



# Drugs and viral Infections in ViEtnam

## DRIVE IN

### Longitudinal phase

ANRS 12299



# Lessons learned from the RDS

- RDS very efficacious to recruit active PWIDs not engaged in care (MMT or ART), including MSM, FSW injecting drugs
- Basing the study in the community (peer groups) was key

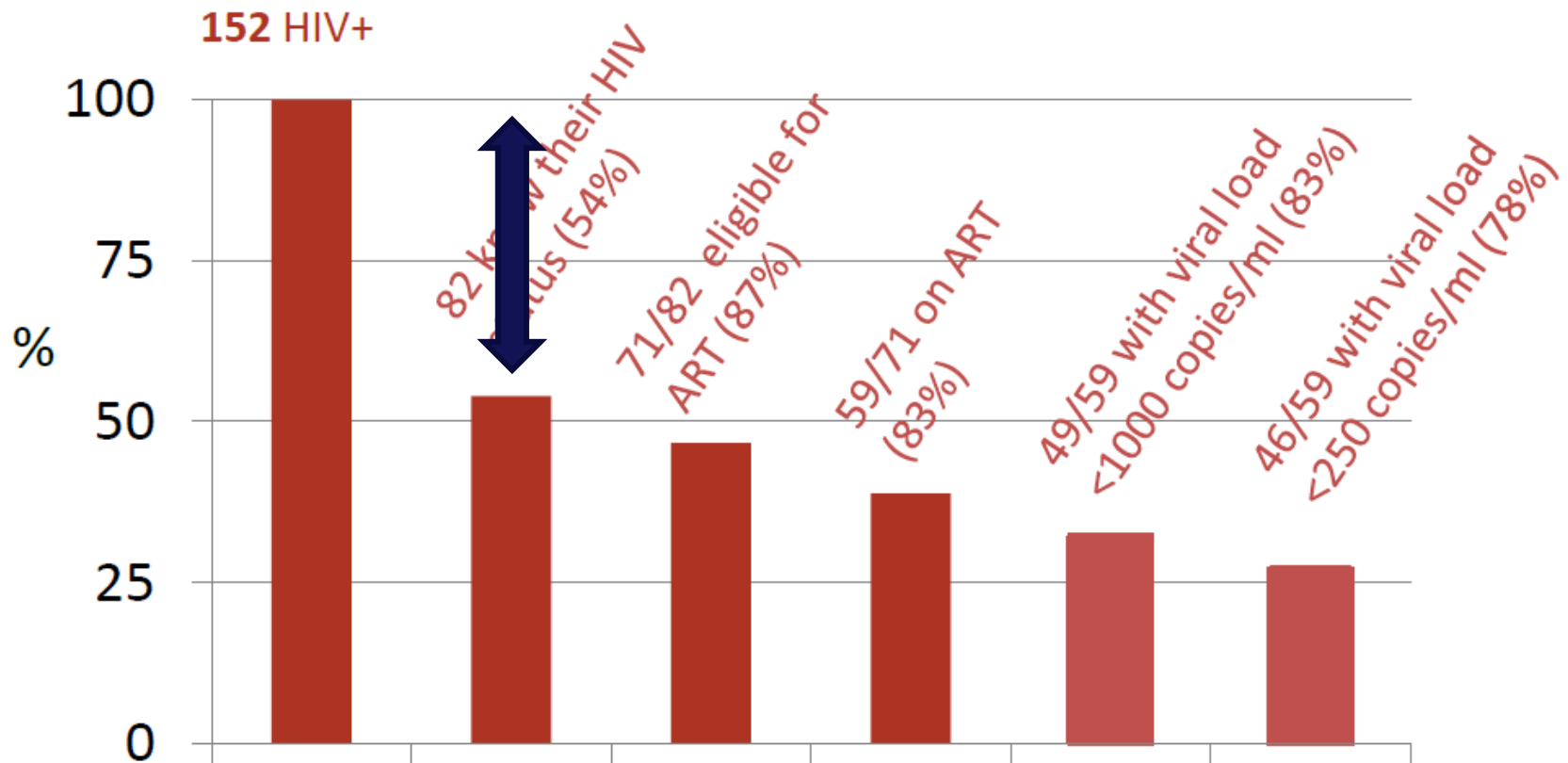


<b>Participant flow</b>	<b>Staff</b>
Greeting and waiting	Peer groups
Registration	Peer groups
Eligibility checking	Peer groups
Informed consent	HPMU
Questionnaire administration	HPMU
HIV/HCV testing	Lab nurses
honoraria / coupons management / appointments	Peer groups
Follow-up	Peer groups
Linkage to care	Peer groups
Harm reduction	Peer groups

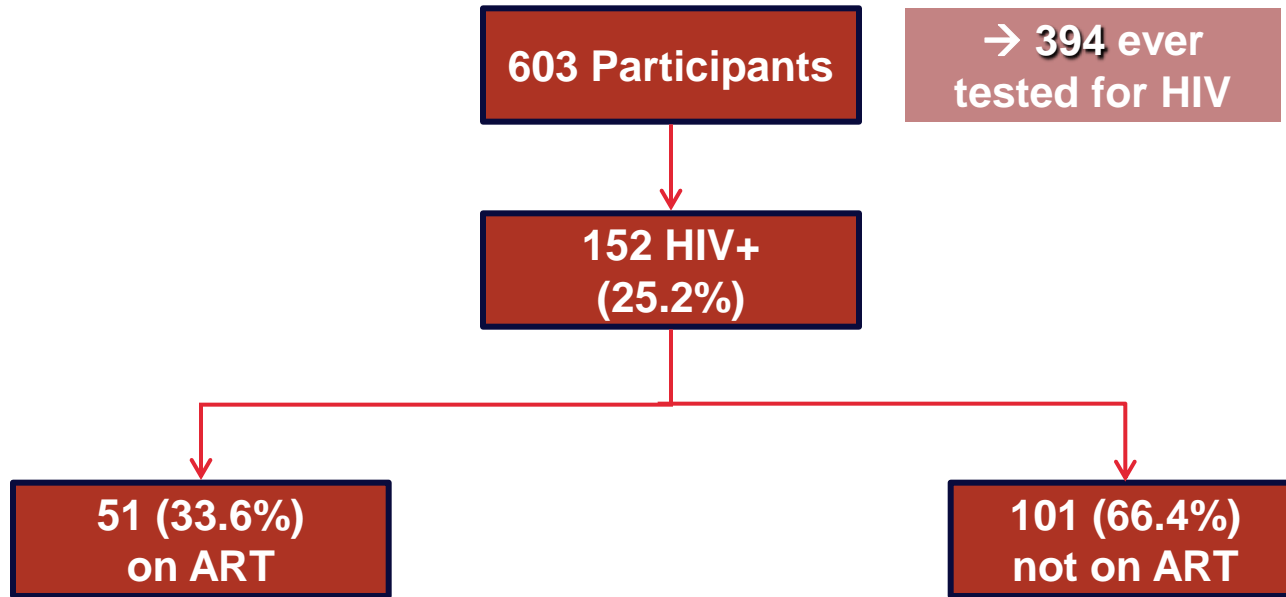


# Lessons learned from the RDS

Estimation of the cascade of care



# HIV



→ 2/3 HIV+ are not treated, of whom 53 (52.5%) with **CD4 ≤ 350**

# Lessons learned from the RDS

- Vietnam has adopted the WHO guidelines: universal ART for HIV-positive PWIDs, but....
- Linkage to HIV outpatient clinics (OPC) after positive HIV testing unsatisfactory for asymptomatic patients:
  - Lack of familial or social support to overcome logistical or regulatory challenges and obstacles
  - low motivation
  - low self-esteem
  - lack of information



# Hypotheses

- RDS used as a mass screening tool
- Linkage to HIV outpatient clinics (OPC) and after positive HIV testing could be much improved by strong peer support
- Access to methadone facilitated by peer groups
- Peer network, supported by a local NGO
- Feasibility / pilot study required
- In addition, need estimates of HIV and HCV incidence
- Feasibility to follow-up PWIDs in view of a future full scale intervention

# DRIVE-IN: Design

***Longitudinal study*** with follow-up at week 4, 12, 24 and 52.

## **Study population**

### *Inclusion criteria*

- Having participated to the RDS survey (active PWID)

### *Non inclusion criteria*

- Ongoing methadone maintenance therapy
- Ongoing antiretroviral therapy
- Health status not compatible with study follow-up
- Plan to move out of Hai Phong over the next two years
- Have been sentenced recently to a prison term



# Baseline characteristics

## ***Participants enrolled***

- *250 RDS participants enrolled*
  - 51 HIV-infected
  - 97 HCV uninfected
  - 27 FSW
  - 28 MSM
  - 41 early injectors (<2 years history of injection)
- 1/3 single, 1/3 married, 1/3 divorced

# Follow-up results

- Week 4: 95% follow-up (240/250)
- Week 12: 92% follow-up (230/250)
- Week 24: 86% follow-up (214/250)

## Reasons for discontinued follow-up at week 24:

- 5 deaths: 1 AIDS-related, 2 suicides, 2 overdoses  
= annual mortality rate of 4%
- 9 moved out to another province
- 10 were jailed, 1 sent to 'rehabilitation centre'
- 8 lost contact
- 3 stopped their participation

# Peer support outcomes

## *HIV referral for care*

	Number of participants		
	CD4 $\leq$ 350	CD4 > 350	Total
<b>Started on ART</b>	11	0	9 (23.1%)
<b>Registered for OPC but did not start ART</b>	1	9	12 (30.8%)
<b>Not registered in OPC</b>	5	13	18 (46.1%)
<b>Total</b>	17	22	39 (100%)

## **Methadone clinics**

	<b>W0</b>	<b>W24</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Participants on MMT</b>	20	94	114/247 (46%)
<b>- Interrupted MMT</b>	0	4	4/114
<b>Registered but not initiated</b>		23	23/247
<b>Not registered</b>		110	110/247
<b>Total</b>	20	227	247

# HIV and HCV incidence

## ***HIV incidence***

- *No seroconversion among 80 pers-years of follow-up*
- *HIV Incidence ranging between 0 and 4.4/100 pers-years*

## ***HCV incidence***

- 98 HCV-negative PWID at baseline, 86 retested at week 24, 14 seroconverted
  - => 31.8/100 pers-yrs (95%, 15.2-48.5)
- Risk factors; no clear profile, not only recent injectors



# Perspectives

## ***Feasibility***

- All feasibility criteria met (recruitment, follow-up)
- Strong support from local and national Health authorities
- Operational Research platform
- Operational Research consortium

## ***Intervention***

- RDS approach for large HIV testing and improved peer-based linkage to care could fill the gap in the HIV cascade of care
- Pilot intervention was successful for HIV/MMT referral

**=> Scaling up in next phase**

# Difficulties in getting methadone



# DRIVE-IN Study Group

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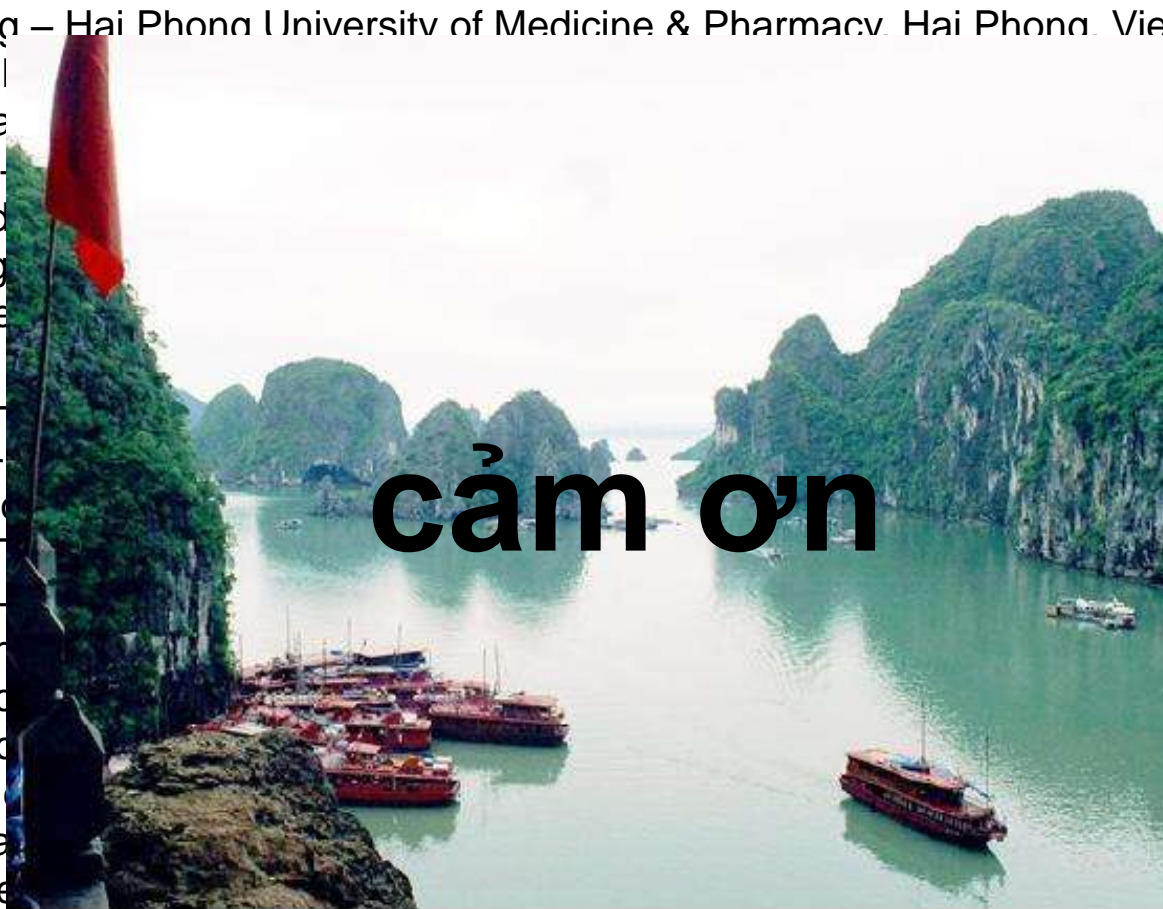
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