

# Immune Mediated Viral Control off-ART

March 8, 2025

Pre-CROI HIV Cure Community Workshop

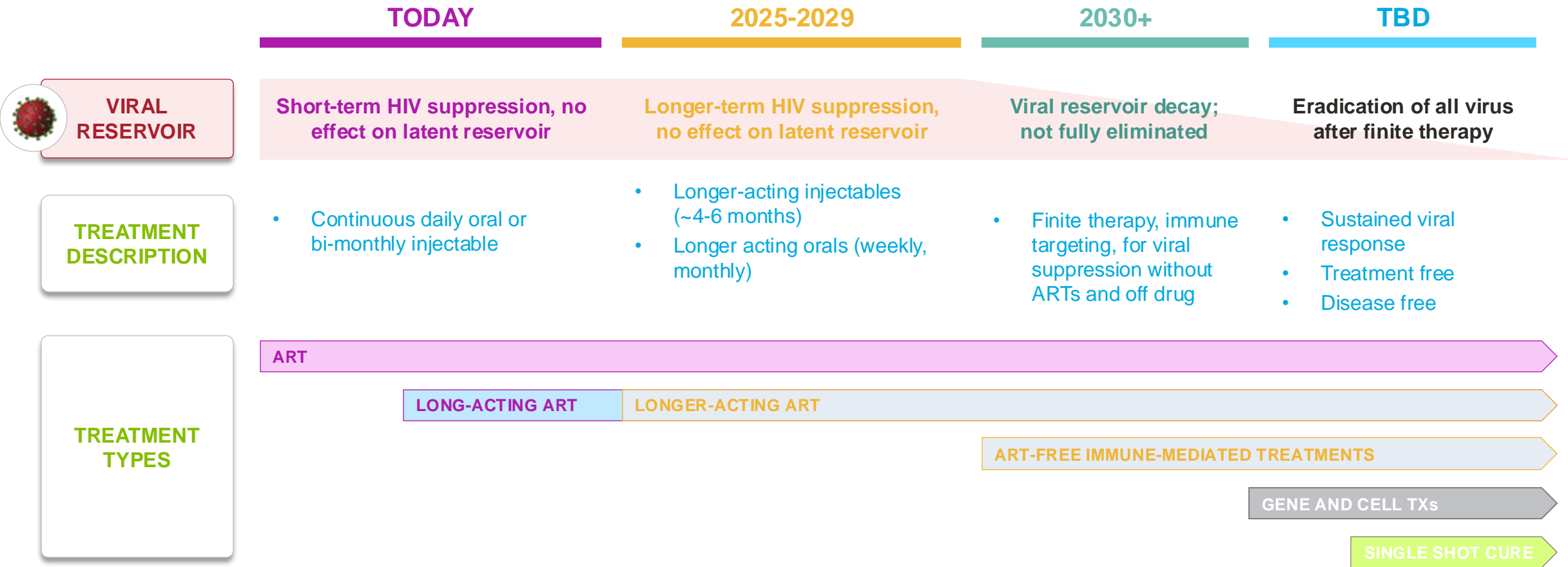
Arlene Nugent, MSc. (PhD), Scientific Director, Medical Affairs

Ana Pires, MD, MSc., M.B.A - Senior Medical Director, Clinical  
Development

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- This non-promotional scientific presentation has been developed and presented by AbbVie and is intended for your own professional scientific interest and education.
- AbbVie was invited by the Pre-CROI HIV cure community workshop organisers to give this presentation on immune mediated control without ART.
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# Research continues in the HIV treatment landscape from daily oral and injectable ART to long-acting regimens, with future therapeutics in the pipeline targeting off-ART disease control and elimination of the virus



# Factors to consider with immune control off ART for HIV on the pathway towards cure

Controlling the virus so that it does not progress or cause damage to the immune system without ongoing treatment



Understanding the immune mechanisms that control the virus without ART offers key insights for developing and improving vaccines to induce similar immune responses in the broader population

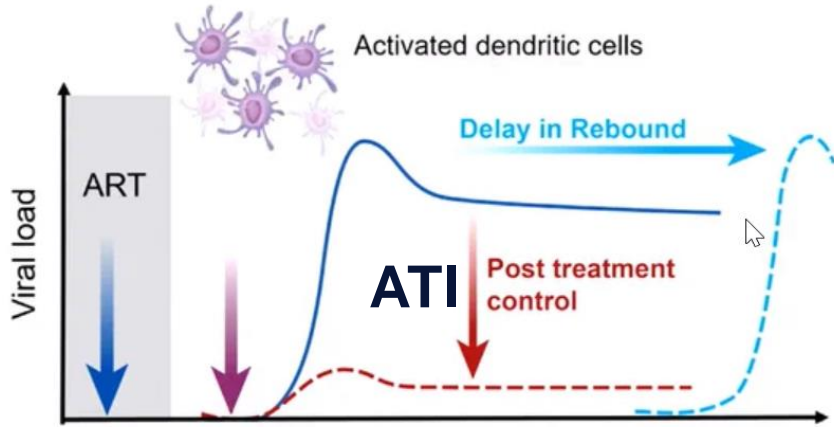
## Harnessing or replicating natural immune control has the potential to:

- reduce the need for lifelong ART, alleviating the burden of daily medication, reducing side effects, and lowering the risk of drug resistance
- Enhance QoL for peoples living with HIV (PLWH)
- Decrease stigma
- Lead to cost savings to PLWH and the healthcare system

## Considerations when developing an ideal regimen:

- Safe
- Achieve long-term viral suppression
- Eliminate risk of viral transmission
- Protect against re-infection
- Affordable and reach all people living with HIV

# Immune mediated clinical trial designs often include an Analytical Treatment Interruption (ATI): Multiple studies are in proof of concept to control the virus post-ART

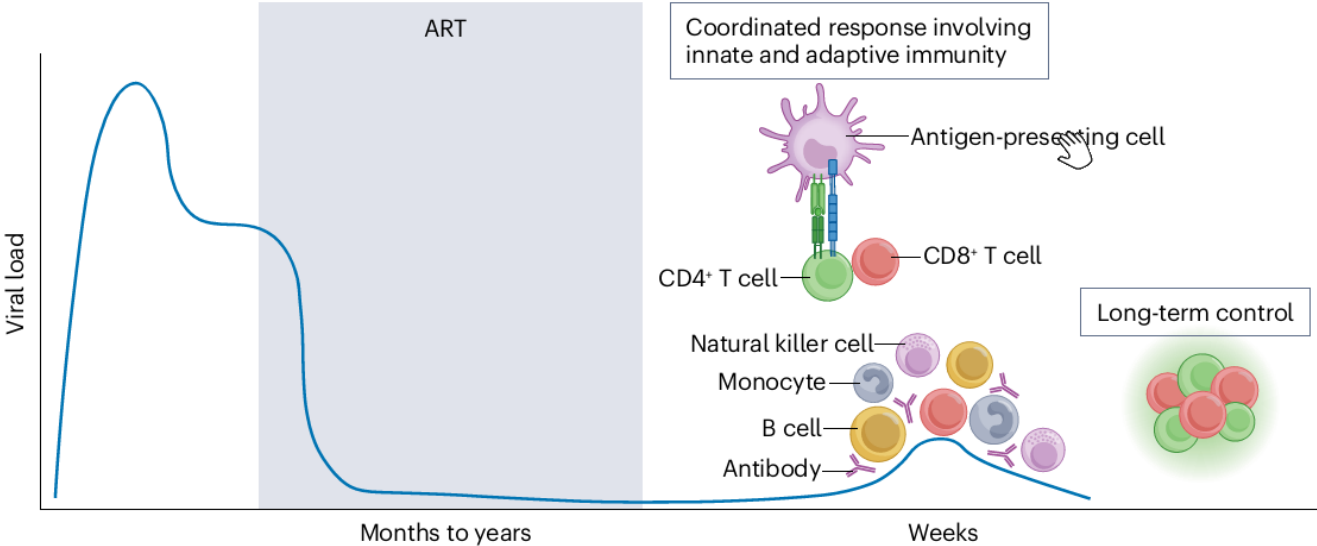


**Lancet HIV 2019**  
**Recommendations for analytical antiretroviral treatment interruptions in HIV research trials – report of a consensus meeting.**  
 Julg et al

**Long-term control will most likely be mediated by T-cells similar to those seen in post-treatment or natural (elite) controllers**

Reproduced from Julg et al. Lancet HIV 2019; Mitchell et al. J Clin Inv 2020

**There is no biomarker available that can predict time to rebound or post treatment control and therefore treatment interruption is needed as a clinical endpoint**



# Several agents that are not classical antiretrovirals, but work by stimulating the immune system to leading to viral control are being investigated from pre-clinical to Phase 2 trials

Examples of targets towards HIV cure. Not an exhaustive list



# PD-1 is Central to Immune Exhaustion

Upregulation of immune checkpoint proteins such as PD-1, may inhibit T-cell function by causing T-cell dysfunction/exhaustion<sup>1-3</sup>

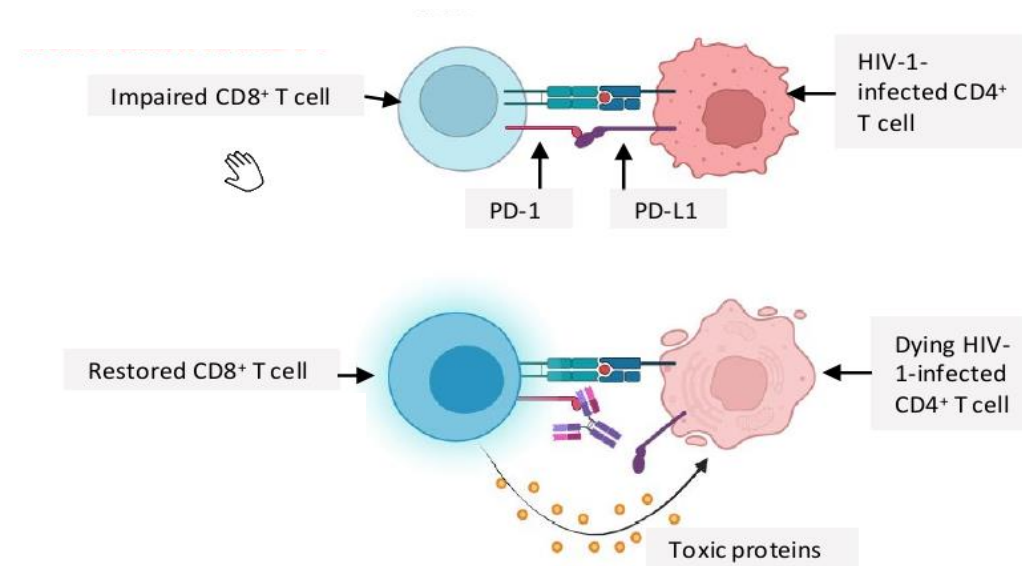


PD-1 overexpression on CD4+ and CD8+ T cells has been shown to increase HIV disease progression<sup>1</sup>

PD-1 blockade may mediate functional restoration of exhausted CD8+ T cells resulting in enhanced cytotoxicity against HIV-infected cells<sup>1-3</sup>

PD-1, programmed cell death-1; TCR, T-cell receptor.

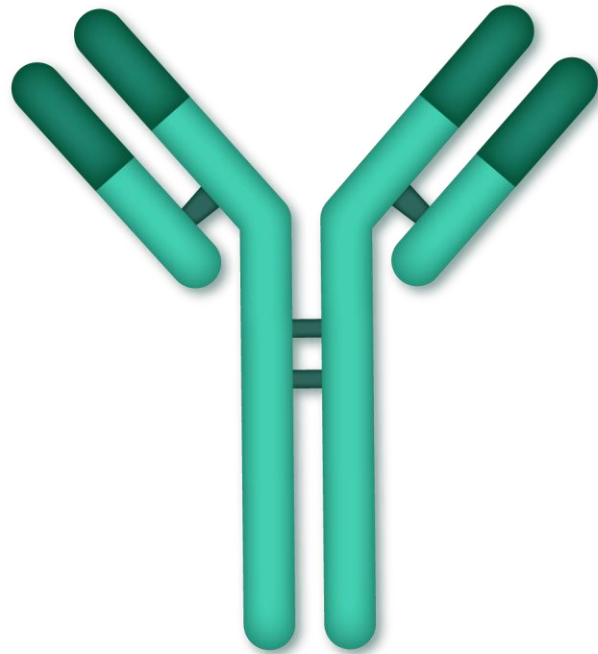
## Proposed role of PD-1



**Small studies in rhesus macaques and in HIV individuals on stable ART with PD-1 blockade have reported viral control in the absence of ART<sup>4-7</sup>**

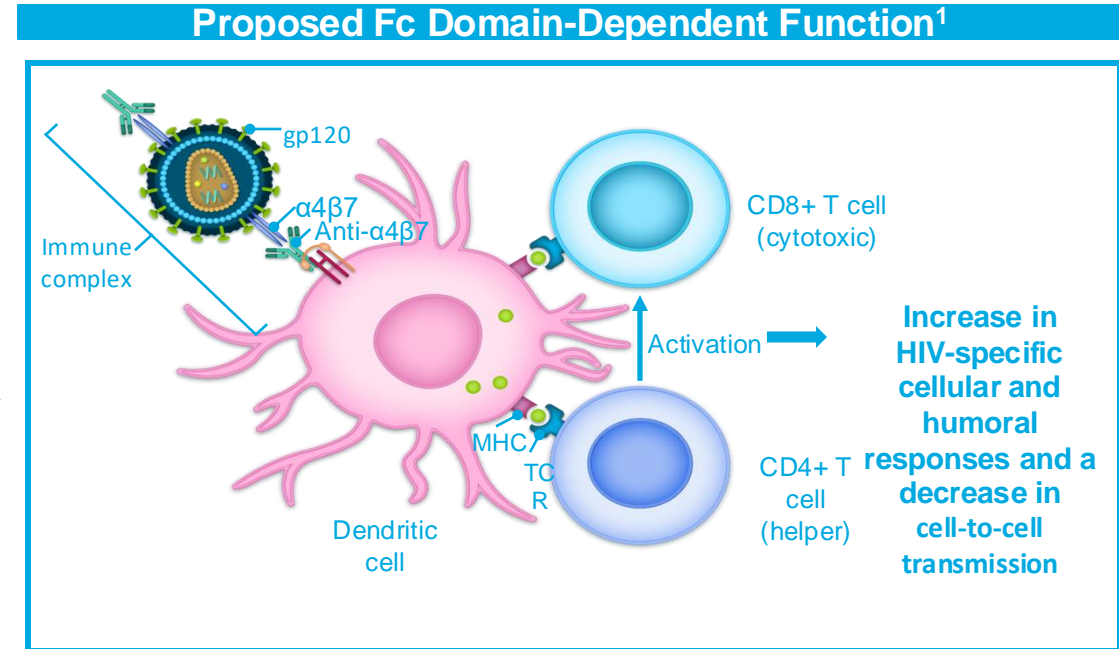
# Anti- $\alpha 4\beta 7$ mAb are Reported to Disrupt Viral Replication, Cell-to-Cell Transmission and Generate Viral-Specific Immunity

## Anti- $\alpha 4\beta 7$ mAb: Proposed Mechanisms of Action



- Fc domain independent:**
- Disruption of the interaction between  $\alpha 4\beta 7$  and gp120 thereby preventing activation of LFA-1 and subsequent **cell-to-cell transmission**<sup>1,3-5</sup>
  - Promotion of **lymphocyte trafficking** to GALT<sup>1,2,4</sup>

- Fc domain dependent:**
- Interaction of the intact Fc domain with Fc $\gamma$ R on effector cells or APCs which may enhance **antigen presentation** and/or **induce clearance** through Fc effector functions (**vaccinal effect**)<sup>1,6-8</sup>

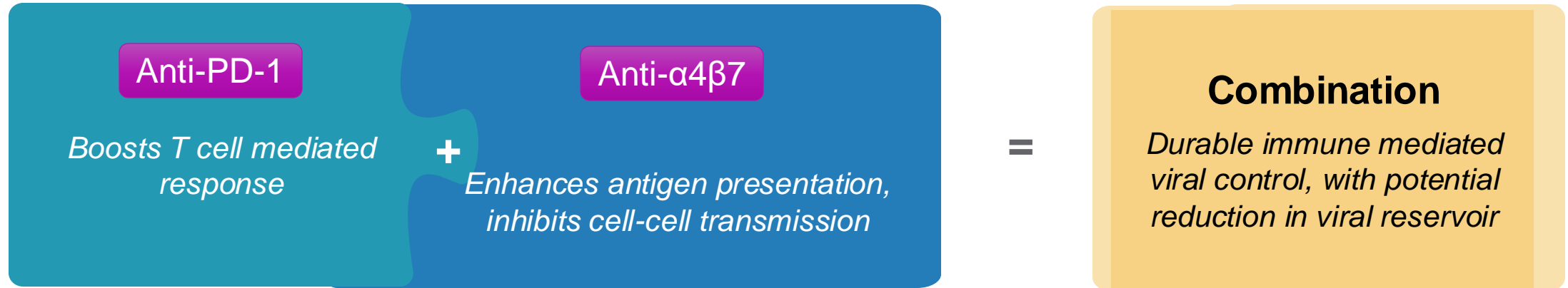


APC, antigen-presenting cell; Fc, fragment crystallizable; GALT, gut-associated lymphoid tissue; IgG, immunoglobulin G; LFA-1, lymphocyte function-associated antigen-1; mAb, monoclonal antibody; MHC, major histocompatibility complex; TCR, T-cell receptor.

1. Pre-investigational new drug document. AbbVie data on file;
2. Nawaz F, *et al. Mucosal Immunol* 2018; **11**:1342–1351;
3. Arthos J, *et al. Curr HIV/AIDS Rep* 2018; **15**:127–135;
4. Arthos J, *et al. Nat Immunol* 2008; **9**:301–309;
5. Guzzo C, *et al. Sci Immunol* 2017; **2**:eaam7341;
6. Wang P, *et al. Proc Natl Acad Sci U S A* 2020; **117**:18002–18009.
7. Byrareddy, *et al.* (2016). 354(6309), 197–202.
8. Wells *et al.* PLoS computational biology, 17(6), e1009031



# The combination of an anti-PD-1 with and anti- $\alpha 4\beta 7$ could have synergistic effects for immune mediated control



- ✓ PD-1 and  $\alpha 4\beta 7$  blockade are complementary approaches that have the potential to synergize to induce a durable immune response

These are not antiretrovirals. They are hypothesized to work by stimulating the participant's immune system to respond to HIV, potentially leading to **ART-Free immune mediated** viral control.

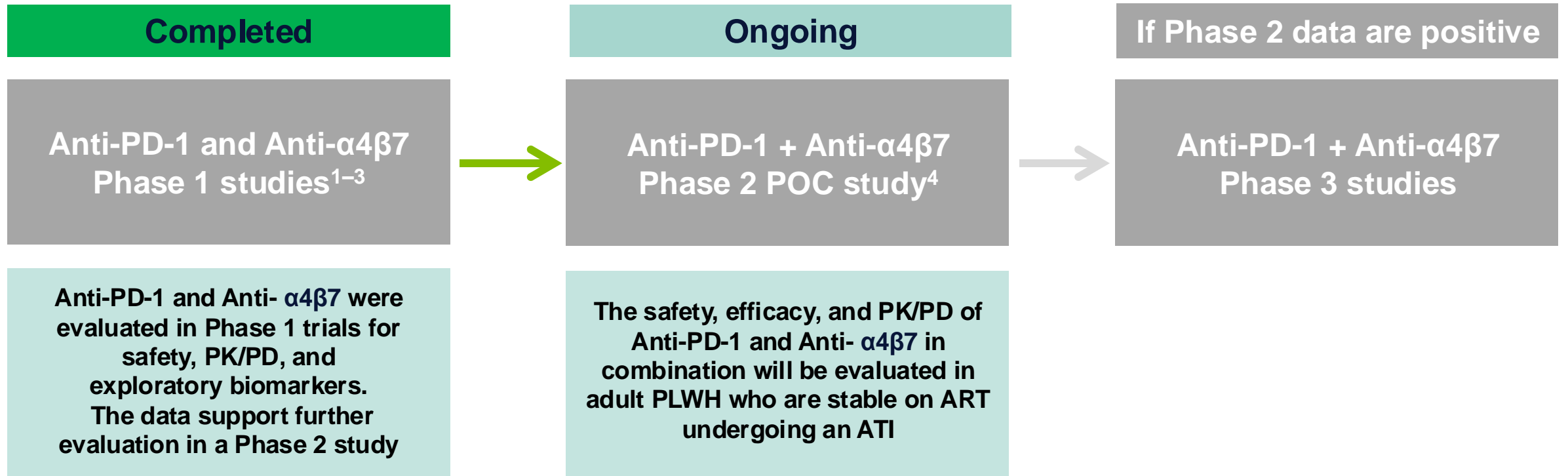
abbvie

# **Abbvie program overview: Focusing on Immune-mediated viral control**

Ana Gabriela Pires dos Santos

Senior Medical Director – Clinical Development

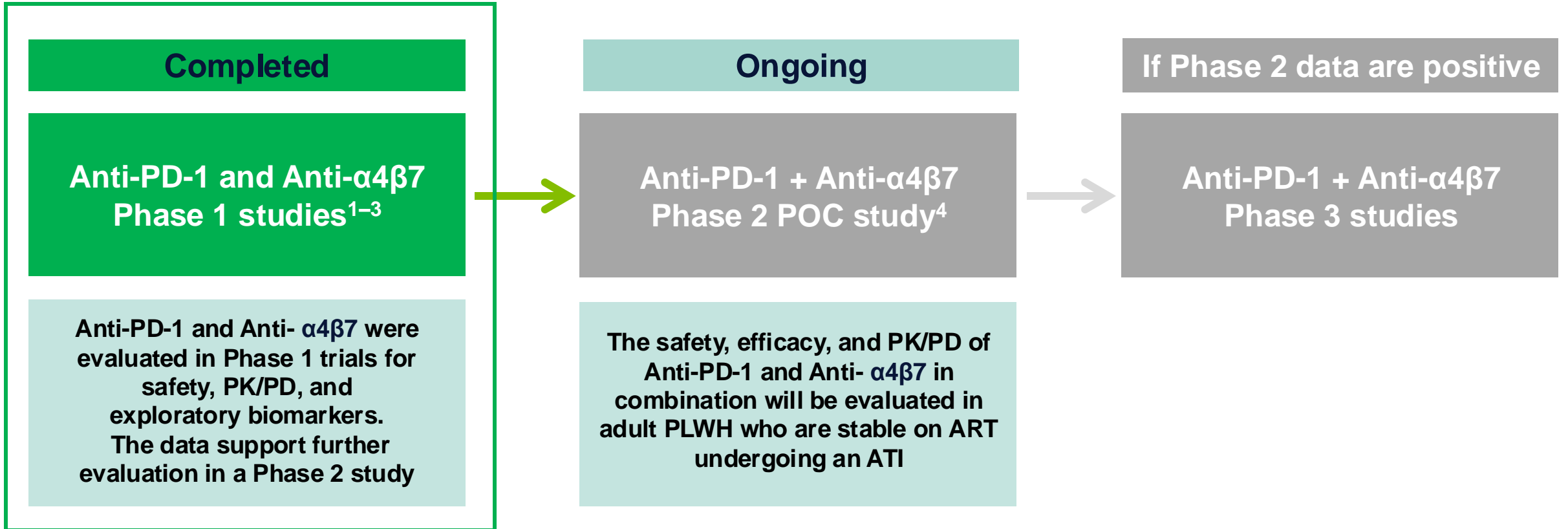
# Abbvie HIV viral control proposed clinical program



1. ClinicalTrials.gov identifier: NCT04223804. Available at: <https://clinicaltrials.gov/ct2/show/NCT04223804> (accessed Jan 2025)
2. ClinicalTrials.gov identifier: NCT04799353. Available at: <https://clinicaltrials.gov/ct2/show/NCT04799353> (accessed Jan 2025)
3. ClinicalTrials.gov identifier: NCT04554966. Available at: <https://clinicaltrials.gov/ct2/show/NCT04554966> (accessed Jan 2025)
4. ClinicalTrials.gov identifier: NCT04799353. Available at: <https://clinicaltrials.gov/ct2/show/NCT04799353> (accessed Jan 2025).

ATI, analytical treatment interruption; POC, proof of concept.

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ATI, analytical treatment interruption; POC, proof of concept.

# Anti- $\alpha 4\beta 7$ phase 1b: Safety & pharmacokinetics in Healthy adults and PLWH

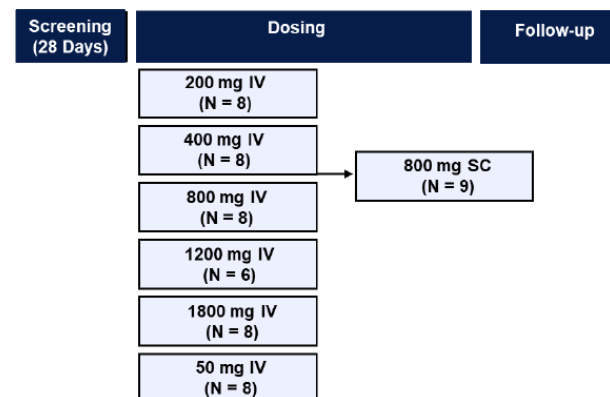
## Main Objectives of the program<sup>1</sup>:

- To evaluate how safe ABBV-382 is and how it moves within the body in adult Healthy adults in single dose vs placebo (n=55)
- To evaluate how safe ABBV-382 is and how it moves within the body in adult PLWH in multiple doses (N=54)

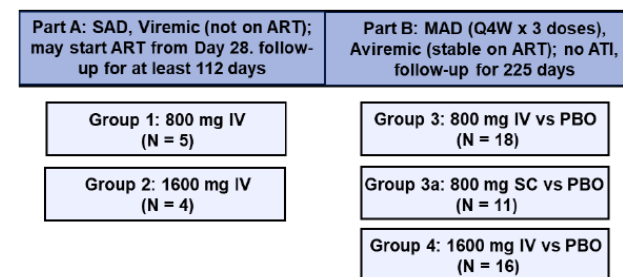
Results will be presented at CROI 2025. Poster 0709 on March 11 at 2:30PM PST

## Phase 1 Study Design

### Phase 1a Study: Single Ascending Doses of Trosunilimab in Healthy Volunteers



### Phase 1b Study: Single and Multiple Doses of Trosunilimab in PLWH



#### References:

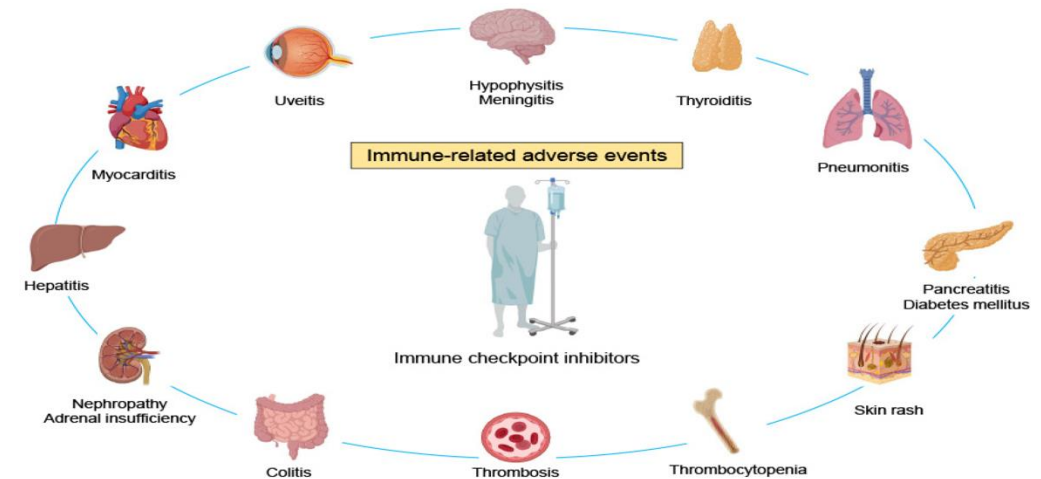
1. ClinicalTrials.gov identifier: NCT04554966. Available at: <https://clinicaltrials.gov/ct2/show/NCT04554966> (accessed Jan 2025)
2. Trosunilimab Safety, Pharmacokinetics and Pharmacodynamics in Healthy People and People With HIV-1. CROI poster 0709.

# Anti-PD1 phase 1b: Understand safety & pharmacokinetics to identify the lowest dose with favorable risk/benefit for PLWH

## Main Objectives and endpoints of the program:

- To test how safe Budigalimab is and how it moves within the body in adult participants living with HIV, in single dose (M19-972) and multiple doses (M19-939)
- Pharmacodynamics including saturation of the receptor, viral load measurements and biomarkers (exploratory)

Anti-PD1s may harness auto-reactive T-cells, leading to the development of auto-immune reactions specifically known as immune-related adverse events (irAE)



AESI, adverse event of special interest; irAE, immune-related adverse event; MOA, mechanism of action; PD, pharmacodynamic; PD-1, programmed cell death-1; PK, pharmacokinetic; SAD, single ascending dose.

# Safety, Pharmacokinetics, and Exploratory Efficacy of the PD-1 Inhibitor Budigalimab in ART-Suppressed People Living With HIV-1: Preliminary Analysis of 2 Phase 1b Studies Including an Analytical Treatment Interruption

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<sup>1</sup>Midway Immunology & Research Center, Fort Pierce, FL, USA; <sup>2</sup>Quest Clinical Research, San Francisco, CA, USA; <sup>3</sup>AbbVie, Inc., North Chicago, IL, USA; <sup>4</sup>University of Miami Miller School of Medicine, Miami, FL, USA; <sup>5</sup>McGill University Health Centre, Montreal, QC, Canada

# COMMUNITY SLIDE

## What do we know about the research with Budigalimab in HIV?

- Considering Budigalimab is a drug candidate that is similar to immunotherapy used in cancer., We need to know more about its safety and its effects in people living with HIV.

## What was the key finding(s) and take-home message?

- In this first study in people living with HIV, very low doses of budigalimab administered for a fixed duration appeared to have a favorable safety profile.
- Treatment with very low dose budigalimab (Q2W x4 doses) appeared to delay viral rebound and/or prolong ART-free viral control in 6 of 9 participants who had stopped taking ART under close monitoring; 2 participants remained off ART until the end of the study due to continuing viral suppression.

## Why is this important?

- Testing safety is a critical step in developing a drug candidate.

## How is this related to cure?

- Budigalimab has the potential to impact the response of the immune system to HIV.

## Why should we be excited (or not) about this?

- These studies suggest that we should keep studying budigalimab in HIV.

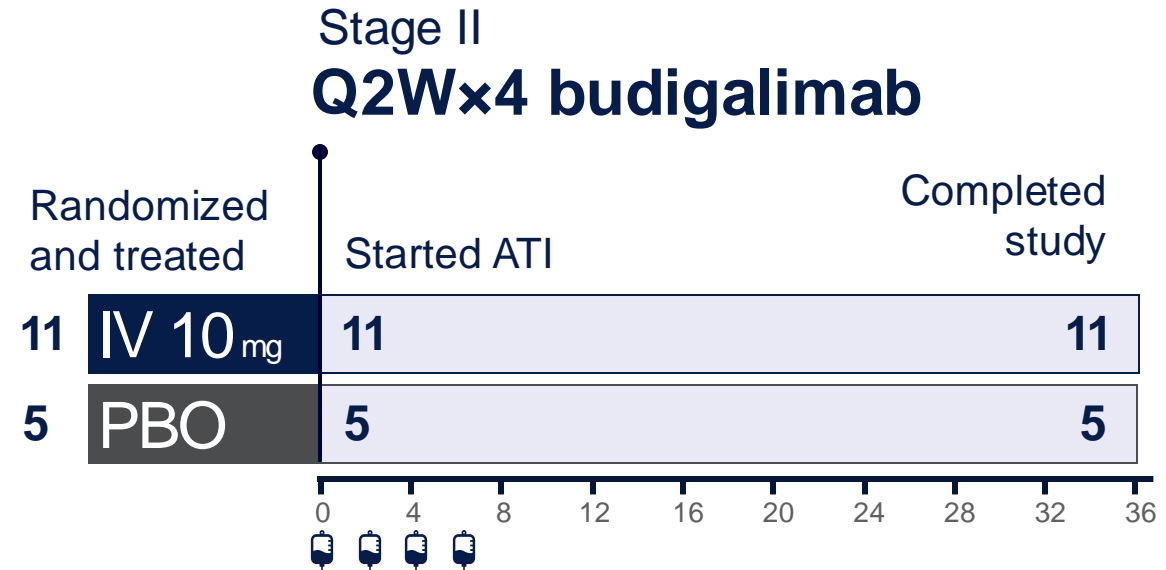
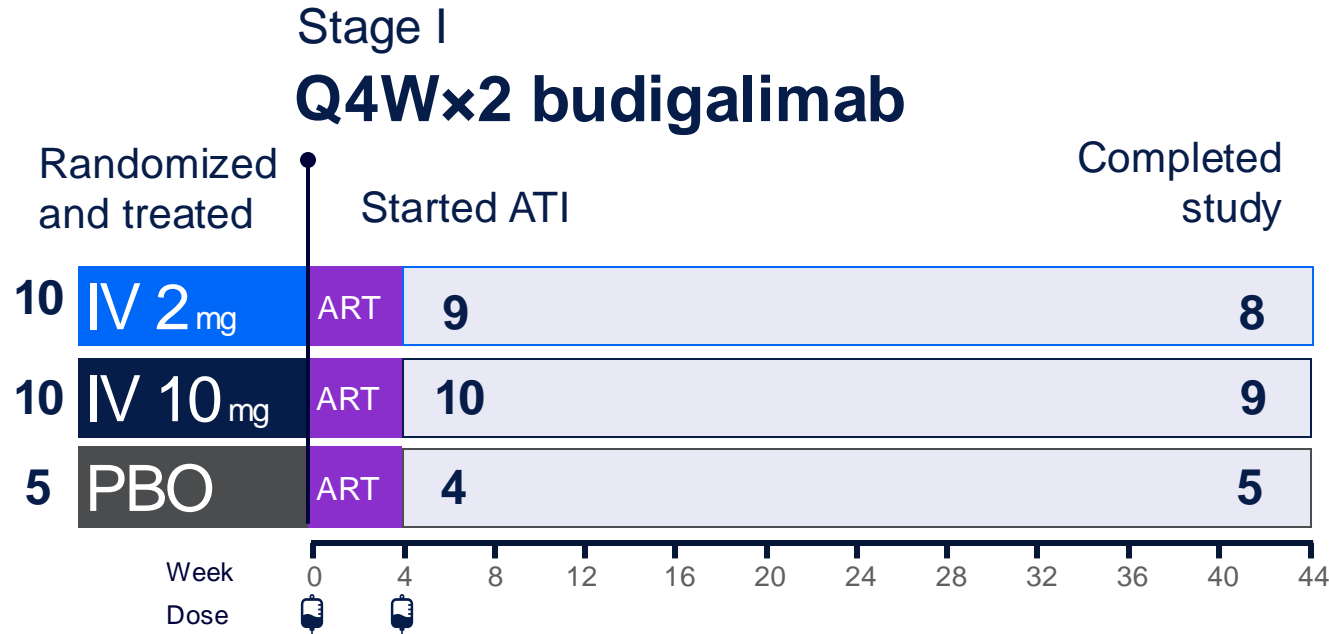
## What are next steps?

- More studies of budigalimab in combination with other immunotherapy drug candidates as a treatment for HIV.



# M19-939 and M19-972: Phase 1b randomized double-blind studies of budigalimab in PLWH

• M19-939



Week 0 indicates baseline/start of treatment.

ART, antiretroviral treatment; ATI, analytical treatment interruption; IV, intravenous; PBO, placebo; PLWH, people living with HIV; Q2W, every 2 weeks; Q4W, every 4 weeks.

# Participant characteristics

M19-939					
Characteristic	Stage I: Q4W×2			Stage II: Q2W×4	
	Placebo N=5	2 mg IV N=10	10 mg IV N=10	Placebo N=5	10 mg IV N=11
Male	5 (100)	10 (100)	10 (100)	5 (100)	10 (91)
Race					
Black/African American	0	2 (20)	3 (30)	0	3 (27)
White	5 (100)	8 (80)	7 (70)	5 (100)	8 (73)
Ethnicity					
Hispanic/Latinx	3 (60)	5 (50)	3 (30)	2 (40)	3 (27)
Age, y	44 (14)	42 (13)	47 (14)	49 (11)	47 (14)
HIV-1 disease, y	11 (13)	9 (8)	13 (9)	19 (6)	11 (7)
CD4+ cell count, cells/μL	652 (143)	887 (263)	785 (175)	680 (160)	775 (203)
Viral suppression on ART, y	10 (12)	7 (5)	13 (9)	16 (5)	11 (6)

Data are expressed as number (%) or mean [SD].

ART, antiretroviral treatment; IV, intravenous; Q2W, every 2 weeks; Q4W, every 4 weeks.

# Combined safety data for budigalimab in 73 participants

AE Participants with at least 1 AE	Placebo Combined N=18	M19-939 Stage I <sup>a</sup> N=20	M19-939 Stage II <sup>a</sup> N=11	M19-972 <sup>a</sup> N=24	Total N=73
Any AE	11 (61)	12 (60)	11 (100)	17 (71)	51 (70)
TR-AE	5 (28)	4 (20)	5 (45)	7 (29)	21 (29)
TR-AE leading to discontinuation	0	0	1 (9)	0	1 (1)
Serious AE	2 (11)	0	0	0	2 (3)
Serious TR-AE	0	0	0	0	0
Immune-related AE	0	1 (5) <sup>b</sup>	1 (9) <sup>c</sup>	1 (4) <sup>d</sup>	3 (4)
Death	0	0	0	0	0

All data are n (%).

<sup>a</sup>Stage I, 2-mg IV and 10-mg IV doses combined; Stage II, 10-mg IV dose; M19-972, 10-mg SC, 20-mg SC, and 10-mg IV doses combined.

<sup>b</sup>10-mg IV dose, grade 1 thyroiditis (days 59–128).

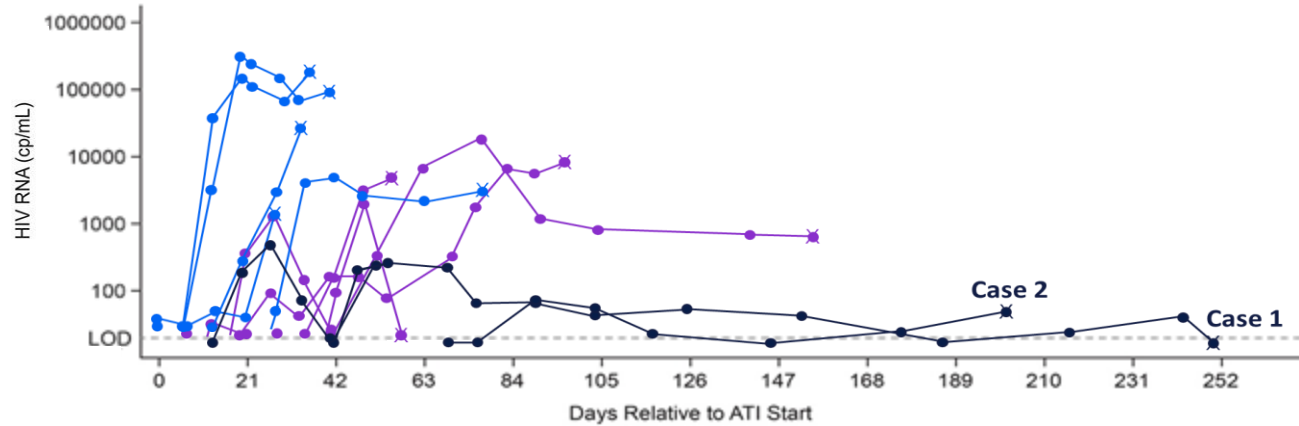
<sup>c</sup>10-mg IV dose, grade 1 hyperthyroidism (days 14–70).

<sup>d</sup>20-mg SC dose, grade 2 lichenoid drug eruption (days 15–51).

AE, adverse event; TR-AE, treatment-related adverse event.

# Exploratory efficacy: Viral load kinetics during ATI (M19-939)

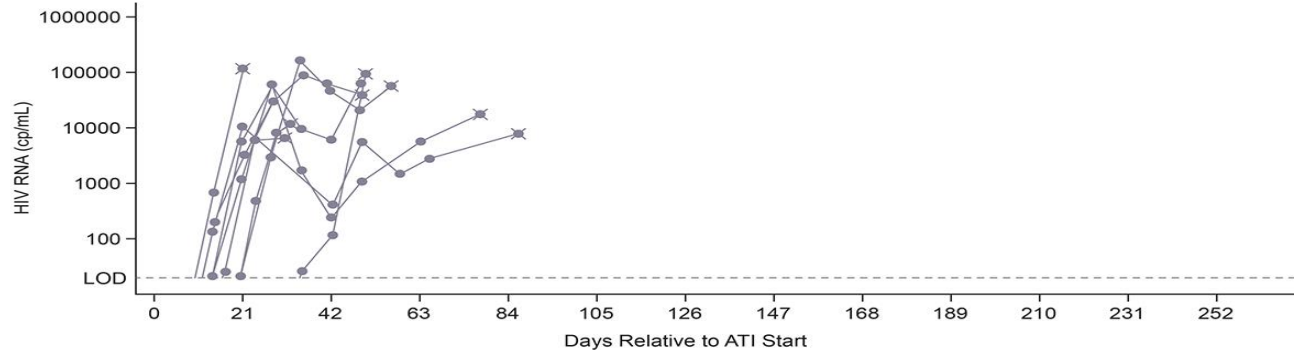
## 10-mg Q2W×4 Budigalimab (n=11)



### Legend

- Case 1 and 2
  - With delayed viral rebound or off-ART viral control<sup>a</sup>
  - Without delayed viral rebound or off-ART viral control<sup>a</sup>
  - ⊗ Placebo
- Last observed data point before ART restart

## Pooled Placebo (n=9)



	Pooled Placebo (n=10)	10-mg Q2W×4 Budigalimab (n=11)
Median time to viral rebound (90% CI), days	21 (21–24)	29 (21–49)

Left graphs in log scale; day 0 corresponds to baseline; in stage II, 2 participants discontinued study drug: 1 for protocol violation (prohibited live vaccination); 1 for AE (grade 1 reversible hyperthyroidism).  
<sup>a</sup>Defined as experiencing delayed viral rebound (>21 days) and/or off-ART viral control (<1000 cp/mL).  
 ART, antiretroviral therapy; ATI, analytical treatment interruption; LOD, limit of detection (20 cp/mL); Q2W, every 2 weeks.

# Conclusions

**Budigalimab administered for finite duration at very low doses was well tolerated in phase 1b studies of PLWH**

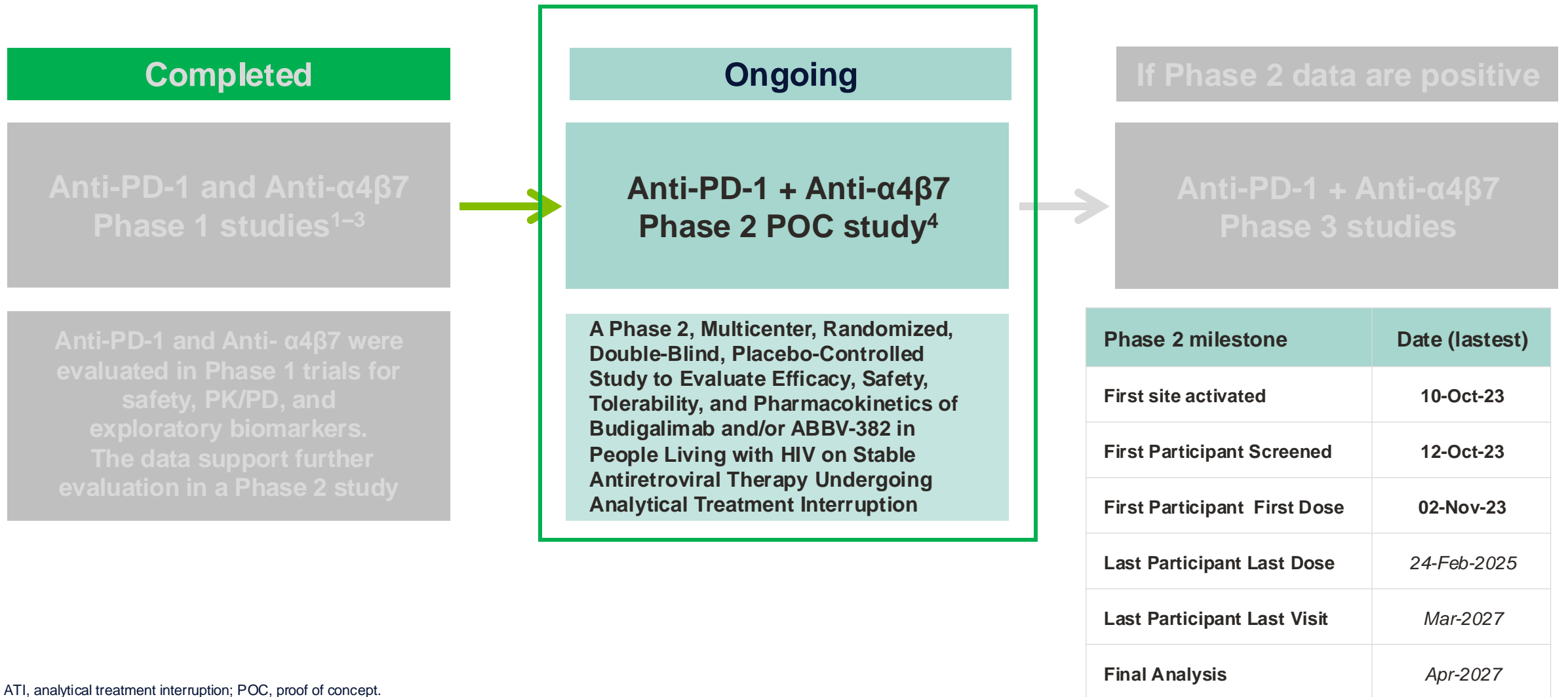
**Near-complete PD-1 receptor saturation was achieved for ~10 weeks post-ATI with four 10-mg biweekly IV doses**

**Biweekly administration of budigalimab 10 mg IV for 4 doses led to delayed viral rebound and/or ART-free viral control in 6 of 9 participants completing treatment, with 2 participants remaining off ART until the end of the study**

**Phase 2 studies examining ART-free viral control with budigalimab 10 mg are warranted**

ART, antiretroviral therapy; ATI, analytical treatment interruption; IV, intravenous; PD-1, programmed cell death protein; PLWH, people living with HIV.

# Abbvie HIV viral control proposed clinical program



ATI, analytical treatment interruption; POC, proof of concept.

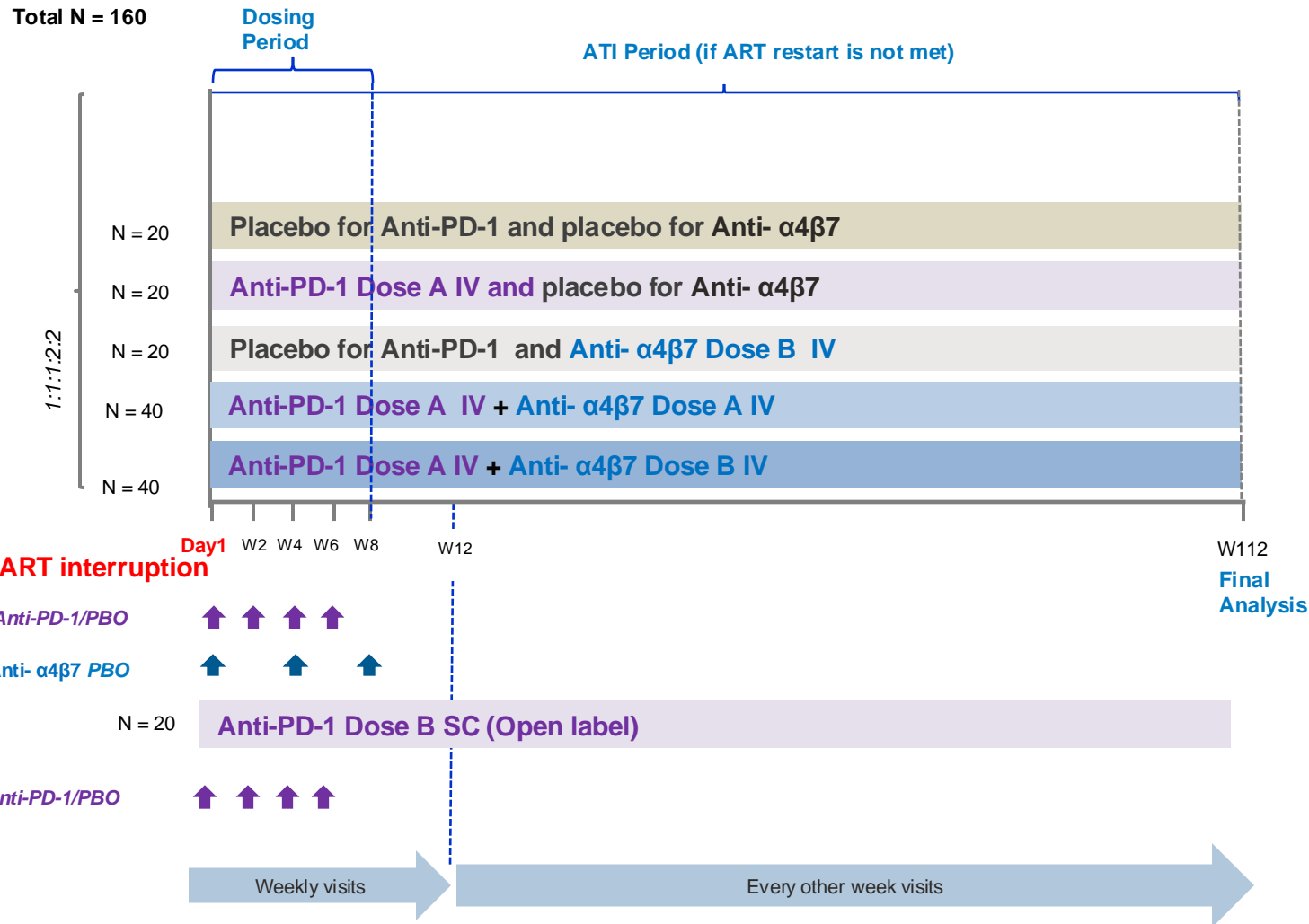


# Collaborators and Investigators: Countries and site selection

Countries	Number of Sites
United States	43
Puerto Rico	2
Brazil	1
Canada	6
United Kingdom	2
Spain	4
South Africa	4
France	2
Germany	3
Italy	4
Belgium	4
Poland	2
Japan	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>80</b>

- Sites were selected based on:
  - Experience with HIV Clinical Trials that includes an Analytical Treatment Interruption
  - Diversity
  - Site staff experience and structure to support study participants during the study
  - Site structure for drug infusions and PK collection
  - Enrollment expectations
- Sites were allowed/encouraged to share and discuss study/protocol/ICF with their local community representatives or local community boards.

# How is the study designed?



## Study DMC/DSMB

- Study has a DMC/DSMB (Composed of: Clinicians; Independent Statisticians; Community Representative) overseeing study safety

## Study Drug Administration

- Anti-PD-1 (or placebo) given as an IV infusion for 30 minutes
- Anti- α4β7 (or placebo) given as an IV infusion for 1.5 hours
- For the combination arms Anti-PD-1 is given first followed by a 1 hour wait then Anti- α4β7 is given

## Flexibility for reduce burden to participants:

- From week 11: On-site; virtual visits with local labs or home-visits are offered (PI/Participant choice)
- At anytime additional HIV RNA and CD4 can be collected per PI/Participant request.
- Participants back on ART and have already reached re-suppression have the option to collect HIV RNA/CD4 on site less frequent visits only



# Participation criteria

## Inclusion Criteria:

- Adults from 18 to 70 years old of any sex or gender
- A condition of general good health in the opinion of the investigator, based upon the results of a medical history, physical examination, vital signs, laboratory profile, and a 12-lead electrocardiogram (ECG).
- Must be on antiretroviral therapy (ART) for at least 12 months prior to screening and on a stable ART regimen for at least 8 weeks prior to screening (current ART regimen cannot include Non-nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitor [NNRTI] or long-acting ART).
- Negative human immuno-deficiency virus (HIV)-2 antibody (Ab)
- Cluster of differentiation 4 (CD4+) T cell count  $\geq 500$  cells/ $\mu$ L at screening and no known evidence of CD4+ T cell count  $< 500$  cells/ $\mu$ L in the last 12 months prior to screening
- Participant must have plasma HIV-1 ribonucleic acid (RNA) below the lower limit of quantitation (LLOQ) at screening and for at least 12 months prior to screening

## Exclusion Criteria:

- Prior exposure to long acting antiretrovirals within 24 weeks or within a period defined by 5 half-lives, whichever is longer, prior to randomization and prior to the first dose of study drug.
- History of CD4+ T cell nadir of  $\leq 200$  cells/ $\mu$ L during chronic HIV infection.
- History of medical disorders (other than HIV-1 infection) that, in the opinion of the investigator, might expose the participant to undue risk of harm, confound study outcomes or prevent the participant from completing the study.

# What is the study measuring?

## Safety

Outcome Measure	Measure Description	Time Frame
Number of participants with adverse events (AEs)	An AE is defined as any untoward medical occurrence in a patient or clinical investigation in which a participant is administered a pharmaceutical product which does not necessarily have a causal relationship with this treatment	Up to approximately week 112

## Efficacy

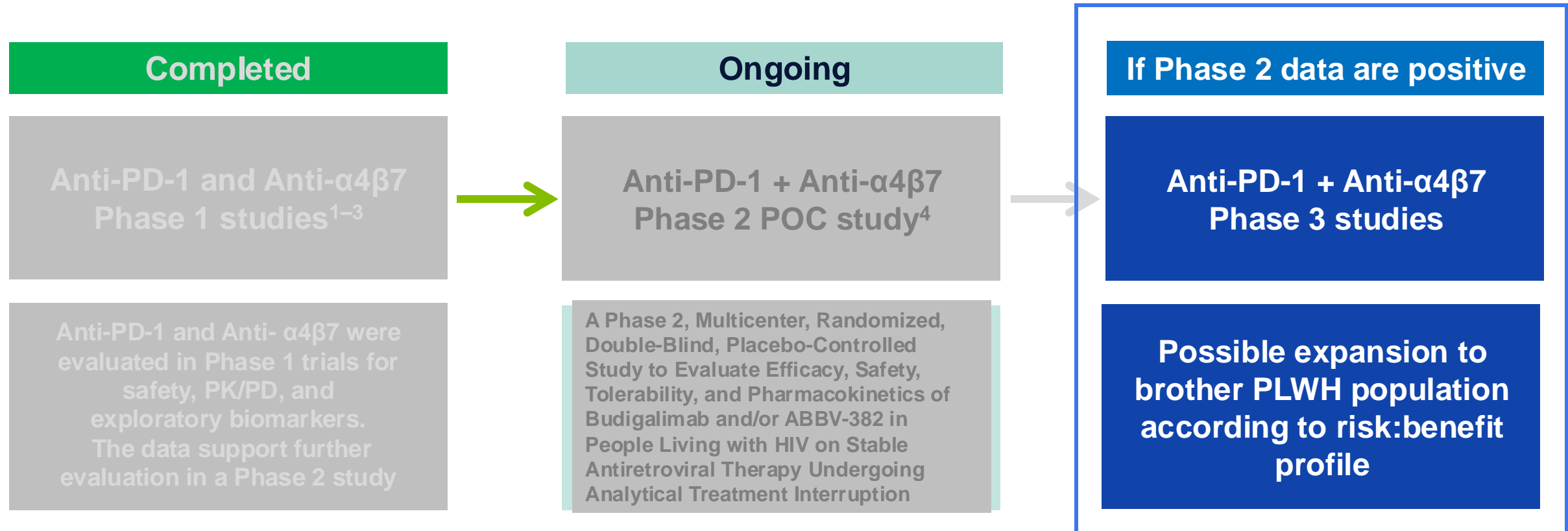
Outcome Measure	Measure Description	Time Frame
Primary Outcome Measure		
Percentage of participants with viral control without antiretroviral (ART) restart	Percentage of participants who achieve viral control (viral load <1000 copies/mL) without ART restart at week 24	Week 24
Secondary Outcome Measures		
Median Peak Viral Load (At Rebound) prior to restarting ART	The median peak viral load (at rebound) before re-starting ART	Up to 112 weeks
Median Time to First Rebound to $\geq 1000$ copies/mL during ART Interruption	The median time to rebound to $\geq 1000$ copies/mL during ART interruption	Up to 112 weeks

# ART Restart Criteria for the study aligned with recommendations, regulatory requests and community feedback

1. Confirmed HIV-1 viral load  $\geq 100,000$  copies/mL, defined as 2 or more consecutive measurements\*
2. HIV-1 viral load  $\geq 10,000$  copies/mL, confirmed over a 4-week period \*
3. HIV-1 viral load  $\geq 1,000$  copies/mL, confirmed over a 6-week period \*
4. Confirmed absolute CD4 count  $< 350$  cells/ $\mu$ L, defined as 2 consecutive measurements.
5. Pregnancy
6. Grade  $\geq 3$  RRS during ATI (any RRS symptom grade 3 or higher)
7. Any AE which, in the judgment of the investigator, presents a substantial clinical risk to the participant to continue ATI
8. Any social or behavioral condition which, in the judgment of the investigator, presents a substantial clinical risk to the participant to continue ATI, including participant's request

\*To meet this criteria, participant must have multiple lab results confirming the HIV-1 viral load over the specified length of time.

# Abbvie HIV viral control proposed clinical program



ATI, analytical treatment interruption; POC, proof of concept.

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**It takes a village ...**



**HIV  
community  
Study sites  
staff**

*Study participants and their families!*

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