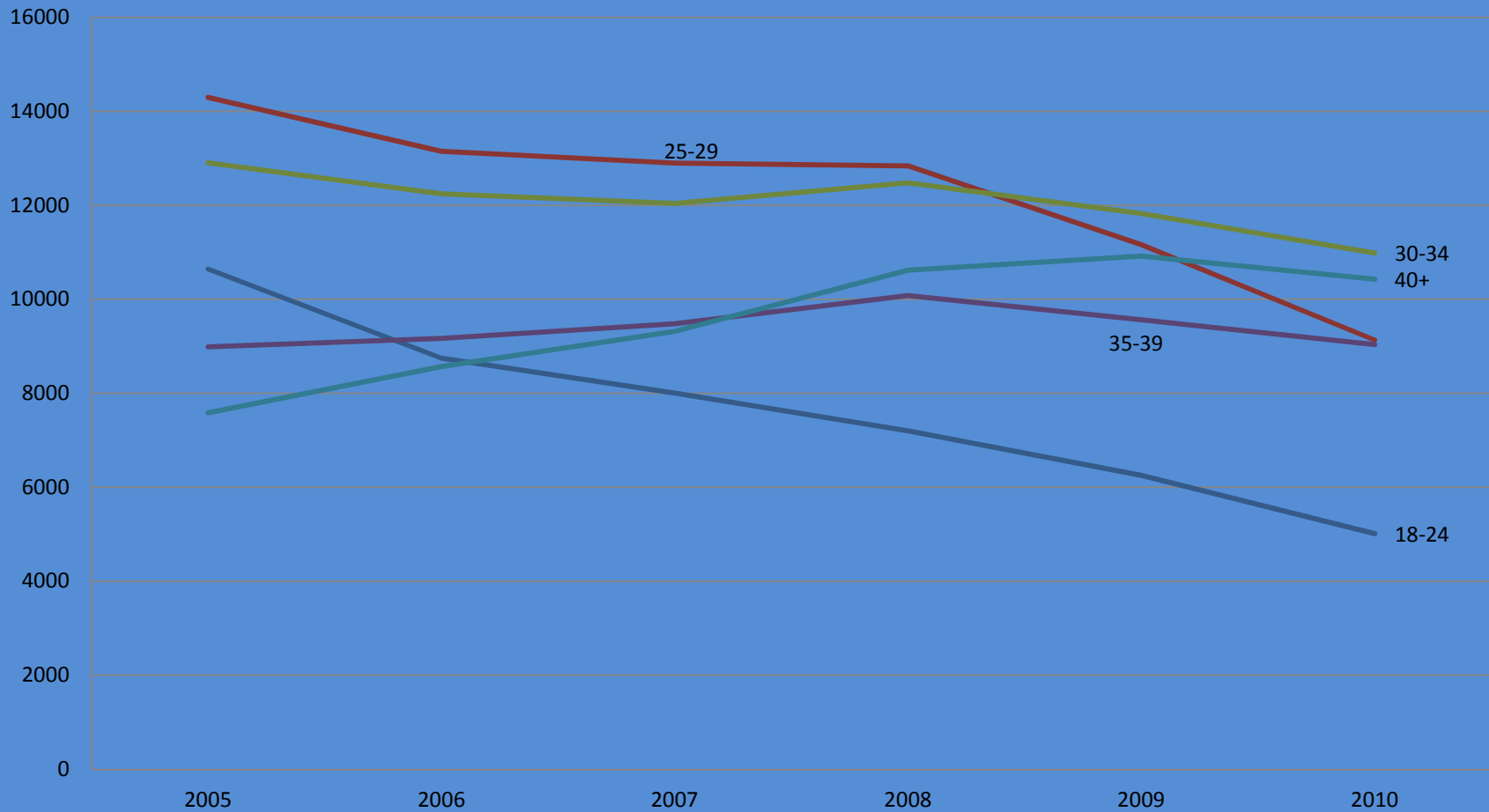
Treatment data

- Source – NDTMS (National Drug Treatment Monitoring System), England

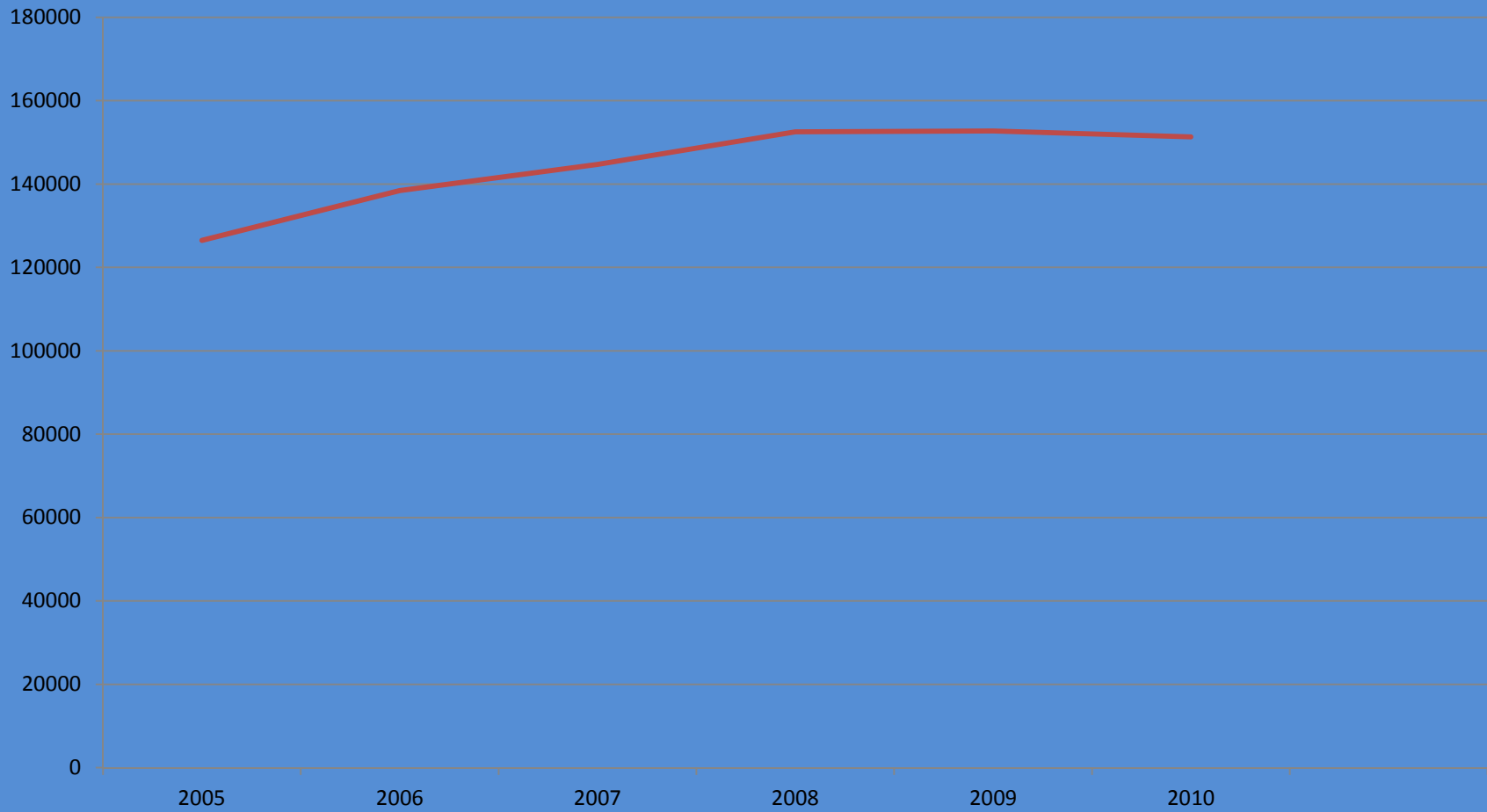
Heroin use – new presentations



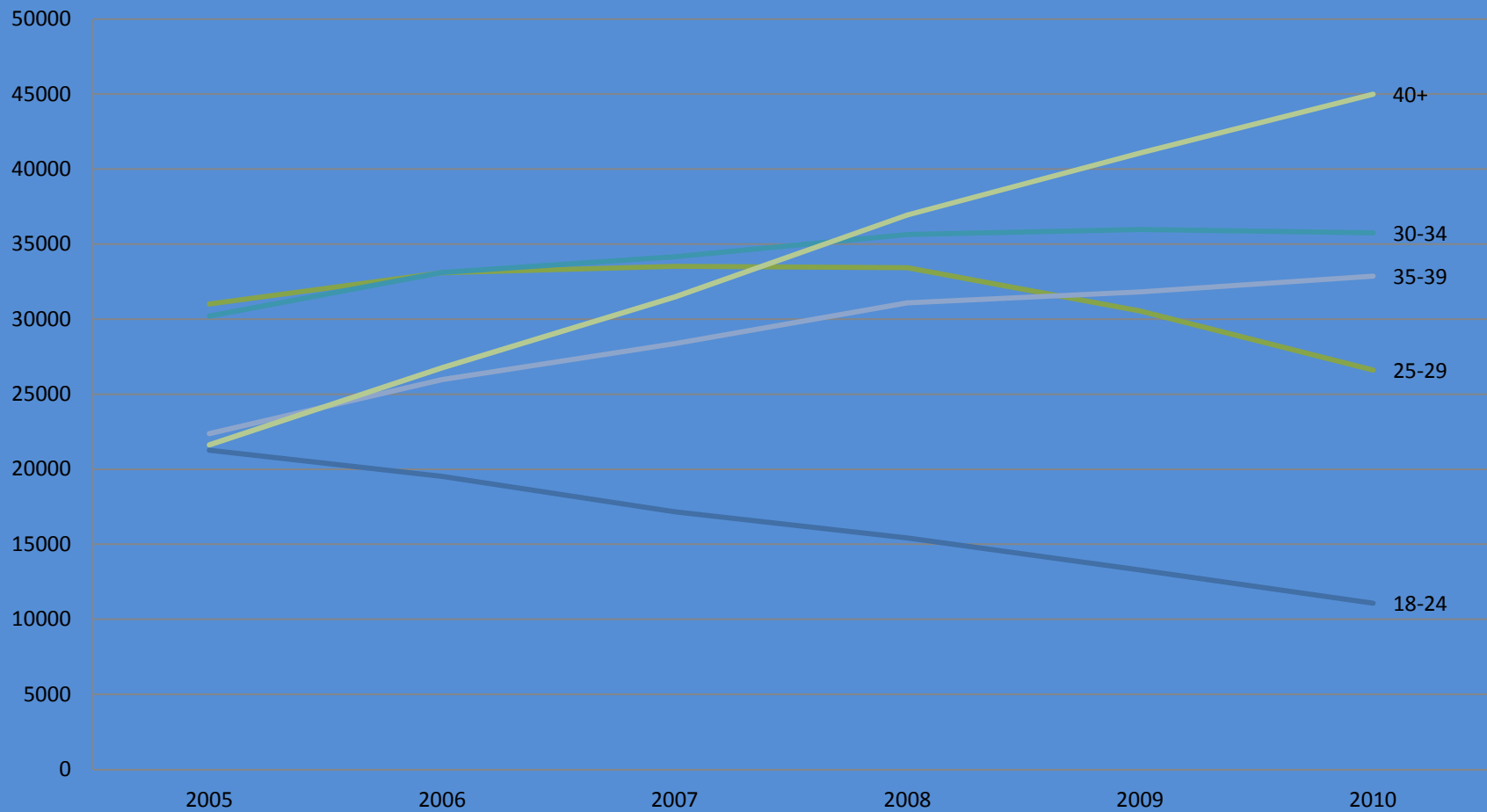
New presentations by age



All treated



All treated by age group



Conclusion

- Number of new cases presenting to treatment is falling
- Total number in treatment starting to fall
- Ageing population keeps treatment figures high but decrease in younger age groups is considerable
- Latest unpublished figures show continuation of all presented trends
- Prevalence estimates reflect treatment figures
- Prevalence may continue to drop significantly if areas with newer populations of users show pattern of ageing
- Can't be complacent – may start to see new set of users (changes in prevalence may be cyclical not linear)