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# The impact of early ART initiation on HIV disclosure and social support among people living with HIV and followed within a universal test and treat programme in rural South Africa (ANRS 12249 TasP trial)

Cape Town, November 13<sup>th</sup> 2017

Marie NISHIMWE, Camelia PROTOPODESCU, Collins IWUJI, Nonhlanhla OKESOLA, Bruno SPIRE, Joanna ORNE-GLIEMANN, Nuala MCGRATH, Deenan PILLAY, François DABIS, Joseph LARMARANGE & Sylvie BOYER

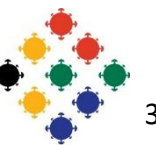
# Background

- HIV status disclosure and social support have been associated with increased antiretroviral treatment (ART) adherence and better clinical outcomes.
- In September 2016, South Africa adopted the latest World Health Organization (WHO) guidelines on ART, recommending ART immediately after HIV diagnosis, regardless of CD4 count.
- The TasP cluster-randomized trial conducted in rural South Africa between 2012 and 2016 provided the opportunity to investigate HIV status disclosure and social support among patients who were offered early ART.



# Objective

To investigate *the impact of early ART initiation on HIV status disclosure and social support* among patients in care within the universal test and treat (UTT) cluster-randomized TasP trial.



# The TasP trial

- **Settings: The ANRS 12249 TasP trial**

- Cluster-randomized trial implemented in the Hlabisa sub-district, northern KwaZulu-Natal
- Estimated HIV prevalence of 29%
- Trial primary objective : to estimate the impact of immediate ART just after positive diagnosis on HIV incidence among the population of the sub-district
- **Two arms** : following home-based HIV testing, treatment initiation is offered in trial clinics :
  - i) **Intervention arm : regardless of CD4**
  - ii) **Control arm: CD4 $\leq$ 500 since 01/01/2015 or CD4 $\leq$ 350 before 01/01/2015**

- **The study population = all HIV-positive participants**

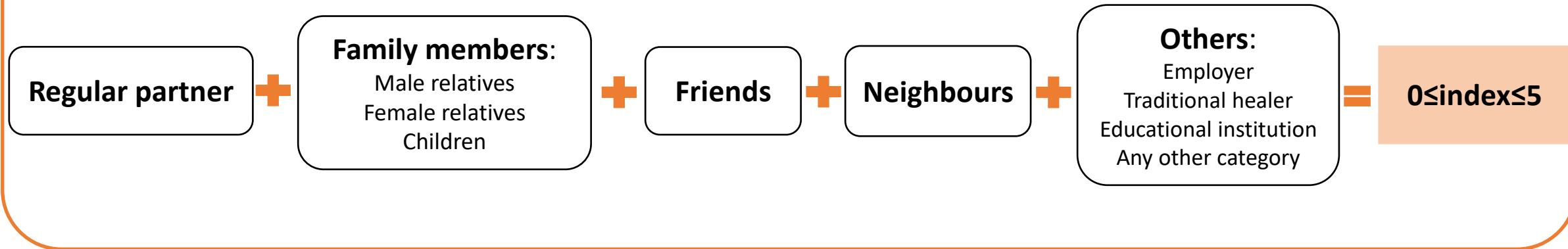
- Linked to a trial clinic
- Not ART treated at their first visit (baseline clinic visit)
- **CD4 > 500** cells/mm<sup>3</sup> (and no WHO stage 3 nor 4, nor pregnancy) at baseline
- Having at least two clinic visits over the trial period (March 2012 - June 2016).



# Methods – Outcome variables

- Estimated at baseline and every 6 months

**HIV disclosure:** Q. Have you disclosed to anyone that you are HIV-positive?



**Social support:** Q. Does anyone provide you with social support to help you cope with your HIV infection?



# Methods – Covariates

**Covariates** (defined at baseline except ART status defined at each time point):

- Socio-demographic characteristics: sex, age
- Highest Education level reached
- Baseline professional status
- Care status before TasP (if ever been in care before the TasP trial)
- Time to link to a trial clinic
- ART Initiation in TasP
  - 0: as long as the individual has not « yet » initiated ART in trial clinics
  - 1: from the time the individual initiated ART in trial clinics
- Cluster HIV prevalence (<30%, ≥30%)
- Having a regular partner
- Trial arm: intervention versus control



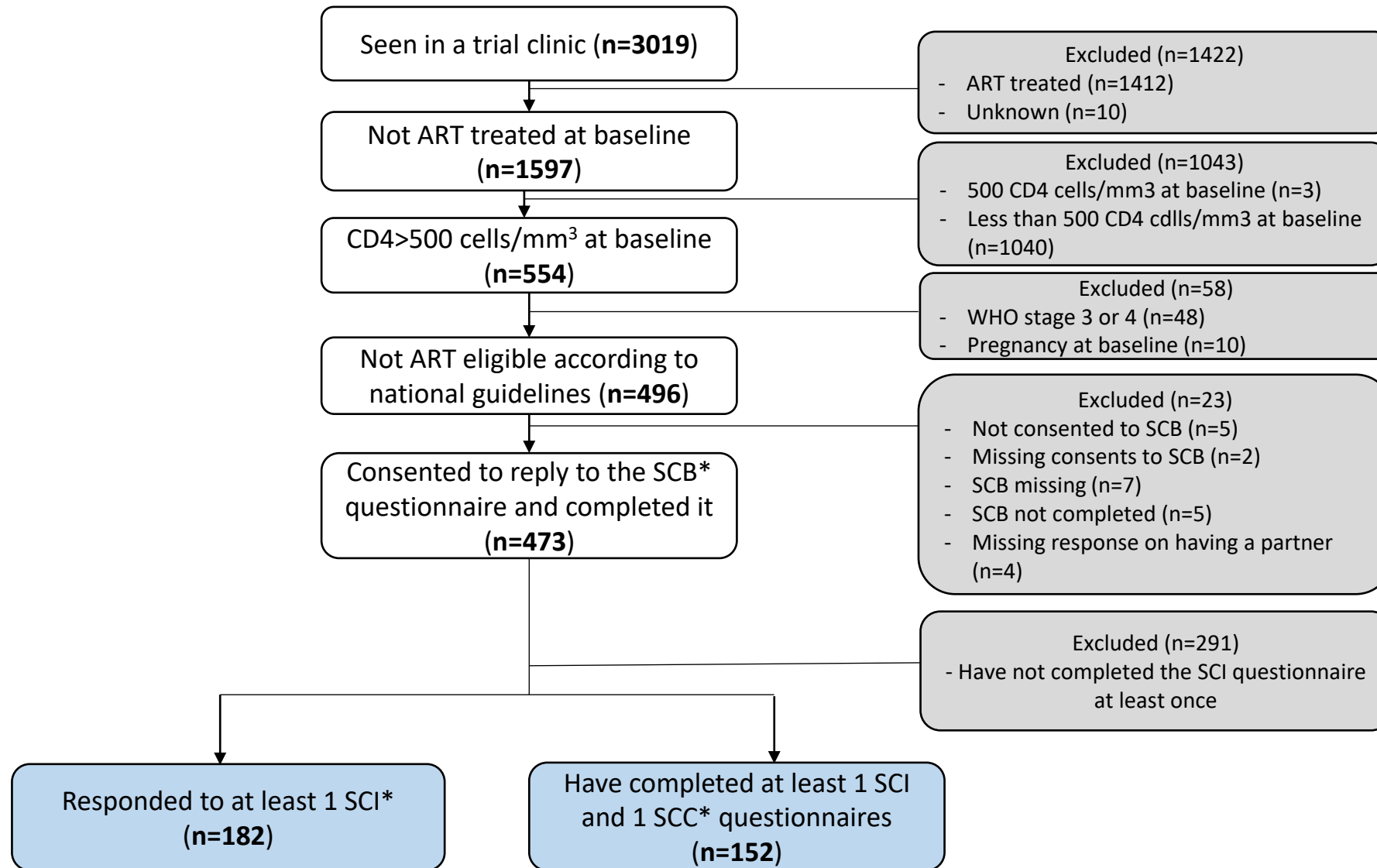
# Methods – Statistical analysis

- **Poisson mixed effects model adjusted on individual factors**
  - Multivariate analyses
    - Stepwise forward selection to adjust for individual characteristics (alpha=5%)
- **4 models have been built for each outcome:**
  - **Model 1 (arm): Is there any effect of the arm (Control vs. Intervention) on the outcome?**
  - **Model 2 (arm\*time): Does the evolution of the outcome over time differ according to the trial arm?**
  - **Model 3 (ART): Is there any effect of initiating ART on the outcome?**
  - **Model 4 (ART\*arm): Is there a different effect of ART initiation on the outcome according to the trial arm?**





# Results – Flowchart of the study population



(\*) SCB : social science baseline clinic-based, counsellor-administered questionnaire. SCI: social science clinic-based interviewer-administered questionnaire.  
 SCC: social science clinic-based follow-up counsellor – administered questionnaire.



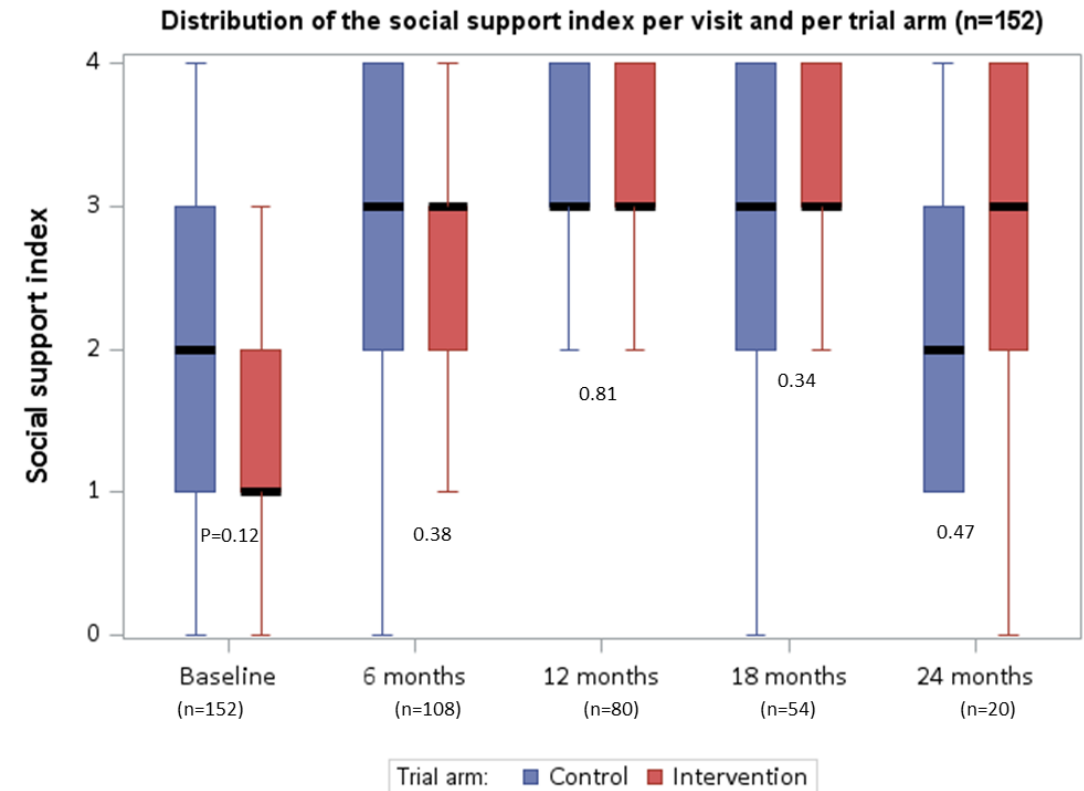
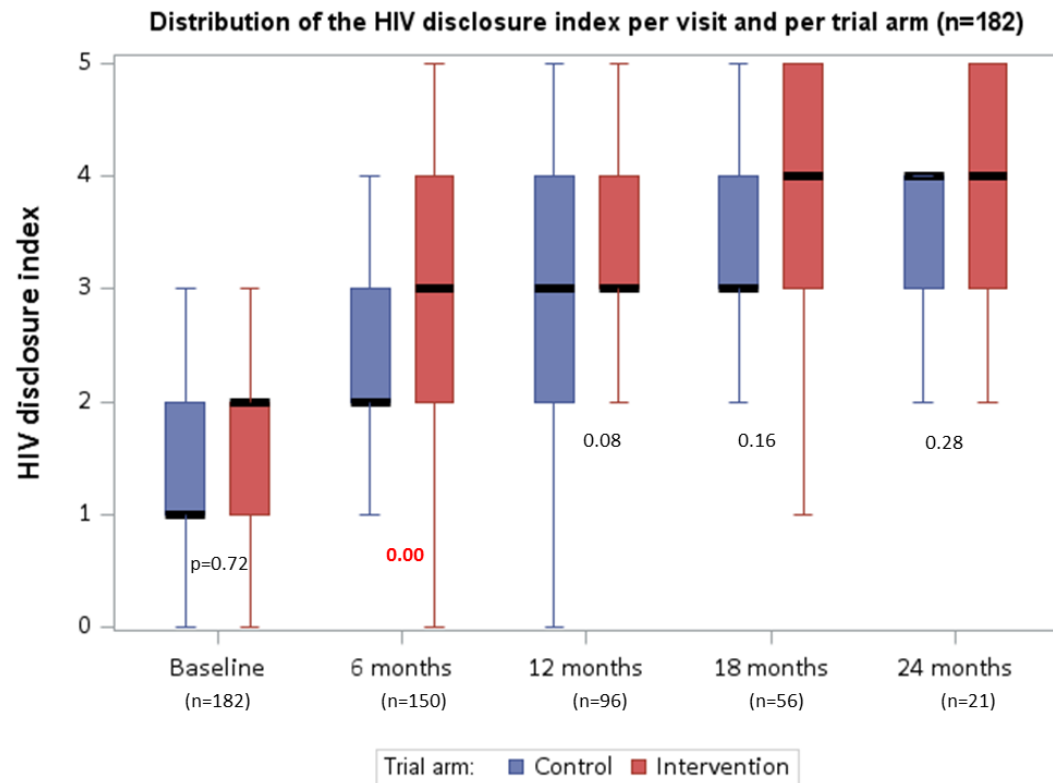
# Results - Main characteristics of the study population

Covariates	Total (n=182)
Sex Female	<b><u>84%</u></b>
Age Median [IQR]	<b><u>32</u></b> [25-48]
Care status before TasP Yes (ever been in care in DoH)	<b><u>52%</u></b>
Baseline highest education level	
Primary or less	46%
Some secondary	32%
At least completed secondary	22%
Baseline professional status	
Student	12%
Employed	7%
Inactive	81%
Cluster HIV prevalence 30% or more	<b><u>82%</u></b>
Time to link to a trial clinic	
0 - 1 month	61%
1 month – 6 months	26%
More than 6 months	13%



# Results

## Distribution of the HIV disclosure and social support index over time



- Increase in the HIV disclosure and social support index over time
- The median of the HIV disclosure index was significantly different between trial arms; people from the intervention arm had a higher median index of HIV disclosure at 6 months.



# Results

## 1. Model 1: Is there any effect of the arm (Control vs. Intervention) on the outcome?

Covariates	Yes	No
	HIV disclosure index IRR [95% CI]	Social Support index IRR [95% CI]
Years from baseline	1.46*** [1.35 ; 1.58]	1.33*** [1.21 ; 1.45]
Trial arm		
Control (ref.)	1	1
Intervention	1.26**[1.12 ; 1.41]	1.03 [0.90 ; 1.17]

Note : Models adjusted on Cluster HIV prevalence, Care status before TasP, having a regular partner.

\*\*\* $p < 0.001$  \*\* $p < 0.01$  \* $p < 0.05$

All other things being equal,

- Increase in the HIV disclosure and social support index over time.
- Participants from the intervention arm disclosed their HIV status to more categories of people.



# Results

## 2. Model 2: Does the evolution of the outcome over time differ according to the trial arm?

No

Yes

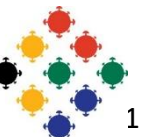
Covariates	HIV disclosure index IRR [95% CI]	Social support index IRR [95% CI]
Years from baseline	1.45 *** [1.29; 1.62]	1.20** [1.06 ; 1.37]
Trial arm Control (ref.) Intervention	1 1.24*[1.04;1.48]	1 0.87 [0.71 ; 1.06]
Years * Intervention	1.02 [0.87 ; 1.19]	1.22*[1.02 ; 1.46]

Note : Models adjusted on Cluster HIV prevalence, Care status before TasP, having a regular partner.

\*\*\* $p < 0.001$  \*\* $p < 0.01$  \* $p < 0.05$

All other things being equal,

- Both trial arms had a similar increase over time in the HIV disclosure index.
- **People from the intervention arm showed a higher increase over time in the social support index.**



# Results

## 3. Model 3: Is there any effect of initiating ART on the outcome?

Covariates	Yes	Yes
	HIV disclosure index IRR [95% CI]	Social support index IRR [95% CI]
Years from baseline	1.24 *** [1.12 ; 1.38]	1.17* [1.03 ; 1.32]
Trial arm		
Control (ref.)	1	1
Intervention	1.05 [0.92 ; 1.20]	0.90 [0.78 ; 1.05]
Initiated ART in TasP		
No (ref.)	1	1
Yes	1.50 *** [1.28 ; 1.75]	1.35** [1.12; 1.62]

Note : Models adjusted on Cluster HIV prevalence, Care status before TasP, having a regular partner.

\*\*\* $p < 0.001$  \*\* $p < 0.01$  \* $p < 0.05$

All other things being equal,

- Initiating ART lead to an increase in the HIV disclosure and the social support index.



# Results

## 4. Model 4: Is there a different effect of ART initiation on the outcome according to the trial arm?

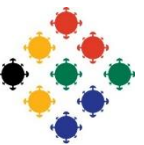
Covariates	No		Yes	
	HIV disclosure index IRR [95% CI]		Social support index IRR [95% CI]	
Years from baseline	1.24 *** [1.12 ; 1.37]		1.15* [1.02 ; 1.30]	
Trial arm				
Control (ref.)	1		1	
Intervention	0.98 [0.80 ; 1.18]		<b>0.73** [0.58 ; 0.91]</b>	
Initiated ART in TasP				
No (ref.)	1		1	
Yes	<b>1.40** [1.14 ; 1.71]</b>		1.11 [0.88 ; 1.40]	
Initiated ART in TasP * Intervention	1.15 [0.89 ; 1.48]		<b>1.50** [1.12 ; 2.01]</b>	

Note : Models adjusted on Cluster HIV prevalence, Care status before TasP, having a regular partner.

\*\*\* $p < 0.001$  \*\* $p < 0.01$  \* $p < 0.05$

All other things being equal,

- Initiating ART lead to an increase in the HIV disclosure index
  - That effect was similar in both trial arms.
- The effect of initiating ART on the social support was stronger in the intervention arm.



# CONCLUSION

- Besides clinical benefits, early ART initiation at high CD4 cell count was associated with HIV disclosure and social support.
  - For the social support index: a longer time of follow-up may however be required to observe this benefit.
- Findings encouraging for the countries that have implemented the UTT strategy.

## Study Limits :

- × All categories had a same weight in the definition of the index
- × A small proportion of our population had attended 18 months of follow-up at the end of the study.





# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

## ANRS 12249 Study Group (by alphabetical order):

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