UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL
INYUVESI YAKWAZULU-NATALI

NATIONAL HEALTH LABORATORY SERVICE

# HIV viral load data from KwaZulu-Natal: Jan 2025-Aug 2026

**Lilishia Gounder, MD, PhD**
(Clinical Virologist)

AWACC
28th – 30th October 2026

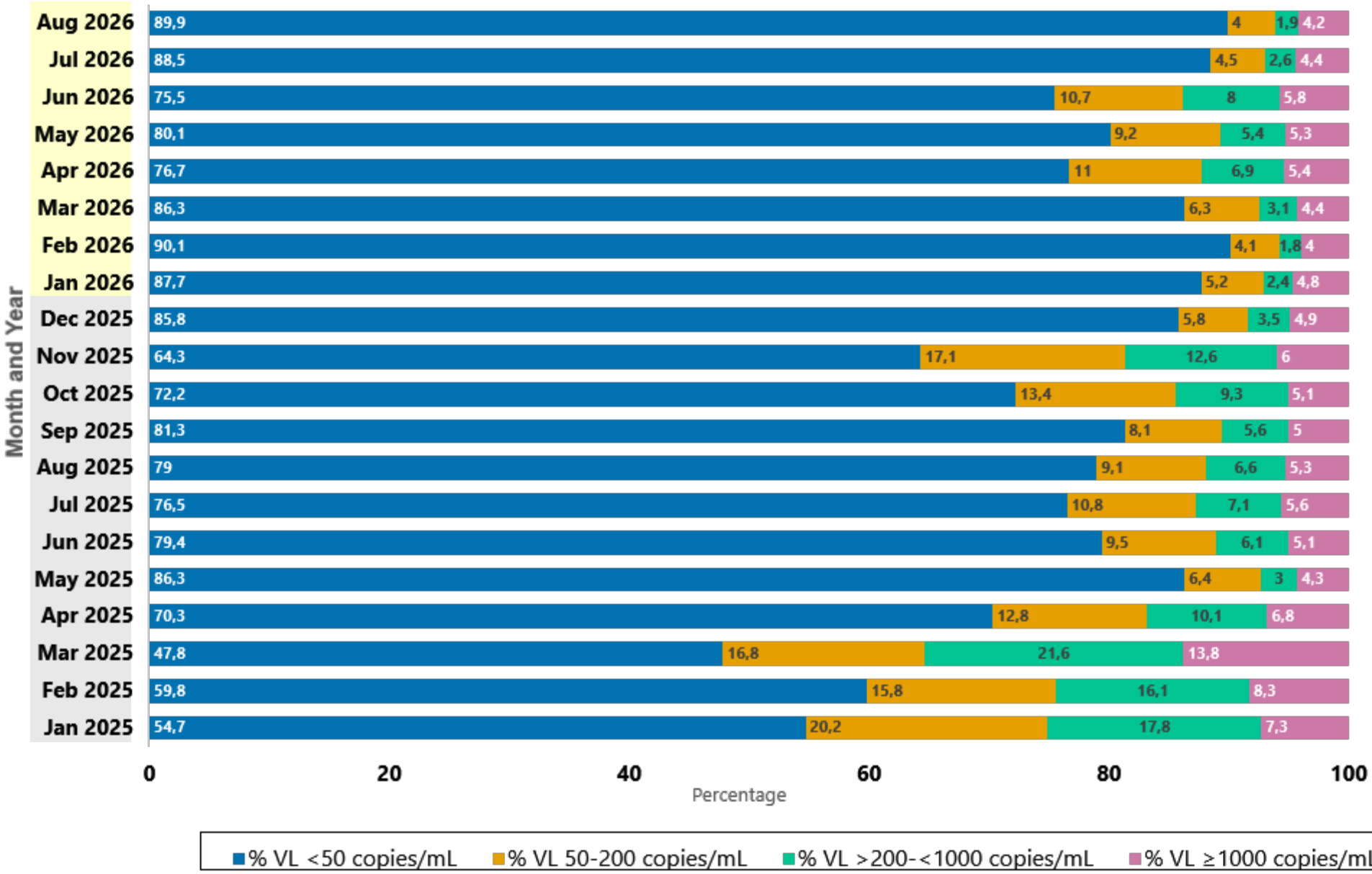
NATIONAL HEALTH LABORATORY SERVICE

## VL labs in KZN:

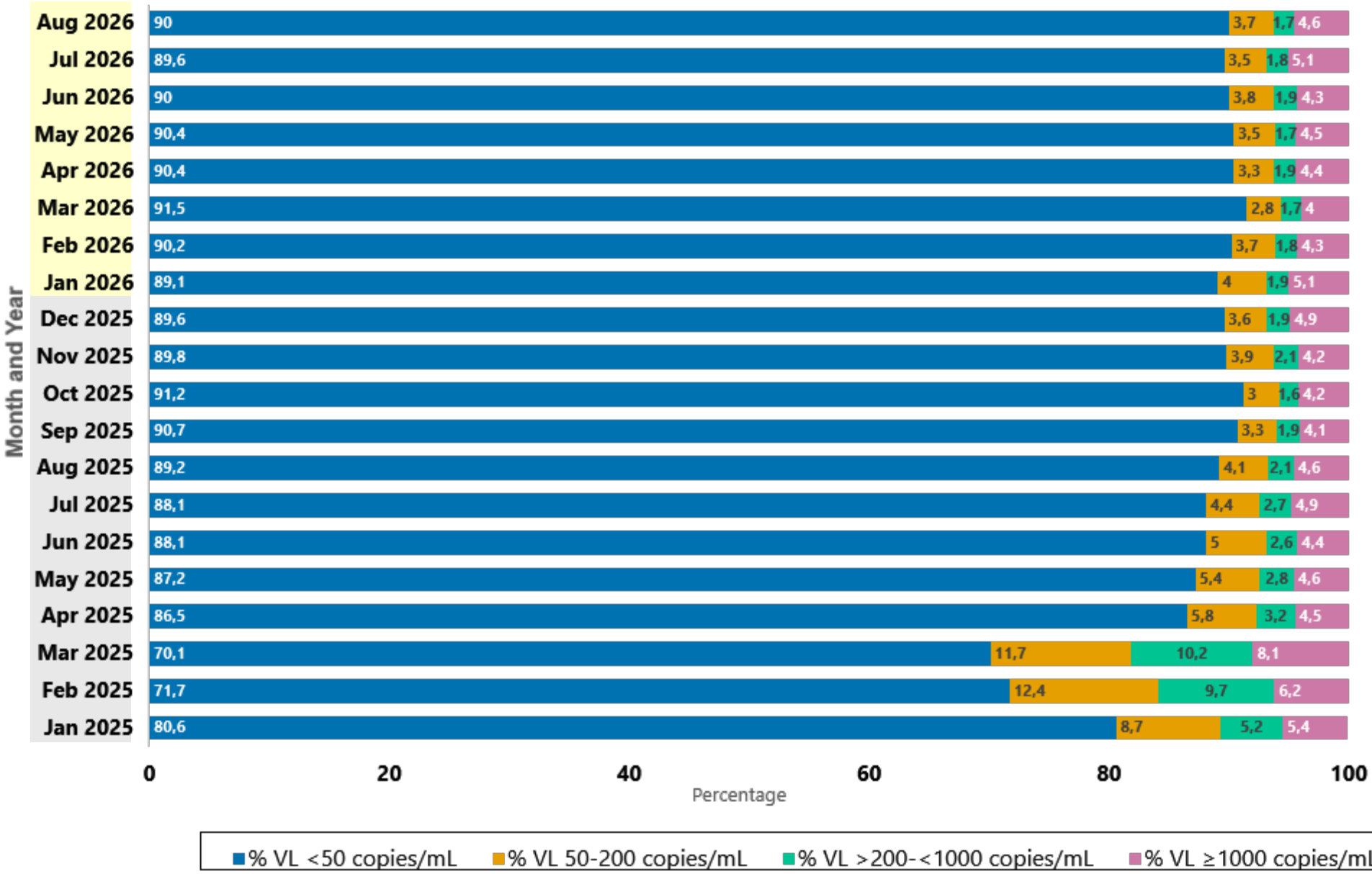
1. Madadeni
2. Hlabisa
3. Ngwelezane
4. Harry Gwala
5. Addington
6. IALCH
7. Port Shepstone



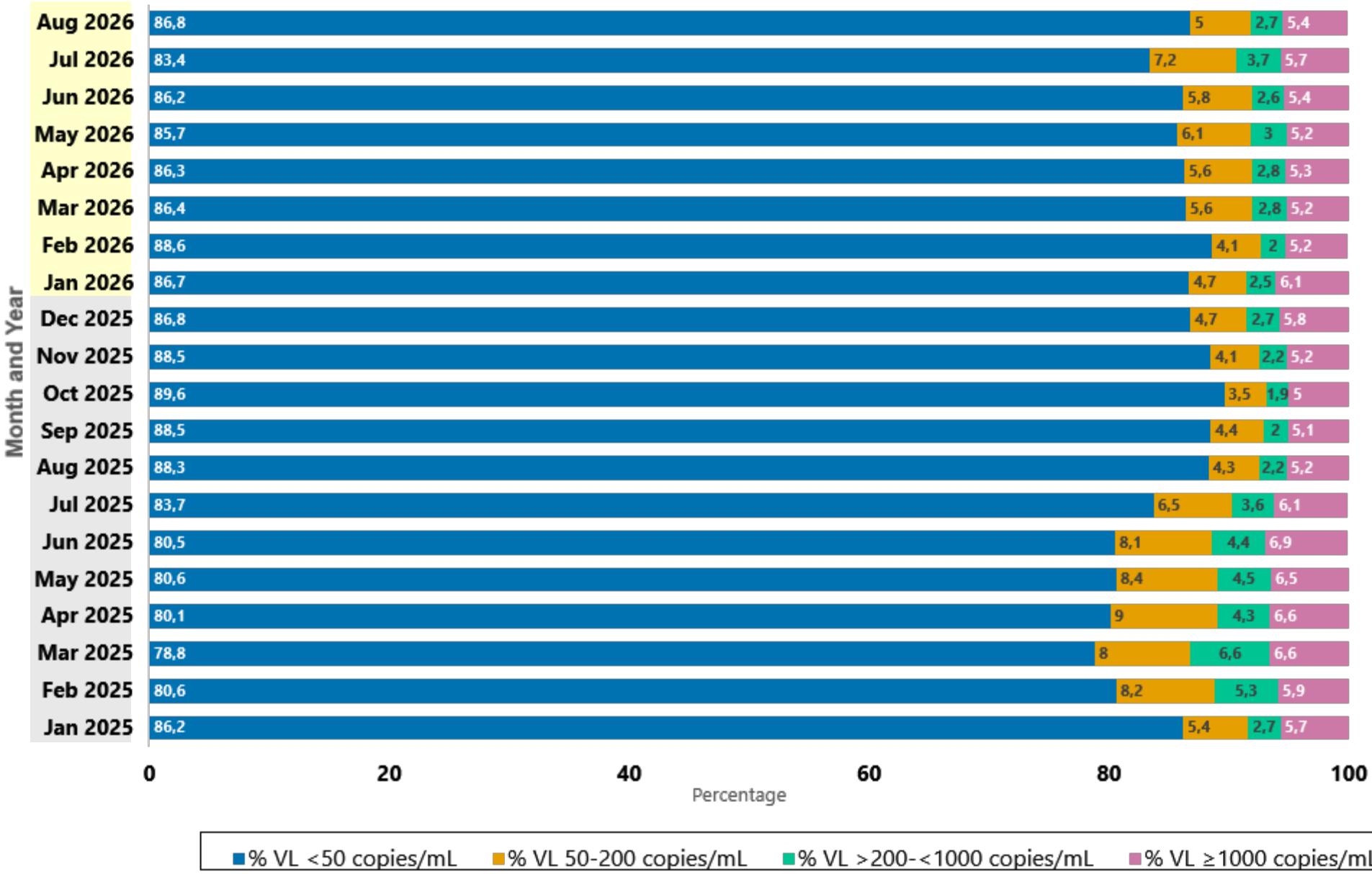
# Proportions of HIV VLs - Jan 2025 to Aug 2026: Madadeni Laboratory (n = 357 529)



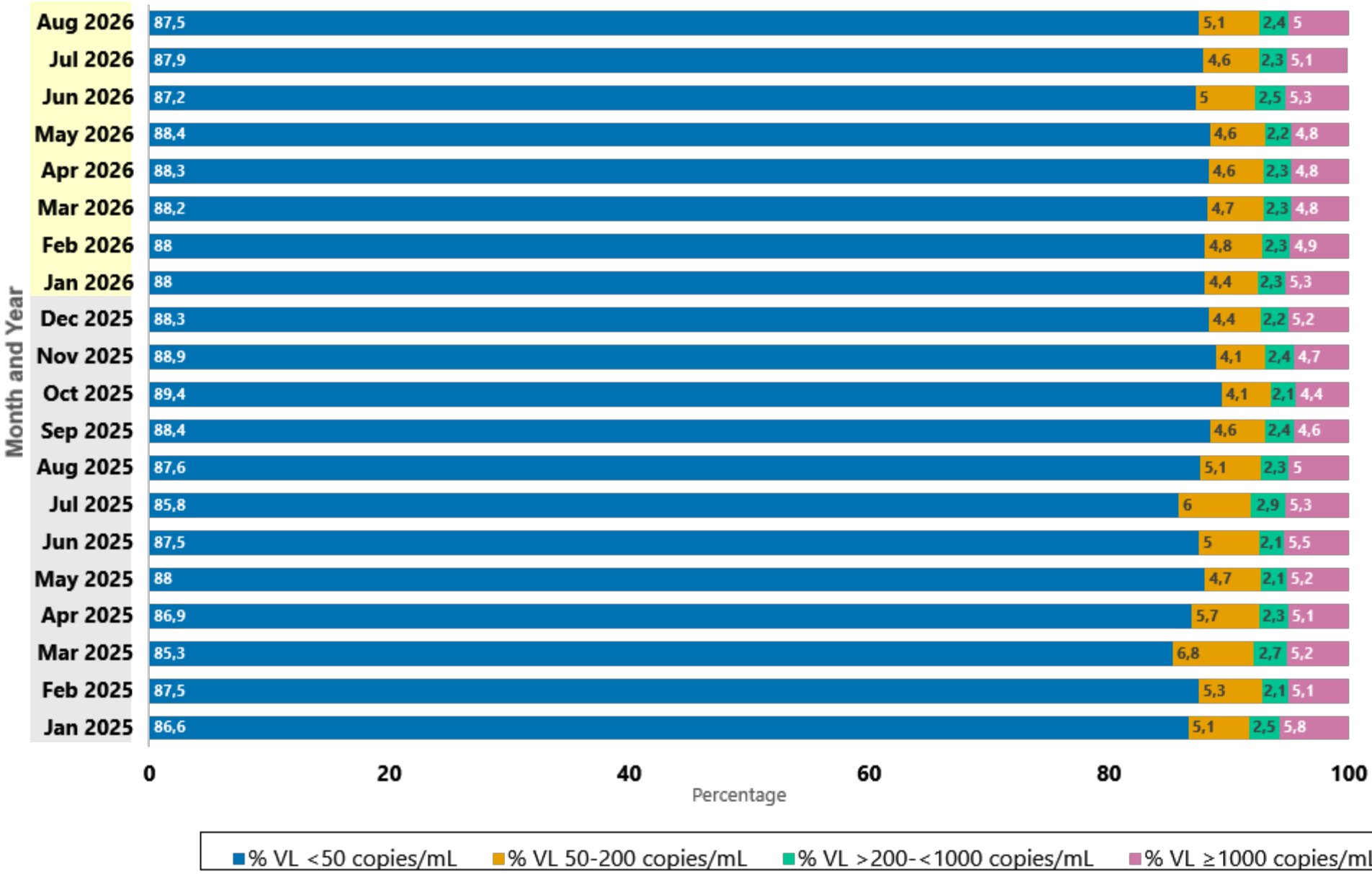
# Proportions of HIV VLs - Jan 2025 to Aug 2026: Hlabisa Laboratory (n = 341 915)



# Proportions of HIV VLs - Jan 2025 to Aug 2026: Ngwelezane Laboratory (n = 486 349)

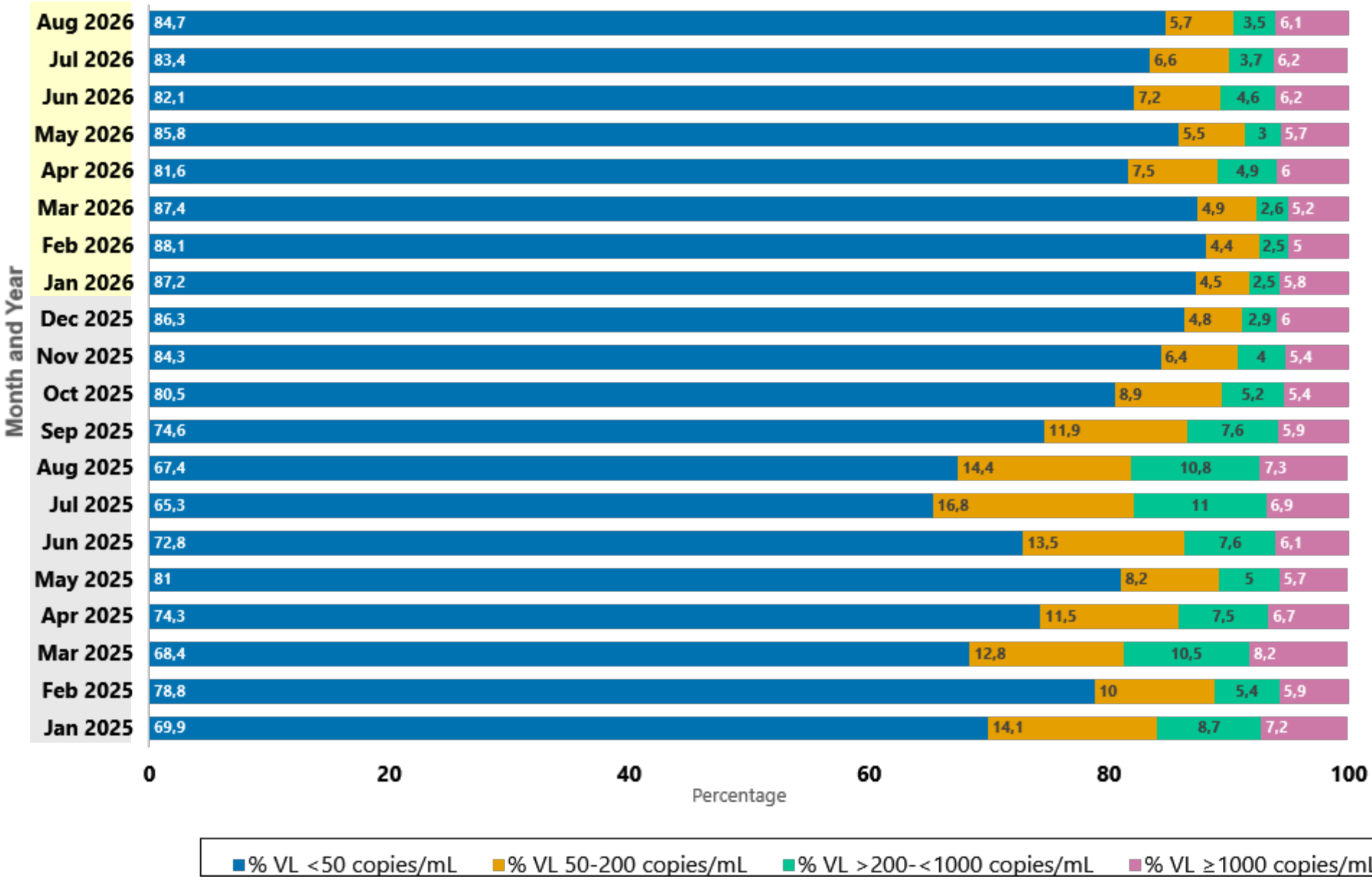


# Proportions of HIV VLs - Jan 2025 to Aug 2026: Harry Gwala Laboratory (n = 718 001)



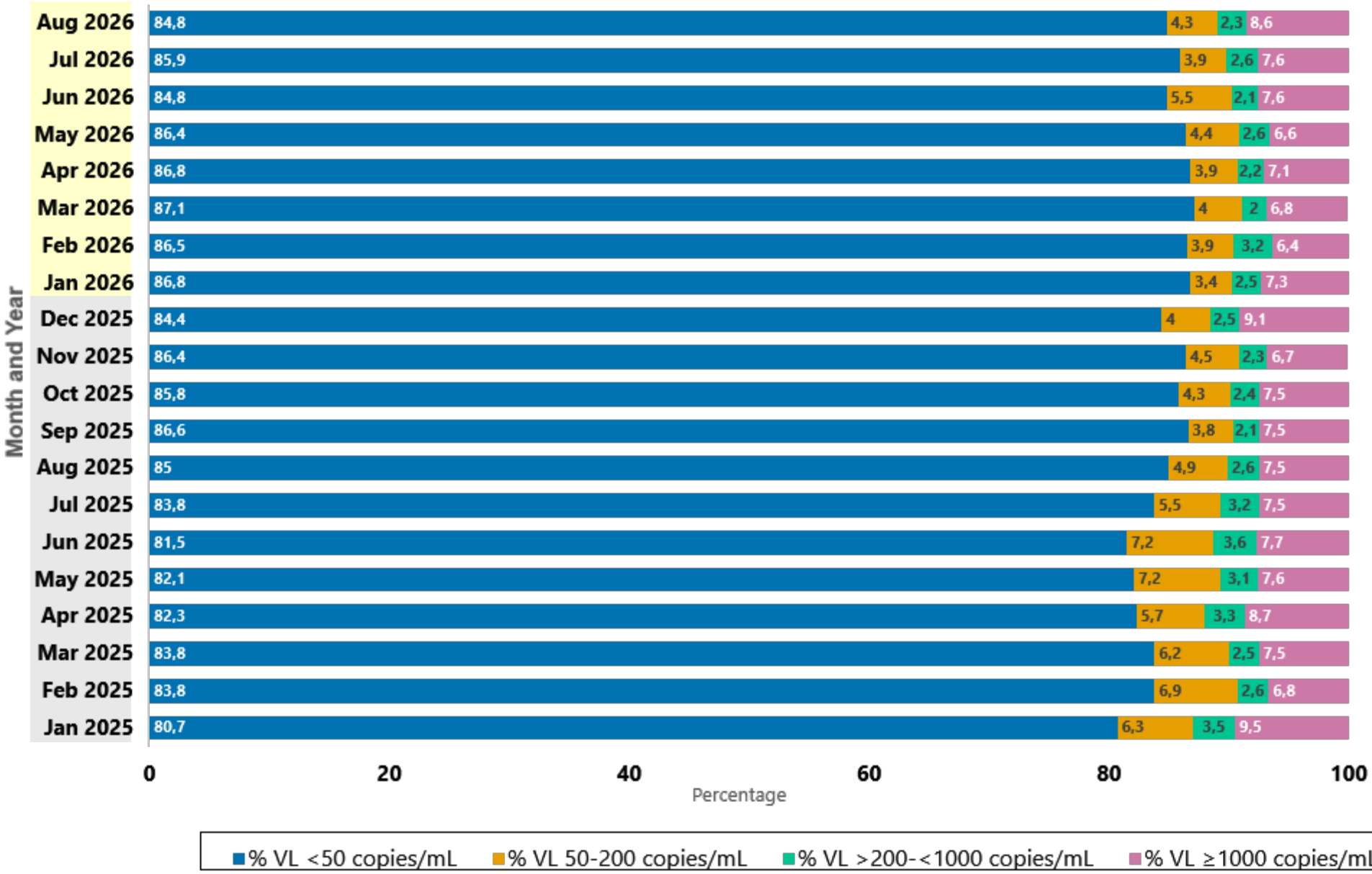
NATIONAL HEALTH LABORATORY SERVICE

# Proportions of HIV VLs - Jan 2025 to Aug 2026: Addington Laboratory (n = 956 213)

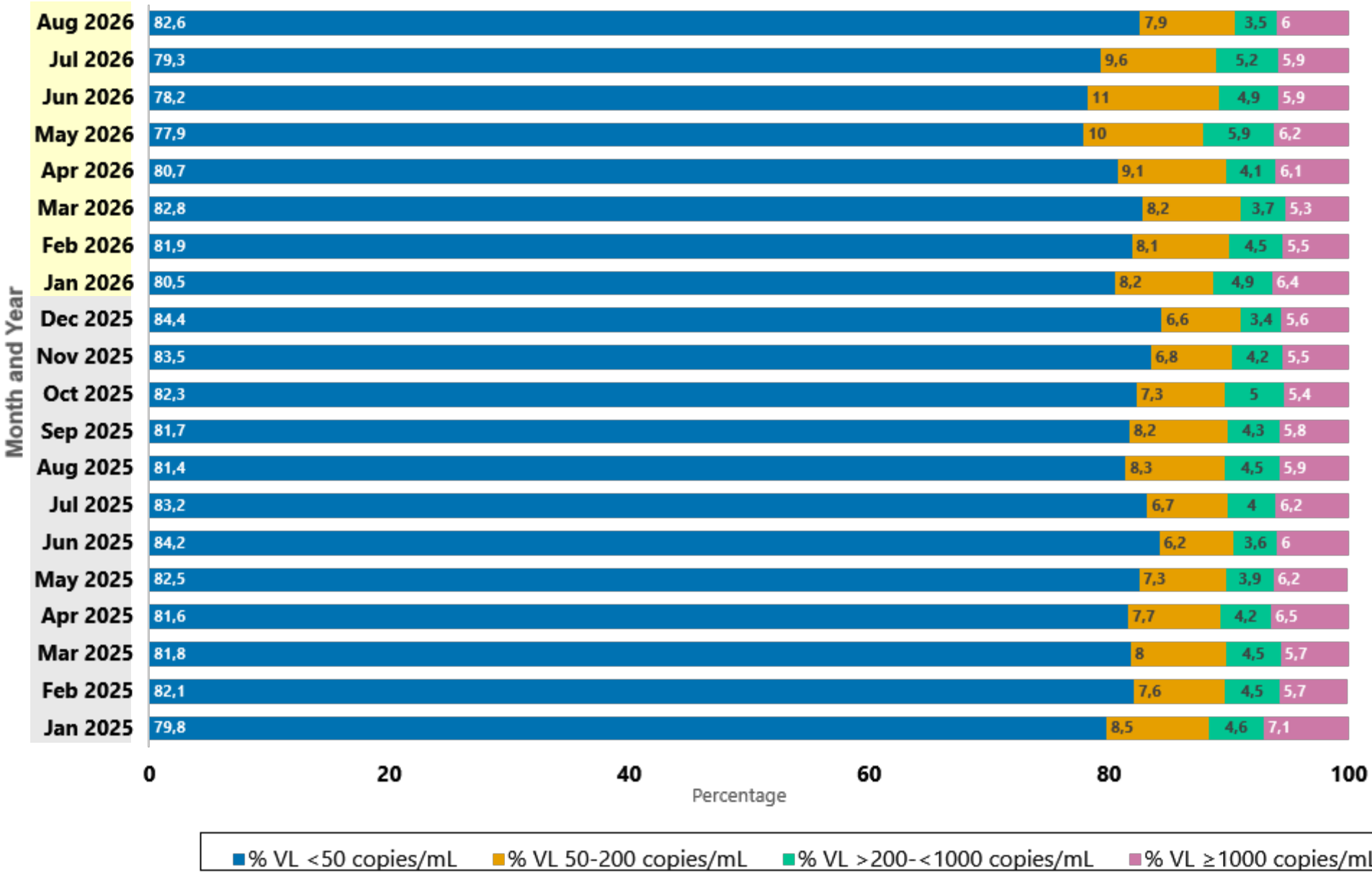


NATIONAL HEALTH LABORATORY SERVICE

# Proportions of HIV VLs - Jan 2025 to Aug 2026: IALCH Laboratory (n = 71 712)

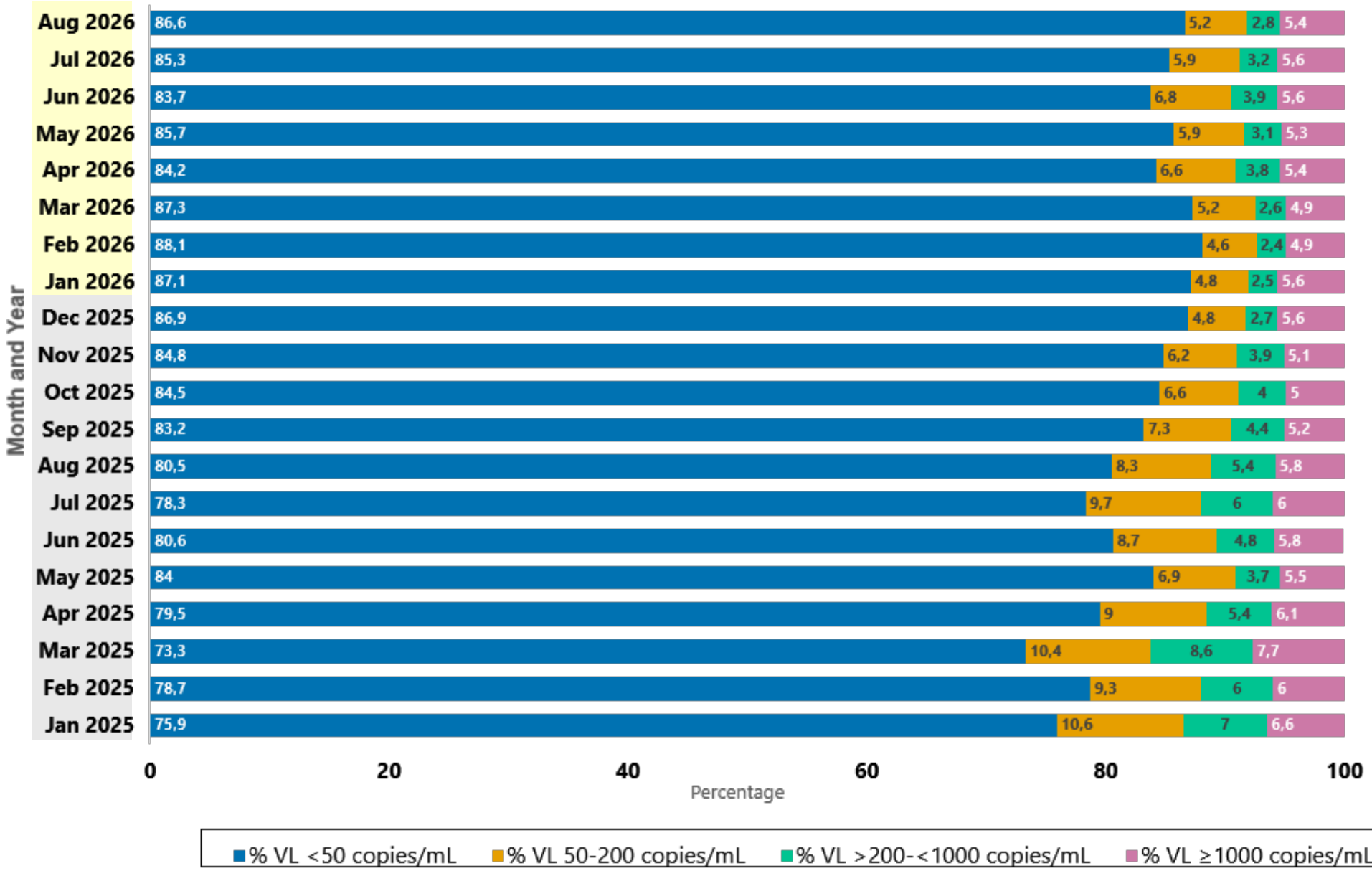


# Proportions of HIV VLs - Jan 2025 to Aug 2026: Port Shepstone Laboratory (n = 238 229)



NATIONAL HEALTH LABORATORY SERVICE

# Proportions of HIV VLs - Jan 2025 to Aug 2026: KZN Province (n = 3 169 948)



NATIONAL HEALTH LABORATORY SERVICE

# Cumulative Data Trends for KZN

| VL Lab | Year | % <50 | % 50-200 | % 201-999 | % ≥ 1000 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| All KZN | 2025 | 80.689 | 8.220 | 5.212 | 5.879 |
| All KZN | 2026 | ↑ 86.046 | ↓ 5.597 | ↓ 3.017 | ↓ 5.340 |
| Madadeni | 2025 | 71.147 | 12.234 | 10.095 | 6.524 |
| Madadeni | 2026 | ↑ 84.467 | ↓ 6.826 | ↓ 3.946 | ↓ 4.761 |
| Hlabisa | 2025 | 85.2 | 5.949 | 3.841 | 5.009 |
| Hlabisa | 2026 | ↑ 90.124 | ↓ 3.54 | ↓ 1.793 | ↓ 4.543 |
| Ngwelezane | 2025 | 84.27 | 6.257 | 3.577 | 5.896 |
| Ngwelezane | 2026 | ↑ 86.237 | ↓ 5.541 | ↓ 2.795 | ↓ 5.427 |
| Harry Gwala | 2025 | 87.496 | 5.096 | 2.344 | 5.064 |
| Harry Gwala | 2026 | ↑ 87.959 | ↓ 4.727 | ↓ 2.324 | ↓ 4.99 |
| Addington | 2025 | 75.269 | 11.175 | 7.186 | 6.37 |
| Addington | 2026 | ↑ 85.156 | ↓ 5.724 | ↓ 3.361 | ↓ 5.759 |
| Inkosi Albert Luthuli (IALCH) | 2025 | 83.662 | 5.75 | 2.848 | 7.74 |
| Inkosi Albert Luthuli (IALCH) | 2026 | ↑ 86.189 | ↓ 4.135 | ↓ 2.463 | ↓ 7.213 |
| Port Shepstone | 2025 | 82.299 | 7.468 | 4.256 | 5.977 |
| Port Shepstone | 2026 | ↓ 80.438 | ↑ 9.044 | ↑ 4.606 | ↓ 5.912 |

# The “T”s that KZN labs have implemented to improve VL quality:

1. Tubes
2. Transport
3. Timing of Testing
4. Tool

Standardised PPT tubes.
Kept upright and on ice from time of specimen collection.

Transported same day to nearest VL lab for testing.

Centrifuged at lab & loaded within 30 min of spinning.
Closed-system analyser.
Standardised protocols.

After processing, batches checked using result monitoring tool. Results only released if all controls passed and % for <50, 50-200, 201-999 and ≥1000 are within expected ranges.

# Month-on-month comparison of VL testing patterns: Jan-Aug 2025 to Jan-Aug 2026

| | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2025 | 171381 | 169179 | 166880 | 153088 | 179921 | 151339 | 169561 | 163847 | 1325196 |
| 2026 | 164480 | 160386 | 154993 | 146013 | 163132 | 139044 | 165827 | 148418 | 1242293 |
| Δ | 6901 | 8793 | 11887 | 7075 | 16789 | 12295 | 3734 | 15429 | 82903 |
| Δ % | 0.52% | 0.66% | 0.9% | 0.53% | 1.27% | 0.93% | 0.28% | 1.16% | 6.26% |

- VL testing decreased by 82 903 tests (6.26%) during Jan-Aug 2026 compared with Jan-Aug 2025
- Same ↓ pattern noted in the individual VL labs except for Port Shepstone: testing ↑ during Jan-Aug 2026 compared with Jan-Aug 2025

# Conclusion

- Overall increase in VL suppression rates in 2026 with a reduction in low-level viraemia

- Overall decrease in the number of VL test requests when comparing month-on-month for 2025 & 2026

# Acknowledgements

- National Priority Programme (NPP) & NHLS

  Central Data Warehouse for individual lab VL data

- Department of Virology, IALCH Academic Complex

- All KZN VL testing labs

HIVVL result reports can be set up per facility – contact HIV@nicd.ac.za
Designated healthcare worker will need to first subscribe – application via NICD self-service portal (www.nicd.ac.za; click on M&E Dashboard)