



School leavers with disability: understanding the capacity to work

Professor Kathy Eagar

Australian Health Services Research Institute (AHSRI)

Live Work and Play: NSW the State of Inclusion

18 May 2017, Darling Harbour

- ◆ 2002 - "ATLAS consumers and their prospects"
- ◆ 2003 – 1st assessments undertaken by transition teachers
- ◆ 2006 - ATLAS becomes Post School Programs (PSP)
 - Transition to Work (TTW) and Community Participation (CP)
- ◆ 2006-2016 – approx. 15,000 PSP participants in NSW
- ◆ 2016 – NDIA begins testing PSP assessment tool in ACT, Tasmania and Victoria
- ◆ 2017 – last year of PSP assessments by transition teachers

- ◆ ADHC commissioned the Commonwealth Rehabilitation Service (CRS) in 2002 to assess post-school leavers who were already in, or applying to join, what was then the NSW ATLAS program.
- ◆ Schools (Transition Teachers) completed a 9 item Functional Screen on each 2002 school leaver.
- ◆ We compared the results achieved by teachers (short functional screen) and by CRS (full comprehensive assessment, including function).

Four ATLAS cohorts in the original study

- ◆ 608 young people who were leaving school at the end of 2002
 - Screening data by school
 - Assessment data by CRS
- ◆ 486 who left school in 2001
- ◆ 215 who left school in 2000 and
- ◆ 264 who left school in 1999

The CRS assessment

- ◆ Age
- ◆ Sex
- ◆ Disabilities
- ◆ Goal
- ◆ Strengths (5)
- ◆ Barriers to economic and social participation (5)
- ◆ Current capacity to work
- ◆ Future capacity to work, self-care
- ◆ Recommended interventions (20)
- ◆ Recommended type of assistance
- ◆ Type of suitable work
- ◆ Self-care functioning
- ◆ Domestic functioning
- ◆ Behavioural functioning

Some research questions

- ◆ Which measures of the person and their needs
 - ◆ e.g. age, sex, disability, strengths, barriers, self care functioning, domestic functioning, behavioural functioning
- ◆ Best predict
 - ◆ the person's current and future capacity for work and/or
 - ◆ the type of assistance that the person needs?
- ◆ How do the results achieved with a short functional screen (undertaken by teachers) compare with the results of a full functional assessment (by the CRS)?



And now a bit of a diversion...

Functional dependency

Functional Dependency

A measure of functional dependency is:

- ◆ an instrument that identifies areas in which a person requires assistance with daily living, and
- ◆ that quantifies the extent to which that person needs support from others to help them carry out normal activities in their home and community.

The screening data set completed by teachers

- ◆ A 9 item functional screen originally developed for use in the community care sector
- ◆ Does not attempt to capture all aspects of function or the most important. Rather, the 9 items in the screen are the best predictors of how well a person is functioning in other aspects of their life
- ◆ Question was whether this could be used with ATLAS consumers

Functional Screen (Overview)

- ◆ 4 domains measured through 9 questions:
 - ◆ Domestic functioning - 3 questions (housework, travelling to places and shopping) to screen for domestic function & 2 questions (handling money and taking medication) that also act as a screen for cognitive or behavioural problems
 - ◆ Self-care functioning - 2 questions (walking, bathing)
 - ◆ Challenging behaviour - 1 question
 - ◆ Cognitive functioning - 1 question



Some results

From the original study and since then

Predicting future capacity to work

	Correlation
Domestic assessment total score	0.67
Domestic items in the screen (questions 1-5)	0.61
Total screen score	0.58
Self care items in the screen (questions 6-7)	0.42
Self care assessment total score	0.39
Behaviour assessment total score	0.37
Behaviour item in the screen	0.25
Disability type	0.10
Gender	0.06
Age	-0.14
Number of disabilities	-0.36

The initial research questions

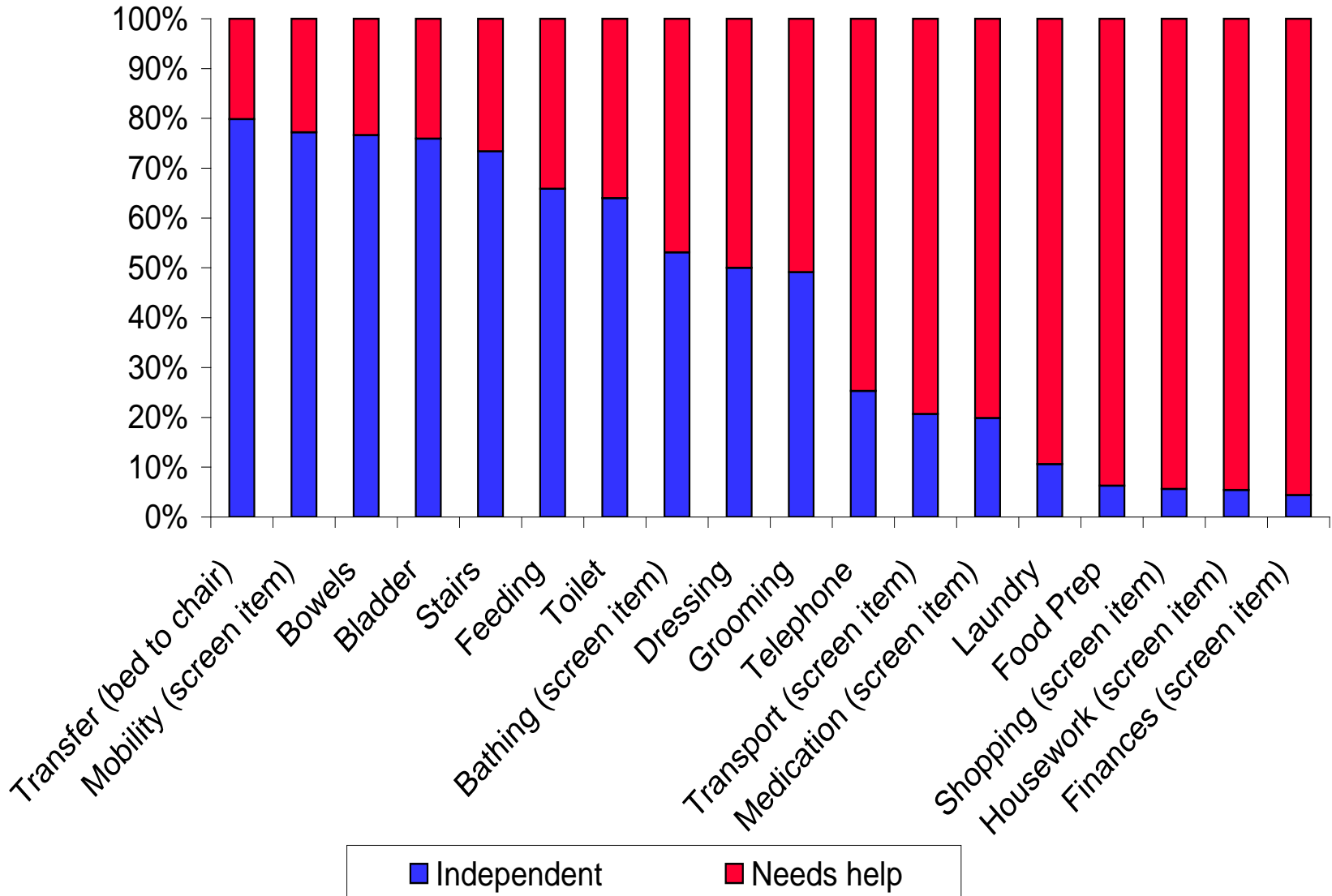
- ◆ Which measures of the person and their needs
 - ◆ e.g. age, sex, disability, strengths, barriers, self care functioning, domestic functioning, behavioural functioning
- ◆ Best predict:
 - ◆ the person's current and future capacity for work and/or
 - ◆ the interventions and type of assistance that the person needs?
- ◆ How do the results achieved with a short functional screen (undertaken by schools) compare with the results of a full functional assessment (by the CRS)?

Correlation = 0.83

The initial research questions

- ◆ Do young people in the program acquire functional abilities in a fairly predictable order?
Yes, coefficient of reproducibility = 0.97
- ◆ If so, what is the hierarchy of functional acquisition for consumers in the program?
- ◆ Is the hierarchy of acquisition predictable enough to support screening? **Yes**

The hierarchy of functional acquisition



Functioning and no. of disabilities

shows a pattern going in the expected directions

- ◆ Those with 1 disability:
 - 7% had low self-care ability
 - 22% had low domestic ability
 - 14% had major behavioural problem
- ◆ Those with 2 disabilities:
 - 10% had low self care ability
 - 39% low domestic ability
 - 21% had major behavioural problem
- ◆ Those with 3 disabilities:
 - 30% had low self-care ability
 - 63% had low domestic ability
 - 31% had major behavioural problem

The measurement of 'need' - 1

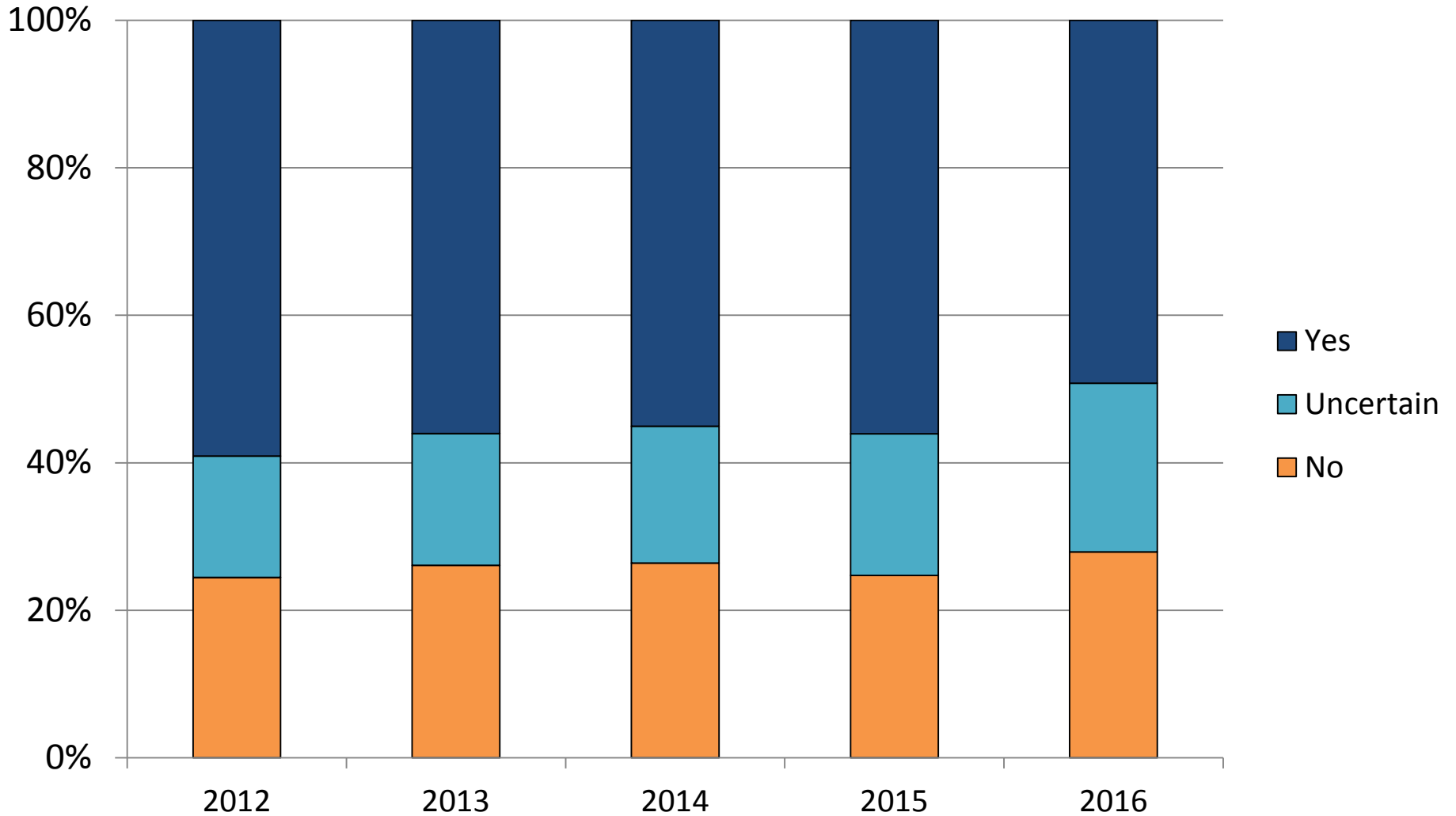
- ◆ Of all the measures captured, the best predictors of the type of assistance required were (in order) domestic functioning, self-care functioning and future capacity to work.
- ◆ Both domestic and self care functioning were better predictors of the type and level of assistance required than any of the variables typically assumed to determine need for PSP services (disability type, capacity to work and so on).

The measurement of 'need' - 2

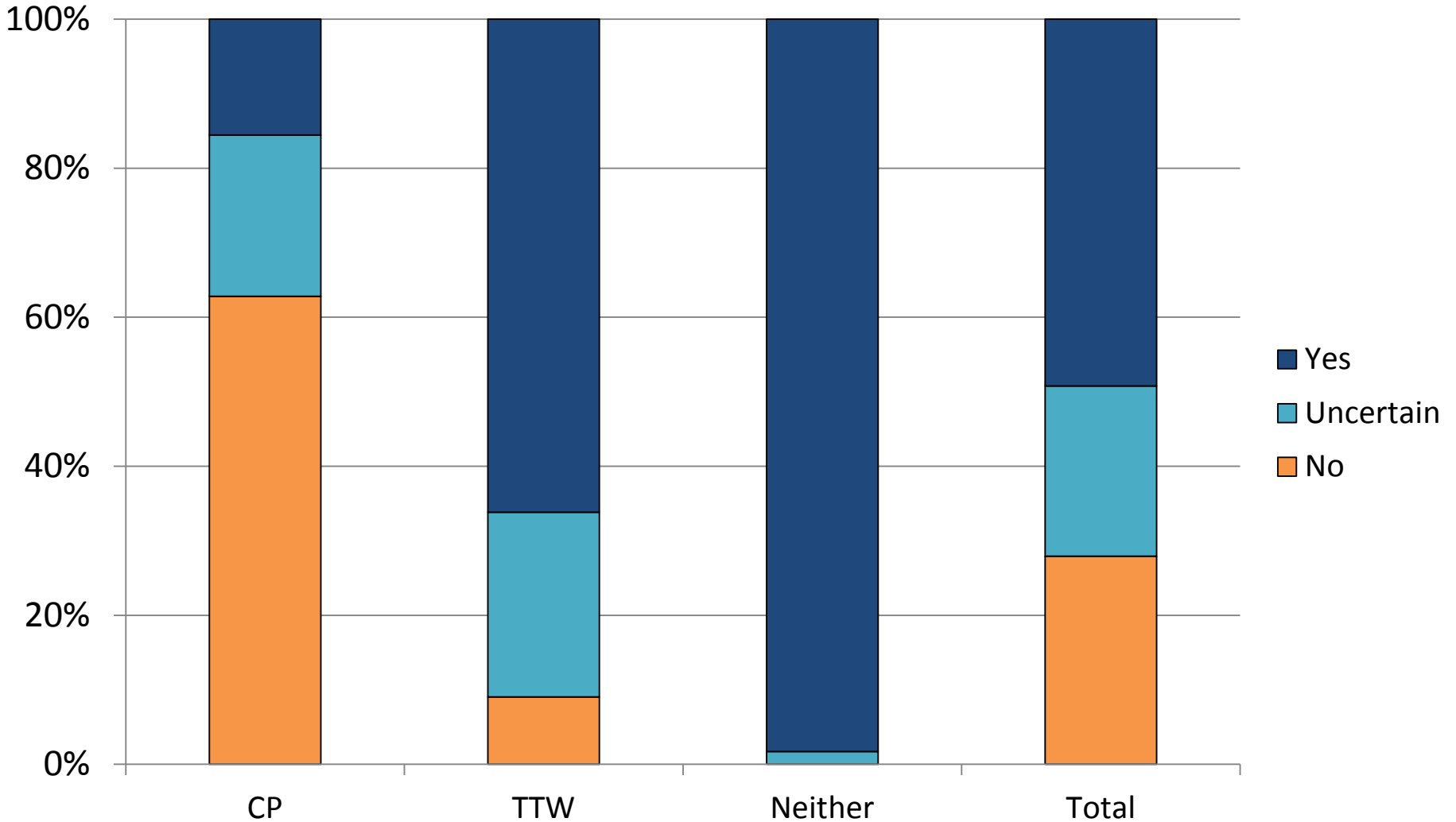
- ◆ Behavioural problems were not strongly correlated with the type or level of required assistance
 - although behaviour is more useful than current work capacity, disability type or the number of disabilities

- ◆ 2002 - "ATLAS consumers and their prospects"
- ◆ 2003 – 1st assessments undertaken by transition teachers
- ◆ 2006 - ATLAS becomes Post School Programs (PSP)
 - Transition to Work (TTW) and Community Participation (CP)
- ◆ 2006-2016 – approx. 15,000 PSP participants in NSW
- ◆ 2016 – NDIA begins testing PSP assessment tool in ACT, Tasmania and Victoria
- ◆ 2017 – last year of PSP assessments by transition teachers

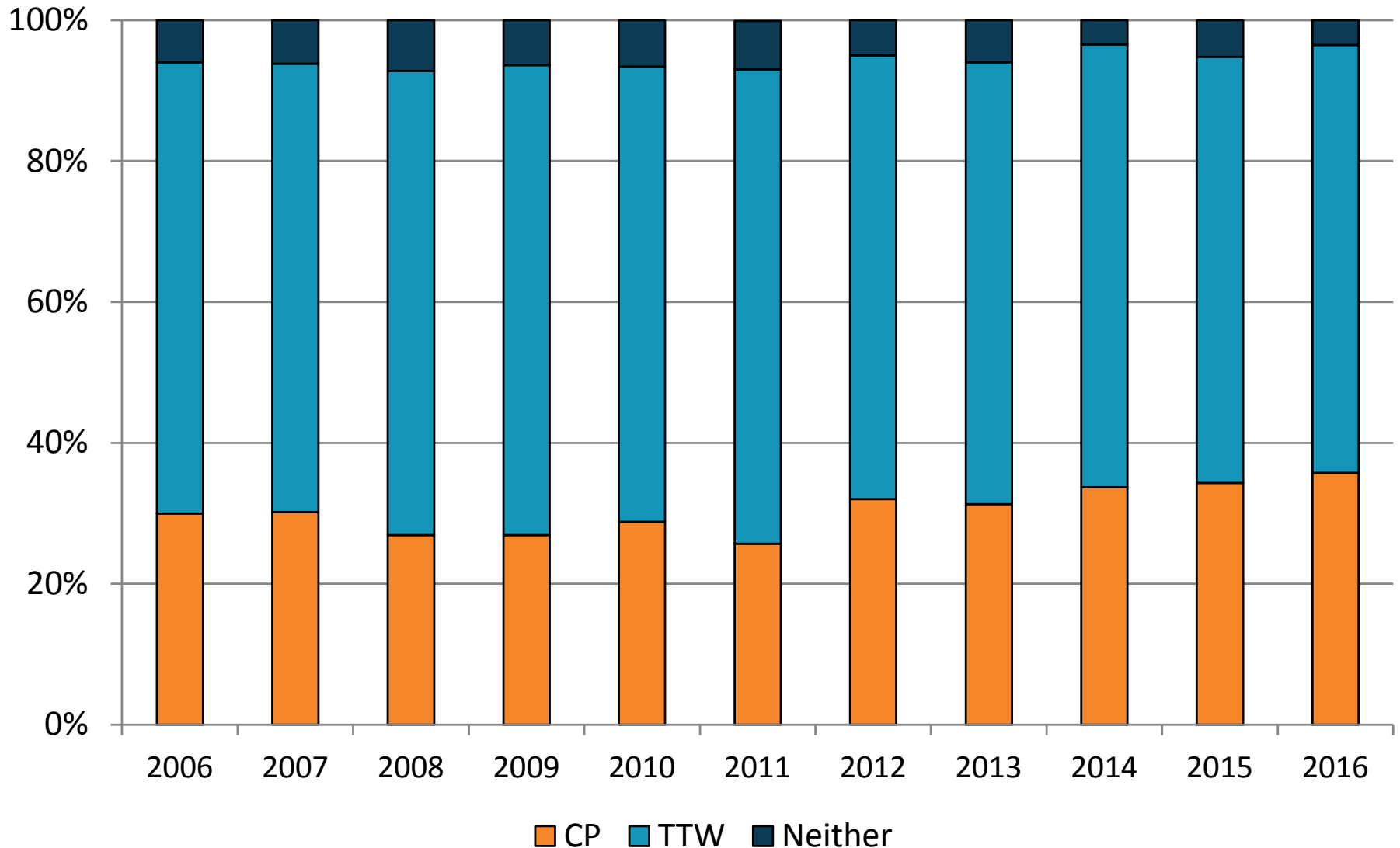
Employment Aspirations



Employment goal?



Outcomes by year



2017 - the end of an era

- ◆ A successful 15 year R&D partnership between UoW, FACS, Department of Education, Association of Independent School and Catholic Education Commission
- ◆ Translating research into practice & using knowledge gained through practice to strengthen the research evidence
- ◆ Aiming to improve services and outcomes for the 15,000+ school leavers who transitioned to PSPs in those years
- ◆ With lots of expertise and experience to contribute to the NDIS

Publications

- ◆ Eagar K, Gordon R and Green J (2003) *NSW ATLAS Consumers and their Prospects*. Centre for Health Service Development, University of Wollongong.
http://ahsripub.uow.edu.au/publication/2003_pubs/ATLAS_HACC%20Function_2nd%20analysis_final.pdf
- ◆ Eagar K, Green G, Gordon R, Owen A, Masso M and Williams K (2006) *Functional Assessment to Predict Capacity for Work in a Population of School Leavers with Disabilities*. International Journal of Disability, Development and Education Vol. 53, No. 3, September 2006, pp. 331-349