



**Healey & AMG Center**

Sean M. Healey & AMG Center for ALS  
at Massachusetts General Hospital



# The HEALEY ALS Platform Trial: Efficient Design and Implementation of Regimens

**Marianne Chase, Melanie Quintana, PhD,  
Annette De Mattos, MPH, Brittney Harkey, PhD**

**2024**  
**BOSTON**

**SCT** | 45TH  
ANNUAL MEETING

# Disclosures

---

- All presenters have no relevant disclosures to report

# Overview of the HEALEY ALS Platform Trial

**Marianne Chase**

Senior Director of Clinical Trial Operations  
Healey & AMG Center for ALS at Mass General



# The HEALEY ALS Platform Trial is grounded in robust academia – industry partnership



Engaged patient community  
More than 250 companies in the ALS space  
Many new investigational drugs waiting to be tested

# HEALEY ALS Platform Trial

Traditional



	Intervention
Disease	Therapy A



Platform



	Intervention		
Disease	Therapy A	Therapy B	Therapy C



# The HEALEY ALS Platform Trial aims to meet the needs of the ALS community

Several advantages over traditional trials



Reduces placebo



Cuts time



Cuts costs

Rapidly move drugs that are more likely to succeed to phase 3



# Worked with the entire ALS Community to launch the trial efficiently

Platform trials are a win for all stakeholders

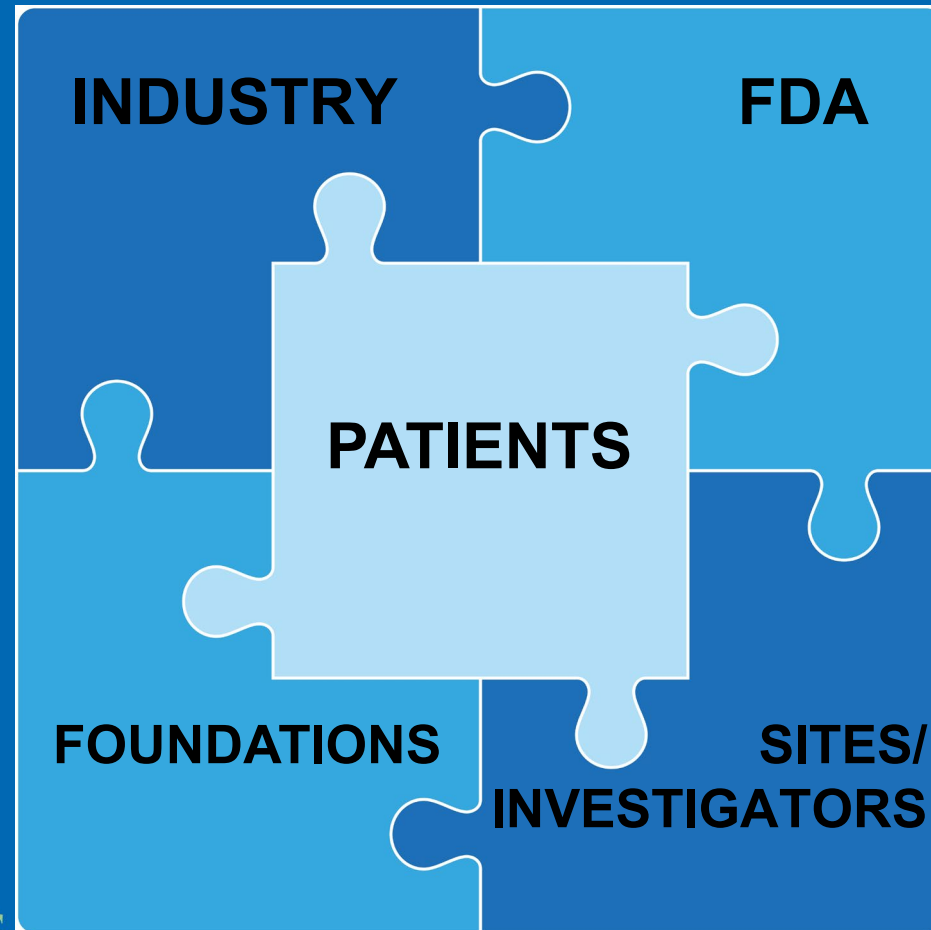
ALS Platform Trial  
Industry Workshop

“Platform trials may possibly  
be the best thing I have seen  
since diagnosis!”



5-stars Patient-Centric Trial  
Design (PaCTD) Rating

SCT | 45TH  
ANNUAL MEETING



# Common Protocol and Shared Infrastructure Allow for Operational and Scientific Efficiencies

## MASTER PROTOCOL



Regimen G

Regimen F

Regimen E

Regimen D

Regimen C

Regimen B

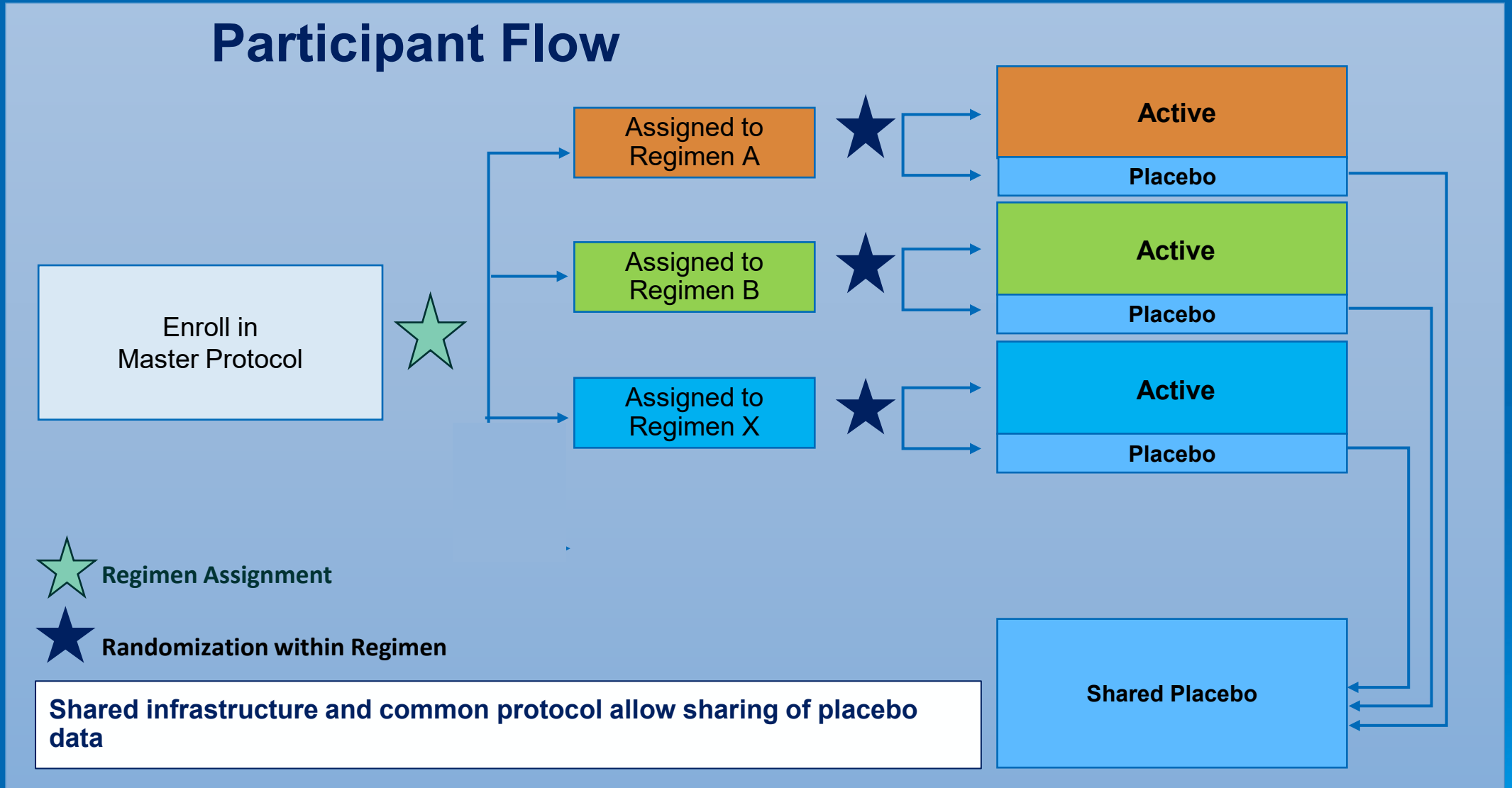
Regimen A

1 Protocol  
1 single IRB  
Central Governance

7 Regimens  
70+ Enrolling Sites  
>1300 Participants

# Master Protocol to Regimen Protocol (RSA)

## Participant Flow



# Streamlined Regulatory Structure



- Healey team leads all FDA interactions
- 30-day review of each new Regimen Protocol

## Single IND application

Master Protocol  
Each Regimen Protocol added as an Amendment

Amendments  
Safety Reports  
Meeting Requests

## Single IRB application

Master Protocol  
Each Regimen Protocol

Each site added as an amendment



- Each site has Reliance Agreement with MGH IRB
- IRB full board review for each new drug added
- Sites are added as an amendment

# Database Structure



## This database only includes data on Master Protocol Screening

- Sites enter Master Protocol screening data
- If the participant meets eligibility, they are randomly allocated to 1 Regimen

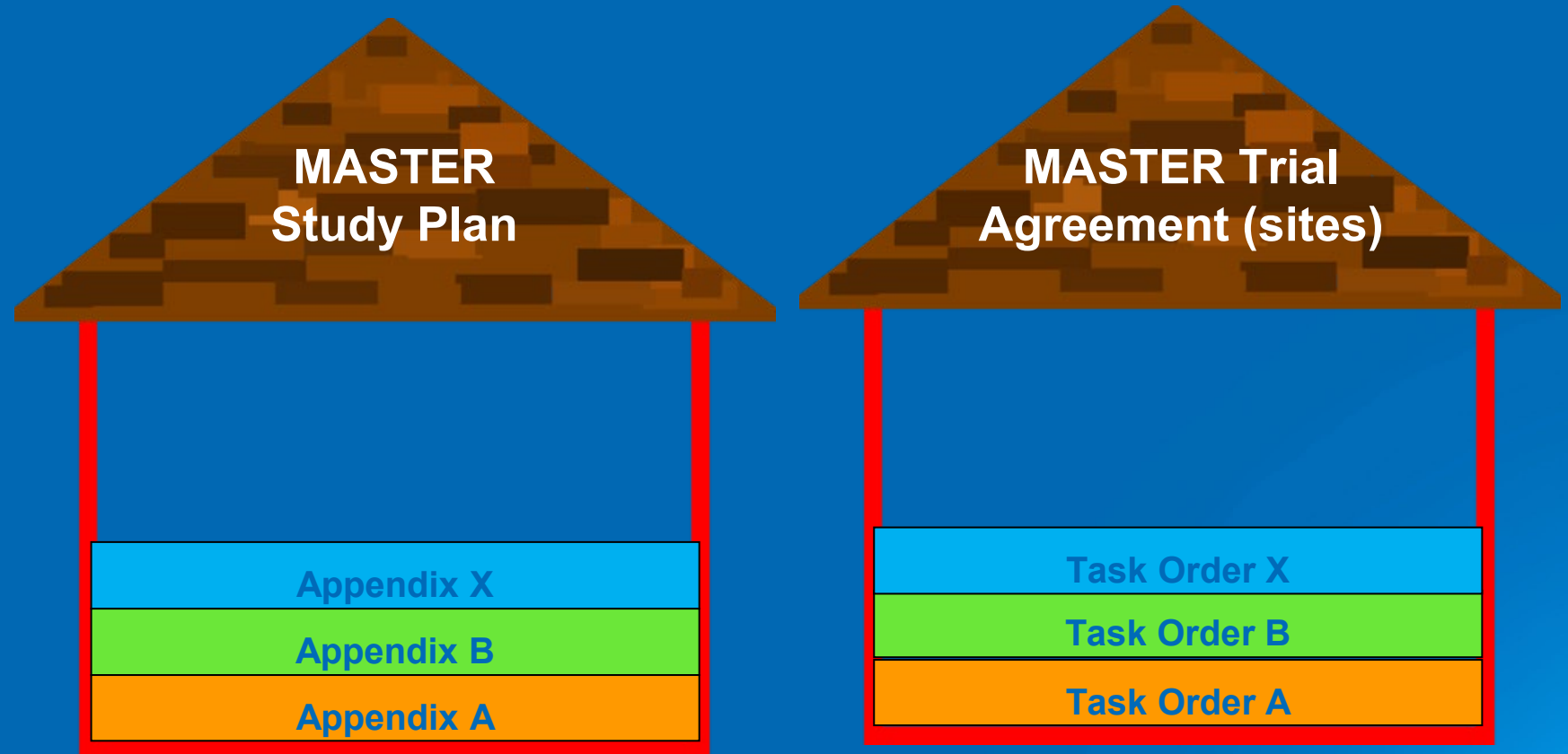


## Each Regimen database includes all data collected for that Regimen

- Sites enter Regimen-specific screening data
- Randomization occurs via IRT system
- Sites enter data from all study visits

# Streamlined Operational Structure

- Statistical Analysis Plan
- Data Management Plan
- Safety Management Plan
- Monitoring Plan



# THERAPY EVALUATION COMMITTEE

## Goals

This group identifies the best therapeutic candidates from promising available drug candidates for inclusion in ALS Platform Trial. Therapies will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- a. Relevance of target in human disease
- b. Pre-clinical data to support target and therapy
- c. Clinical trial readiness (availability of compound and placebo, IND)
- d. Availability of relevant biomarkers

Final therapy selection is determined in conjunction with the Executive Committee to include financial and operational considerations. The Therapy Evaluation Committee will meet monthly or ad hoc as needed for reviews.



## Membership

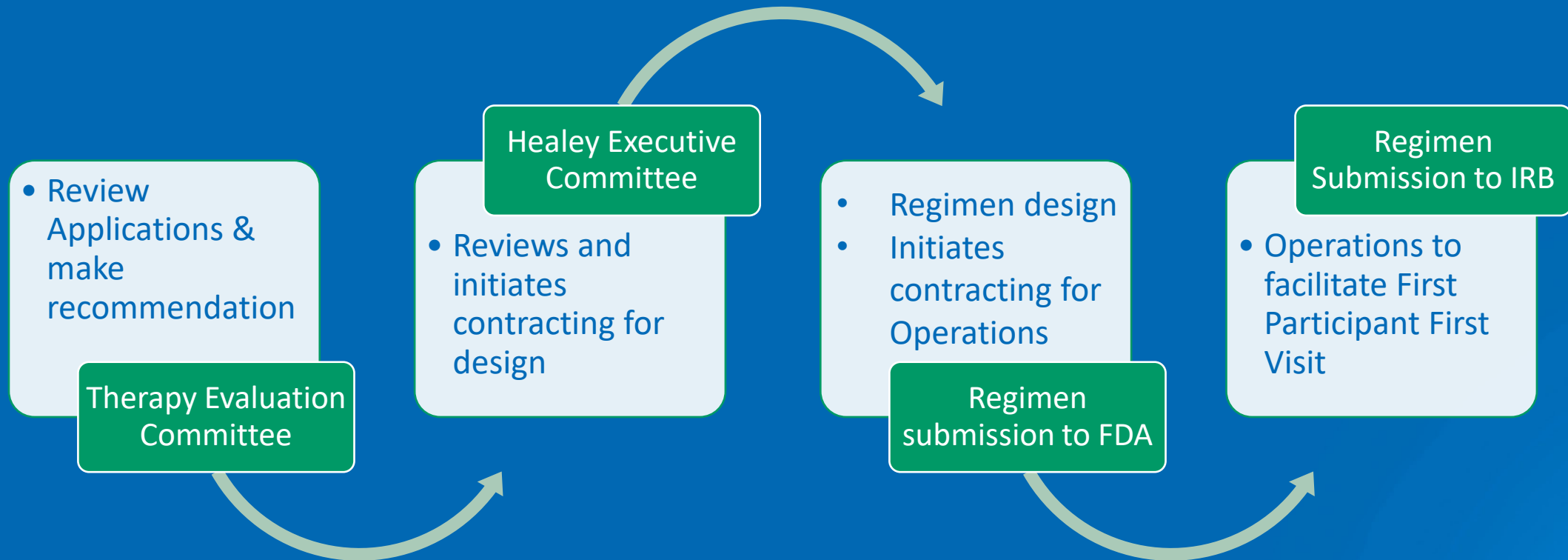
1. Timothy Miller, MD, PhD, Chair
2. Robert Brown, MD, PhD
3. Merit Cudkowicz, MD, MSc
4. Jonathan Katz, MD
5. Clotilde Lagier-Tourenne, MD PhD
6. Melanie Leitner, PhD
7. Ghazaleh Sadri-Vakili, PhD
8. Jeremy Shefner, MD, PhD

45 applications  
received and  
reviewed to date

Standing Monthly  
reviews  
Meetings

Anticipate adding  
up to 3 new  
companies every  
year

# Efficient Process Application to Enrollment



**Thank you!**

# The Evolution of Statistical Design within a Platform Trial

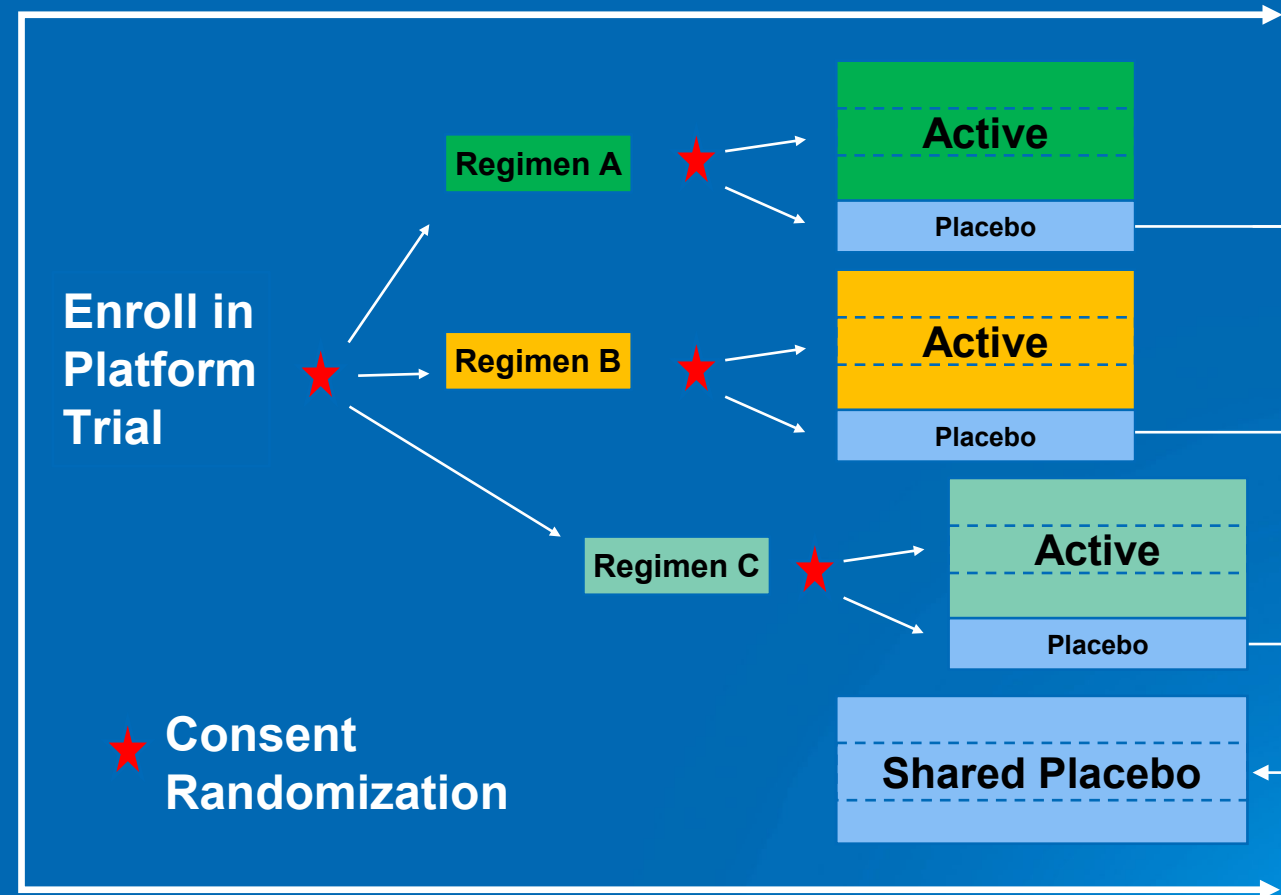
**Melanie Quintana, PhD**  
Senior Statistical Scientist  
Berry Consultants

# Platform Efficiencies

- Shared infrastructure means quicker time to start a new therapy
- Single consensus reached on optimal design across multiple partners
- *Statistical efficiency in terms of sample size from a shared/common control arm*
- *Fewer participants on control*
- *Ability to screen more agents faster and quickly reject ineffective therapies*

# Example Master Protocol: *HEALEY ALS Platform Trial*

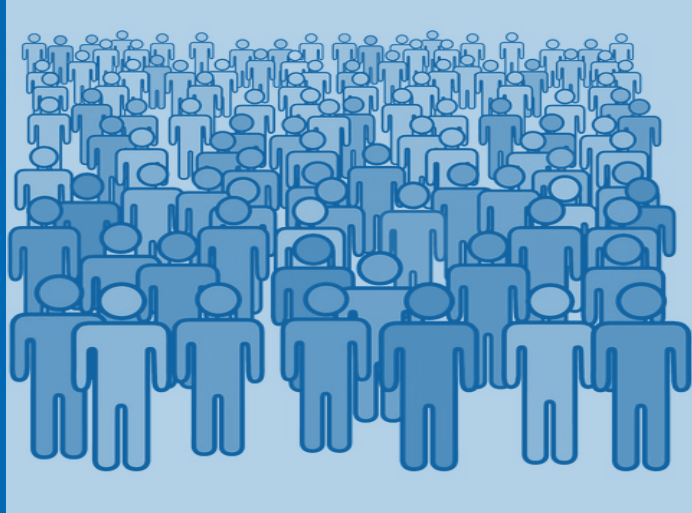
- **Adaptive Platform Trial**
  - Perpetual trial that continuously tests interventions within ALS
  - Frequent platform-wide interims to stop regimens for early futility
- **N = 160 w/ 3:1 randomization** for each regimen, Active Treatment vs. Placebo
  - Shared placebo among all regimens
  - 80% power for 30% slowing
  - Type I error of 5%



# ALS Platform Efficiencies: Per Regimen

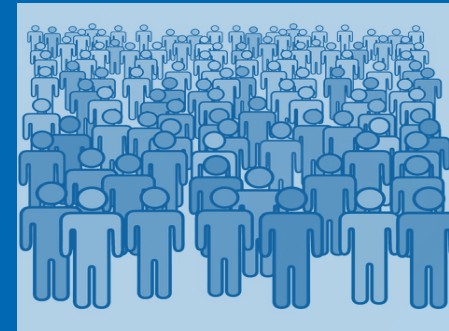
## Traditional Drug Development

N=240 for 80% Power  
120 Participants on Placebo



## Adaptive Platform Trial w/ Shared Controls

N=160 for 80% Power  
40 Participants on Placebo



N reduced by 1/3  
# PBO participants reduced by 2/3

# ALS Platform Efficiencies: How quickly can we find the first effective therapy?

## Traditional Drug Development

Sequence of fixed 1:1 trials  
Lag of 3 months between trials

10 Treatments  
Tested

12  
Years

2400  
Participants  
1200 on  
Placebo

## Adaptive Platform Trial w/ Shared Controls

Perpetually enrolling max. of 3 regimens

10 Treatments  
Tested

4  
Years

1600  
Participants  
400 on  
Placebo

# Platform Statistical Efficiencies + Complexities

***Sharing of controls increases power and decreases the number of participants needed to go on placebo – backbone of the platform trial!***

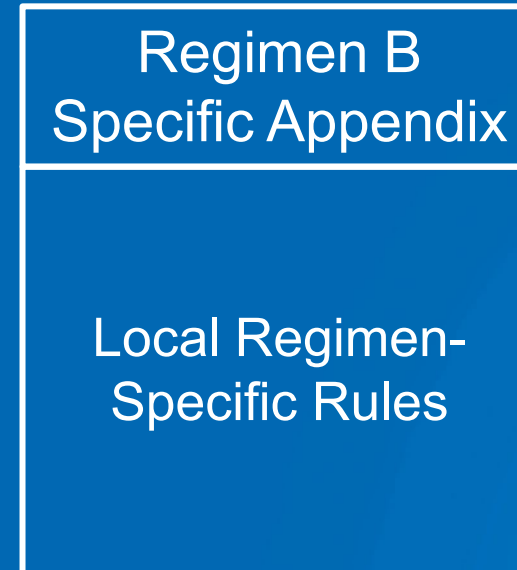
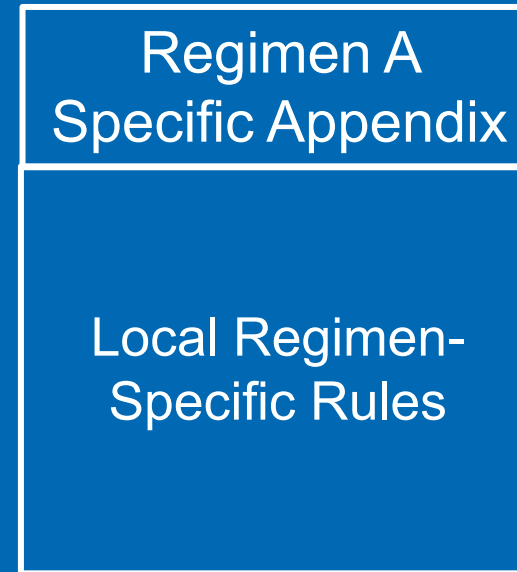
## **Careful considerations:**

**When developing a regimen-specific appendix, we need to be sure there is synergy with the other appendices**

Comparing results across different populations could lead to bias.

Shared controls require *similar patient populations through careful design choices & robust analysis methods* that can adjust for potential differences across shared control

# Master Protocol vs. Regimen Specific Appendix



# Platform Trial: Focus on Synergy

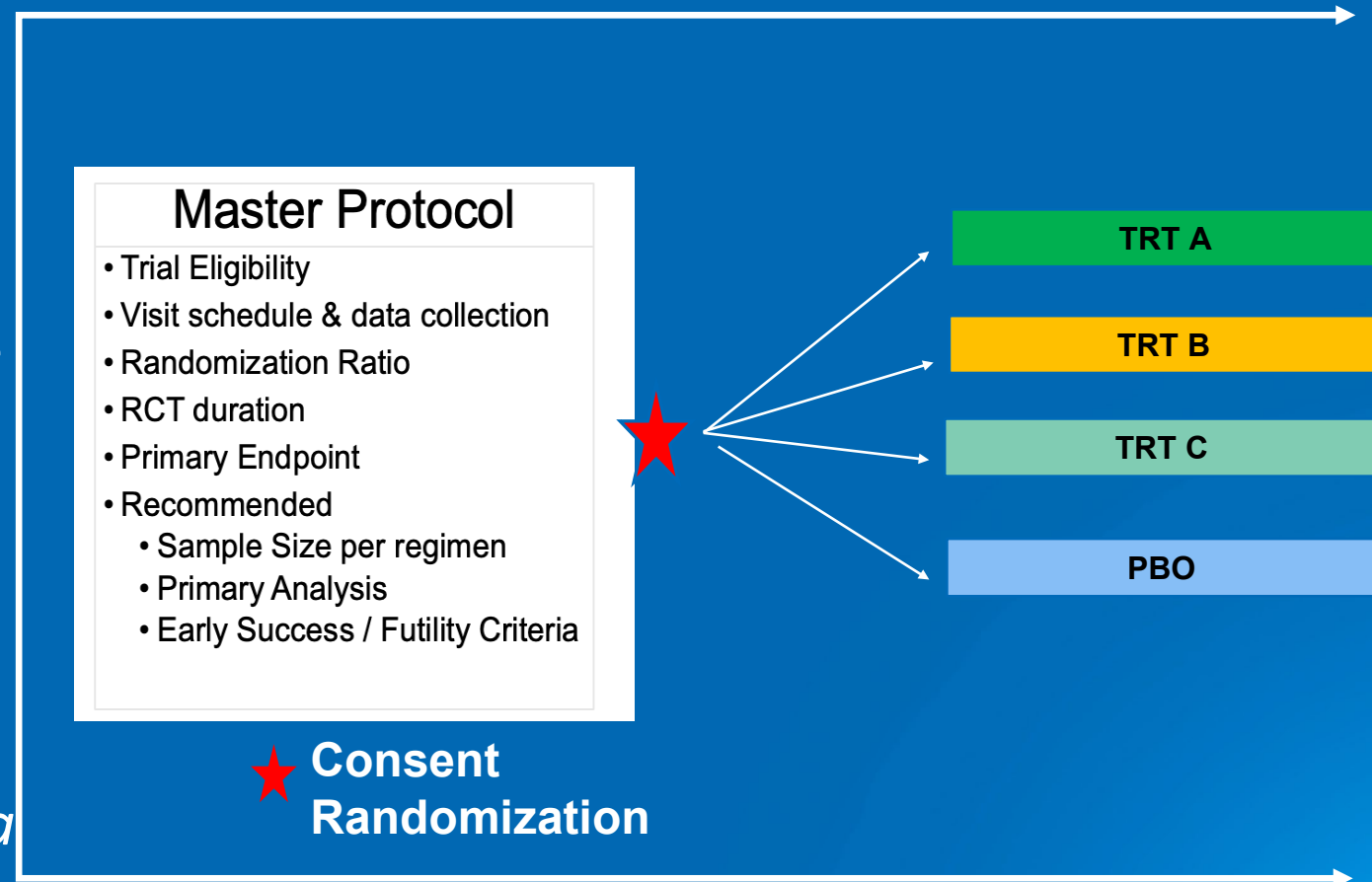
Master Protocol Driven Designs: Almost all design choices are specified in the MP.

## Examples:

- All arms enroll under the same MP inclusion/exclusion at the same time
- Single consent process
- Single common control arm

*Benefits: Same patient population in common control vs. each treatment arm*

*Risk: May not be able to accommodate a wide range of arms*



# Platform Trial: Focus on Flexibility

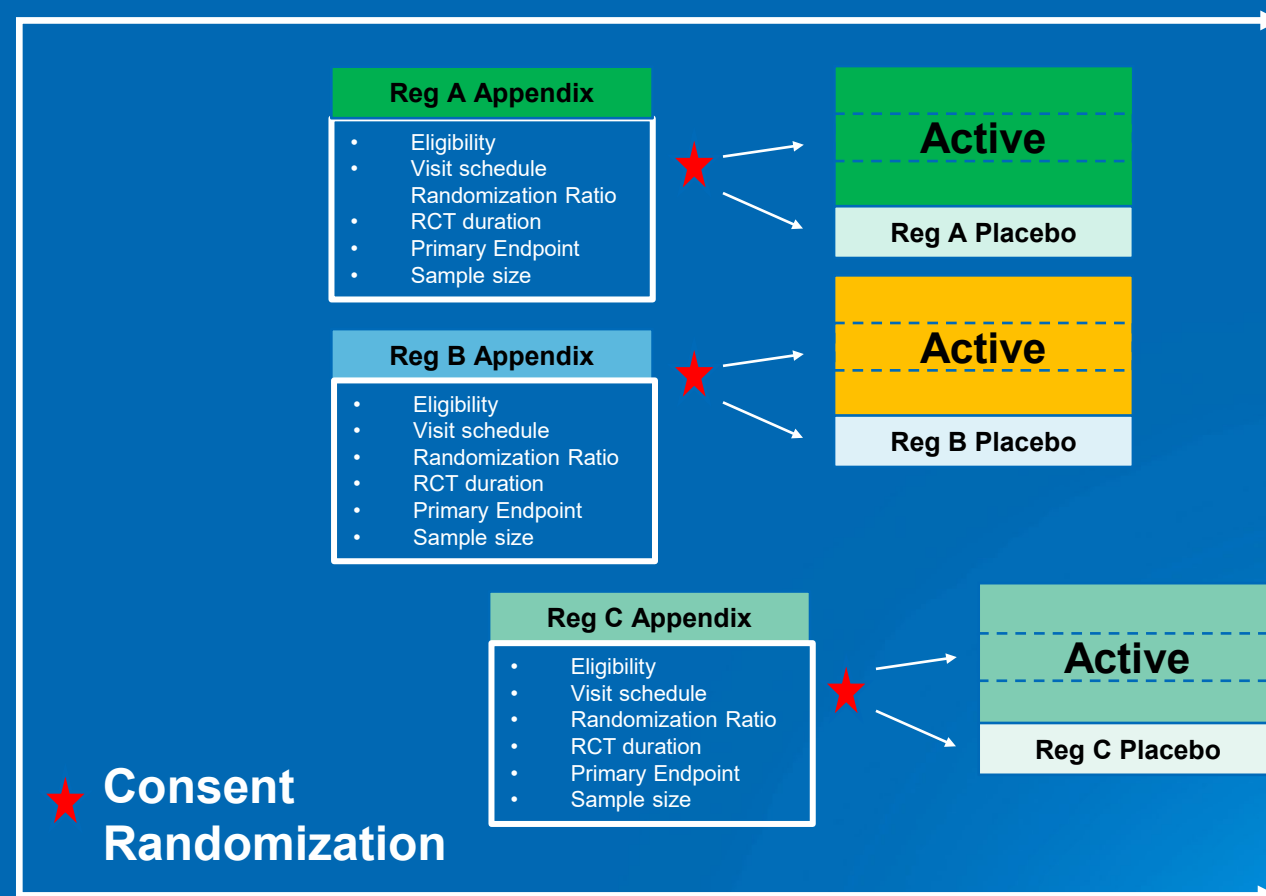
Appendix driven designs: Very little in MP and lots of flexibility in appendix

## Examples:

- All arms choose their own population to enroll, their own endpoint, their own visit schedule, etc...
- Each arm may start at different times

*Benefits: Extreme amount of flexibility for each arm*

*Risk: Lack of inferential synergy*



# Platform Trial: Balancing Synergy & Flexibility

## Master Protocol

- Trial Eligibility
- Visit schedule & data collection
- Randomization Ratio
- RCT duration
- Primary Endpoint
- Recommended
  - Sample Size per regimen
  - Primary Analysis
  - Early Success / Futility Criteria



## Regimen Specific Appendix

- Additional restrictions on Inclusion/exclusion
- Additional endpoints to be collected
- Study Stage / Goals
  - Success threshold / Type I error
  - Primary analysis
  - Bigger / smaller sample size
  - More aggressive futility

# Example: Regimen Flexibility in Determining Inclusion/Exclusion

*Concern with each regimen having their own inclusion/exclusion – lead to major differences in the populations*

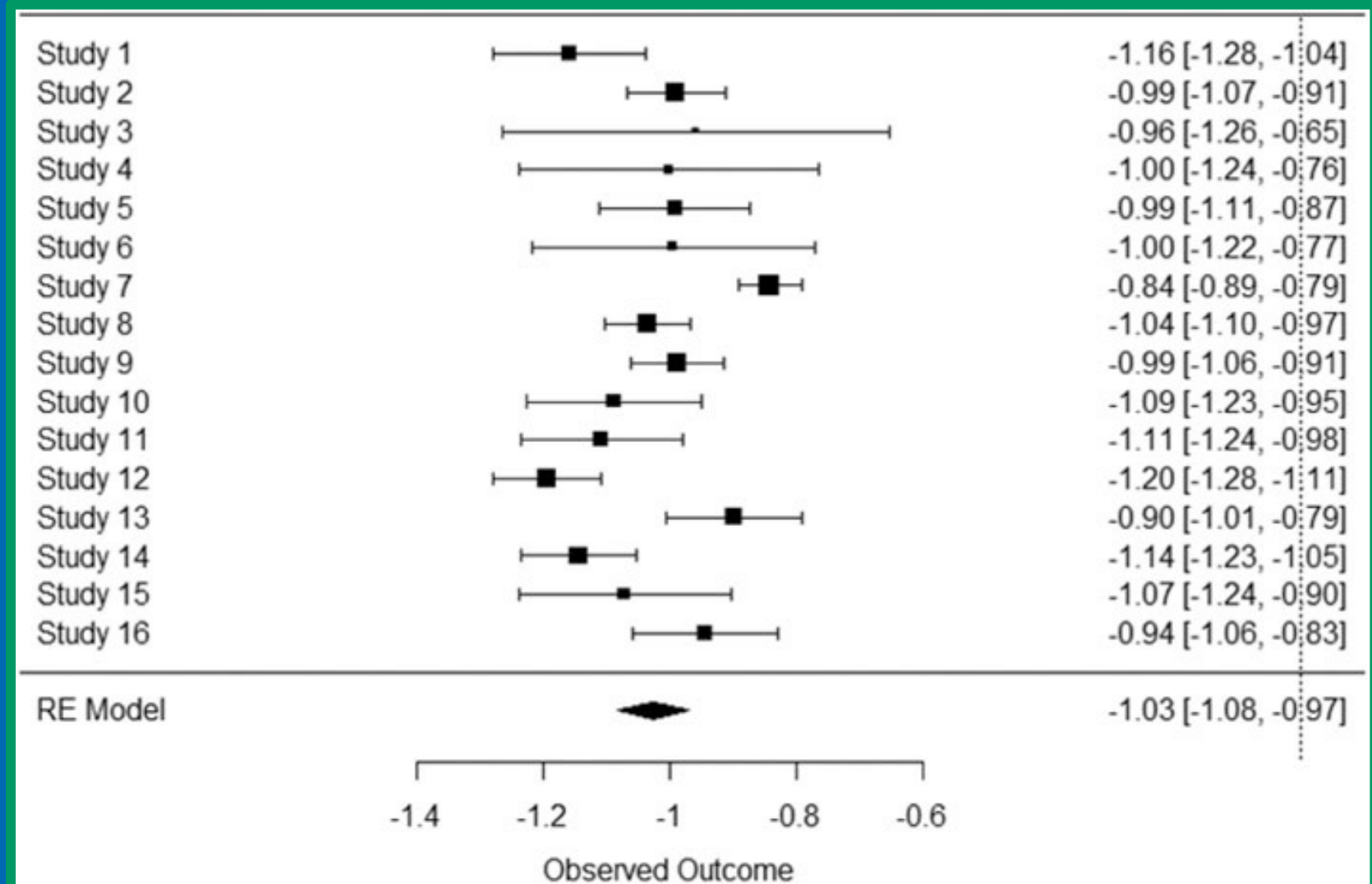
- Consider each proposed regimen-specific difference in inclusion/exclusion carefully – only allow necessary differences justified by safety or mechanism of action
- Judge if each difference is minor / major with respect to potential differences in primary outcome
- If judged to be a major difference limit shared control comparator to only those meeting this difference

# Platform Trial: Balancing Synergy & Flexibility

- Within the platform we attempt to minimize differences across regimens by careful design choices.
- Some differences may still be present & unavoidable
- Example potential differences:
  - Enrollment time
  - Mode of administration
  - Minor differences in Inclusion / Exclusion
- *Can we quantify the likelihood that this would lead to meaningful differences in shared controls?*
- *Can we account for these potential differences with robust analysis methods?*

# ALS Example: How likely are we to see differences in shared controls?

- Rates of progression across 16 different RCT in ALS from PRO-ACT database<sup>1</sup>
- Studies had different modes of administration, inclusion/exclusion criteria, enrolled at different sites and at different times.
- Mean estimate of -1.03 with SD = 0.11.



<sup>1</sup>Schoenfeld DA, F. D. M. E. e. a., 2019. Design and analysis of a clinical trial using previous trials as historical control. *Clinical Trials*, 16(5), pp. 531-538.

# Account for differences using robust analysis methods

- *Primary analysis adjusts for potential differences in regimen-specific controls across regimens and across time*

Potential differences in controls across regimens (regimen-specific random effects)

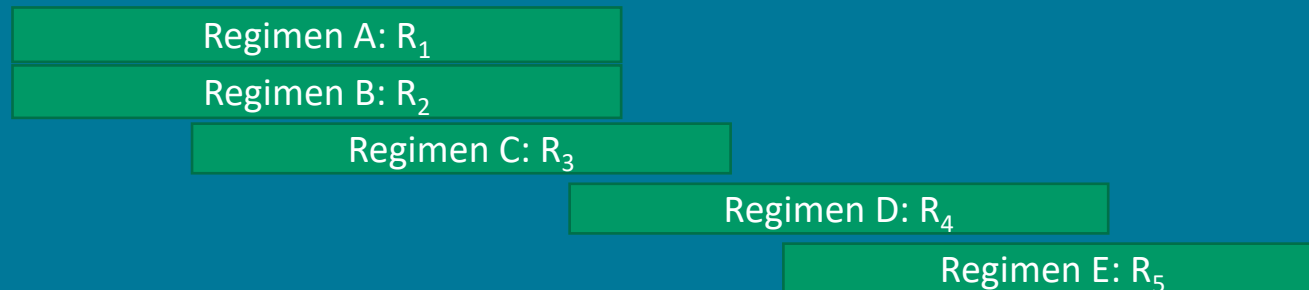
- Hierarchical modeling of regimen-specific random effects
- More similar they are = more sharing of information

## Example Hierarchical Model

$$R_i \sim N(\mu_R, \sigma_R^2); R = 1:5$$

$$\mu_R \sim N(0, 10^2);$$

$$1/\sigma_R^2 \sim \text{Gamma}(a, b)$$

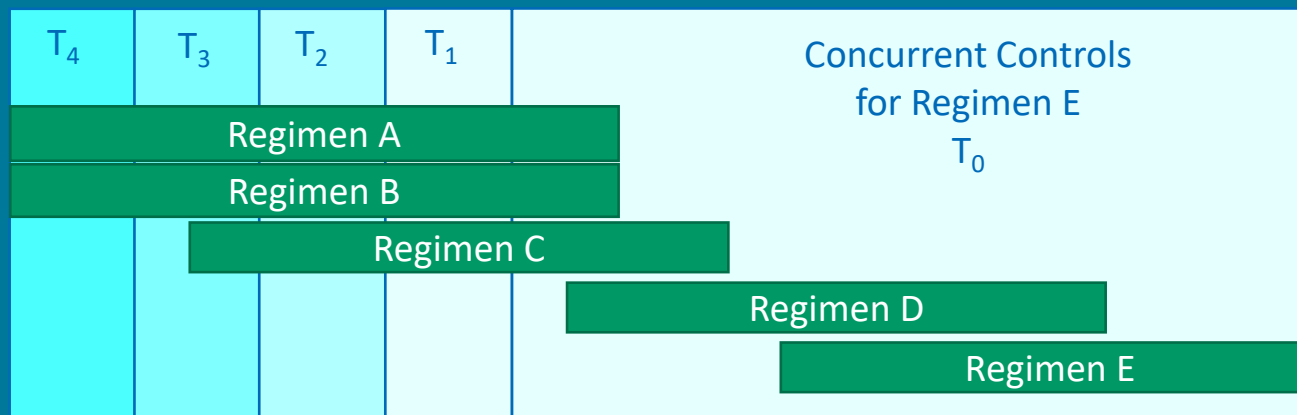


# Account for differences using robust analysis methods

- *Primary analysis adjusts for potential differences in regimen-specific controls across regimens and across time*

Differences in controls over time in analysis (time-trend effect)

- Concurrent vs. non-concurrently randomized controls
- All controls randomized within 24 weeks of regimen are considered concurrent.
- Model differences in the concurrent controls and each 12-week time bucket before

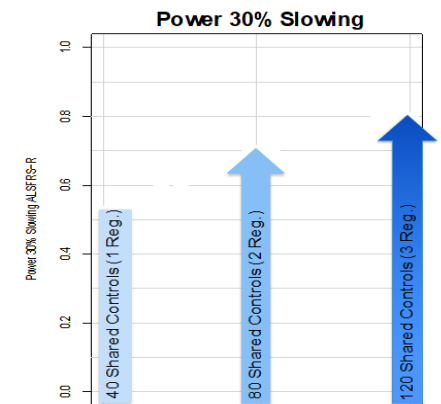
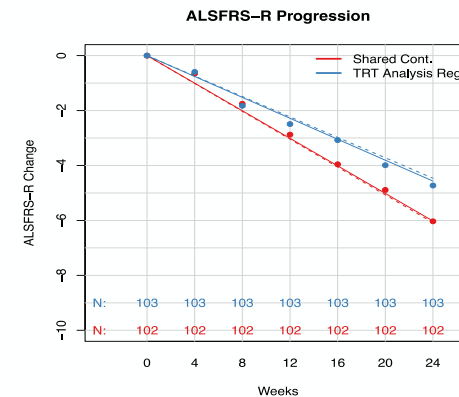
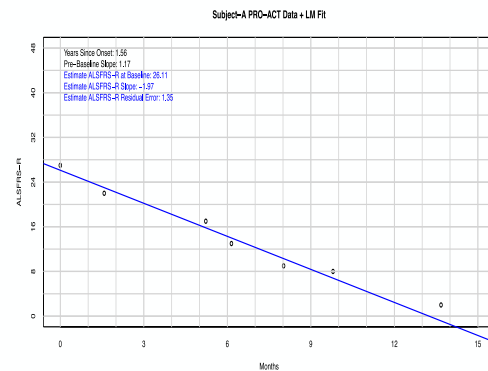
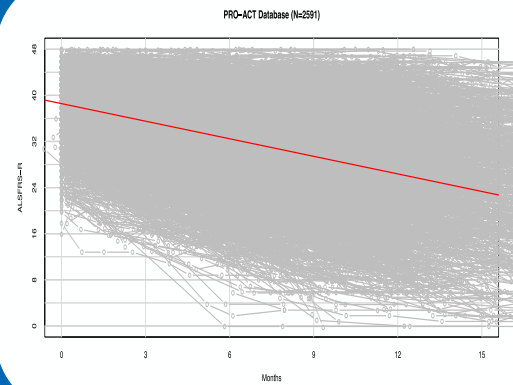
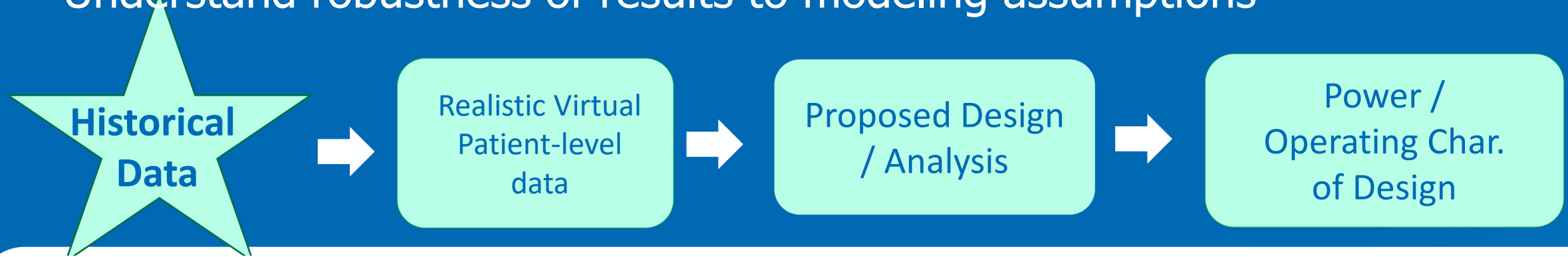


## Example Simple NDLM

$$T_0 \sim N(0, 10^2);$$
$$T_{n+1} \sim N(T_n, \sigma_t^2); n = 2:4$$
$$1/\sigma_t^2 \sim \text{Gamma}(a, b)$$

# How do we customize each new RSA? Clinical Trial Simulation

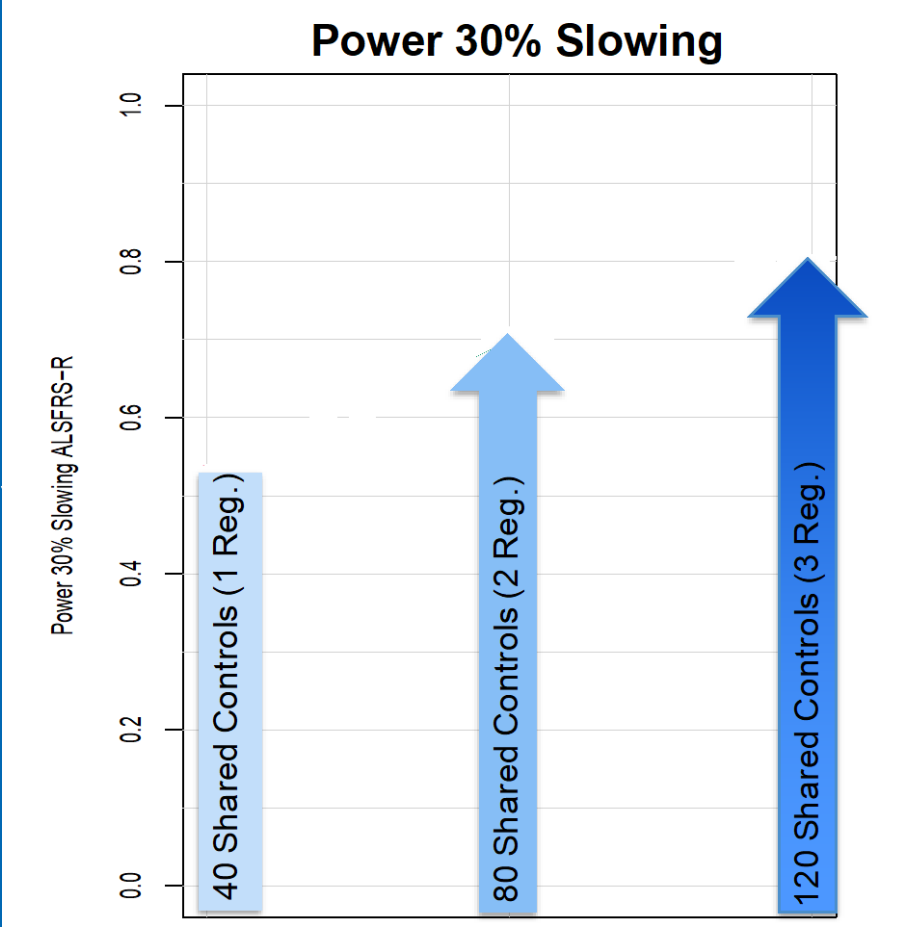
- Understand operating characteristics of proposed design / analysis method
- Optimize design/analysis under key trial parameters
- Understand robustness of results to modeling assumptions



# Clinical Trial Simulation: Power & Benefit of Shared Controls

- *Example Operating Characteristics for first 3 regimens.*
- *Clinical trial simulations and operating characteristics customized based on future regimen's goals / needs*
- *Example: Mult. Doses, Different N, Sharing controls*

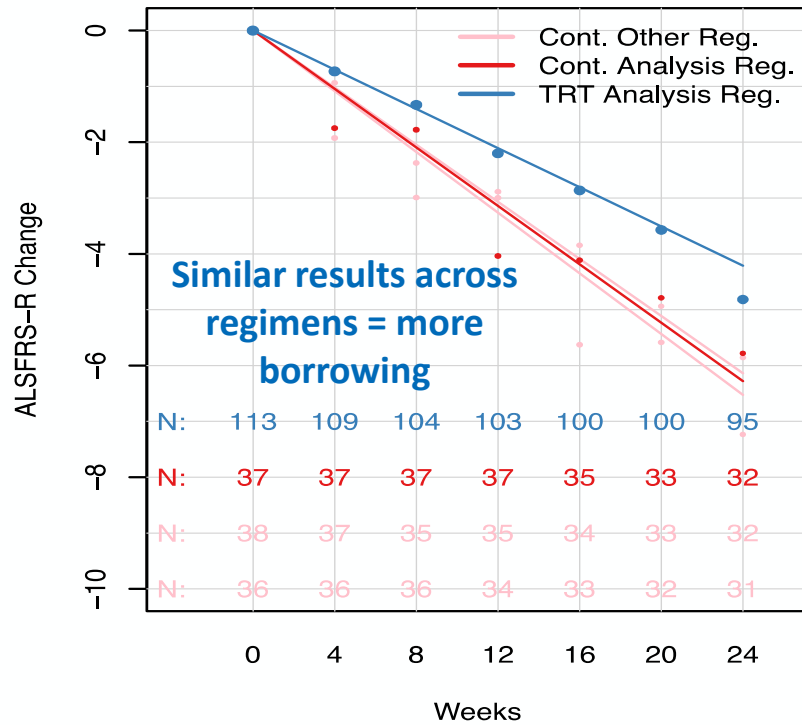
Operating Characteristics with Early stopping for Futility Assumes N=120 Treated and N=40 Controls + N=80 Shared controls from 2 other regimens				
Scenario (% Slowing ALSFRS-R)	HR Mort.	Mean Duration (Months)	Prob. Success	Prob. Early Futility
0%	1	14	0.024	0.28
25%	.75	15	0.61	0.01
30%	.7	15	<b>0.77</b>	<b>0.00</b>
35%	.65	15	<b>0.88</b>	<b>0.00</b>
30%	1	15	0.72	0.00
30%	1.3	15	0.68	0.01



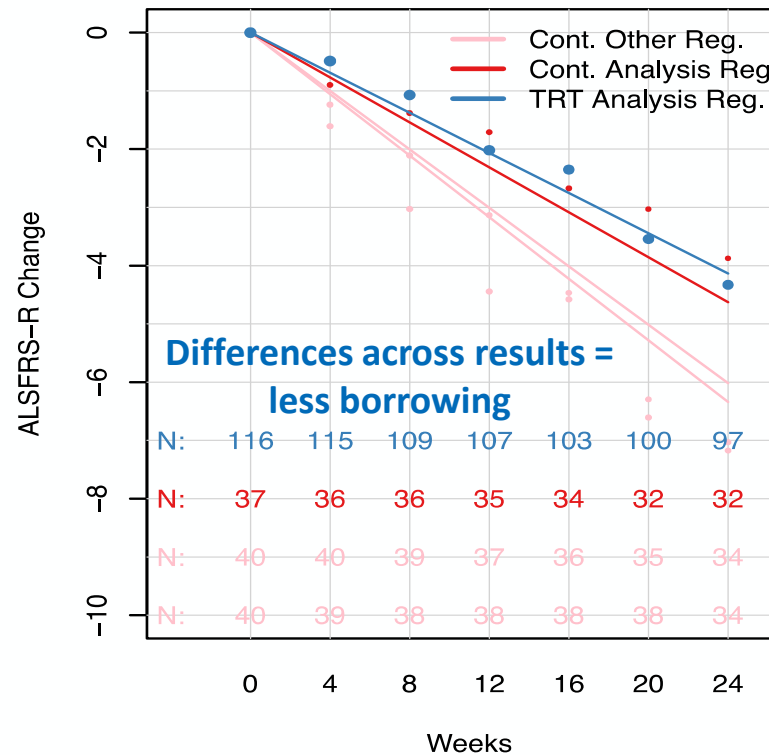
# Clinical Trial Simulation: Demonstration of Primary Analysis Method

- Primary analysis adjusts for potential differences in regimen-specific controls.

ALSFRS-R Progression

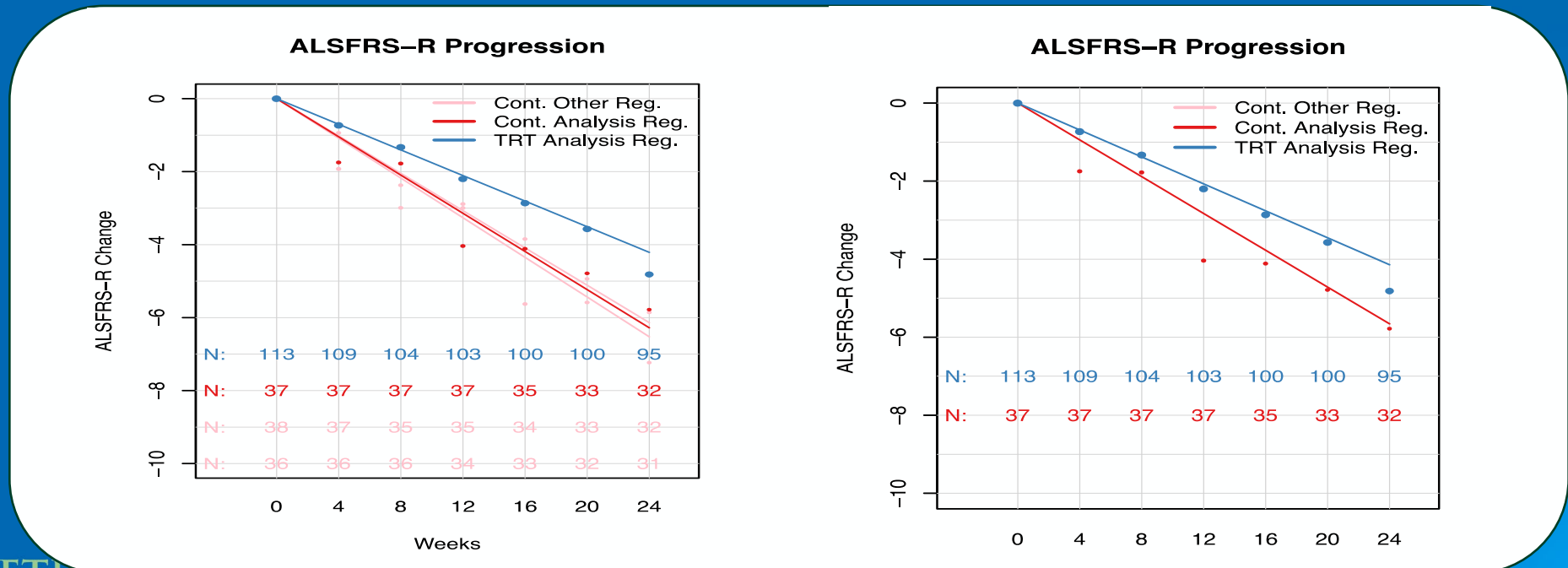


ALSFRS-R Progression

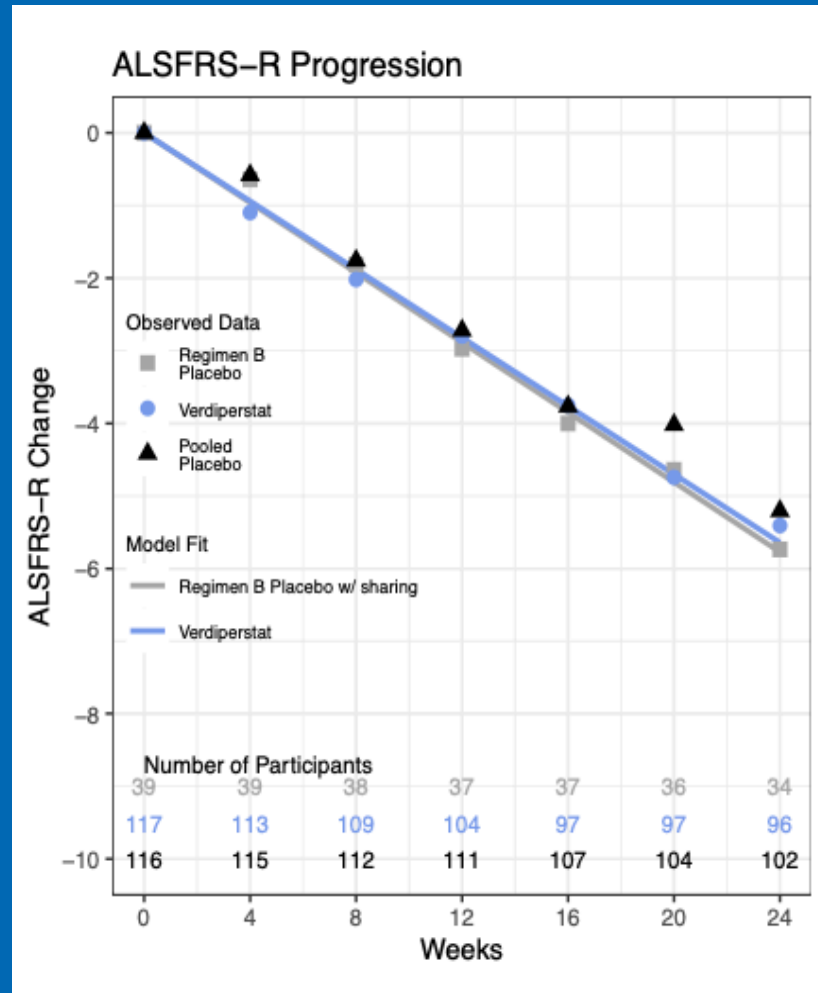


# Clinical Trial Simulation: Demonstration of Sensitivity Analyses

- *Sensitivity analyses look at consistency of results across different assumptions in shared control*
  - *Regimen-only analysis: Using only regimen-specific controls*
  - *Common mode of administration analysis*
  - *Concurrent only control analysis*



# ALS Platform: How have we done so far in practice?



## Potential differences in shared controls:

- Limit number of differences in inclusion/exclusion
  - Very few participants who were eligible for the MP were ineligible for their assigned regimen
- Overall similarities in outcomes across regimens
  - Rate of progression per month on ALSFRS-R for first 5 regimen-specific control groups were consistent.
  - Primary analysis results with sharing across controls were all consistent with sensitivity analysis using regimen-only controls

# Summary

- Backbone of platform trials = operational and inferential efficiencies brought about by synergy within the master protocol
- Need for regimen flexibility to accommodate needs of different types of investigational products
- Careful design + robust analysis methods can limit the potential for statistical bias due to potential differences in control populations
- Each platform must be considered individually – what is an appropriate justified assumption in one disease area may be completely inappropriate in another.

# References

- Paganoni S, Berry JD, Quintana M, et al. **Adaptive Platform Trials to Transform Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis Therapy Development.** Ann Neurol. 2022 Feb;91(2):165-175.
- Quintana M, et al. **Design and Statistical Innovations in a Platform Trial for Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis.** Ann Neurol. 2023 Sept.; 94 (3): 547-560

# Contracting Efficiencies Companies, Sites, and Vendors

**Annette De Mattos, MPH**  
Administrative Manager, Research  
Healey & AMG Center for ALS at Mass General



# HEALEY ALS Platform Trial

Traditional



	Intervention
Disease	Therapy A



Platform



	Intervention		
Disease	Therapy A	Therapy B	Therapy C

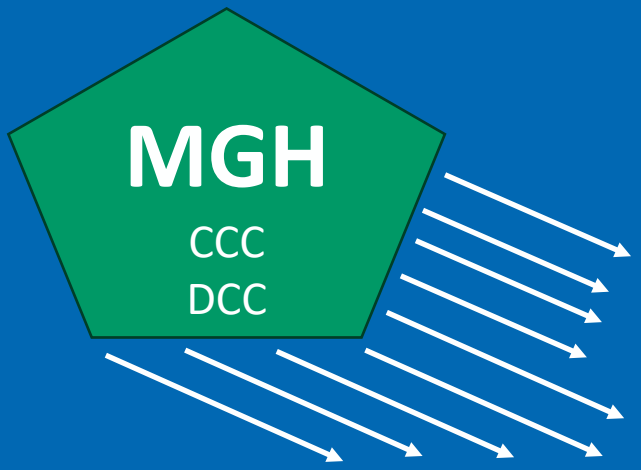
# Outline

- Overview of HEALEY ALS Platform Trial infrastructure
- Scope of contracting
- Sites & Vendors: Selection and master agreements
- Industry Partners: Tiered contracting
- Sites & Vendors: Task Orders & Scope of Work Orders
- Summary: Key benefits and factors that contribute to efficiency



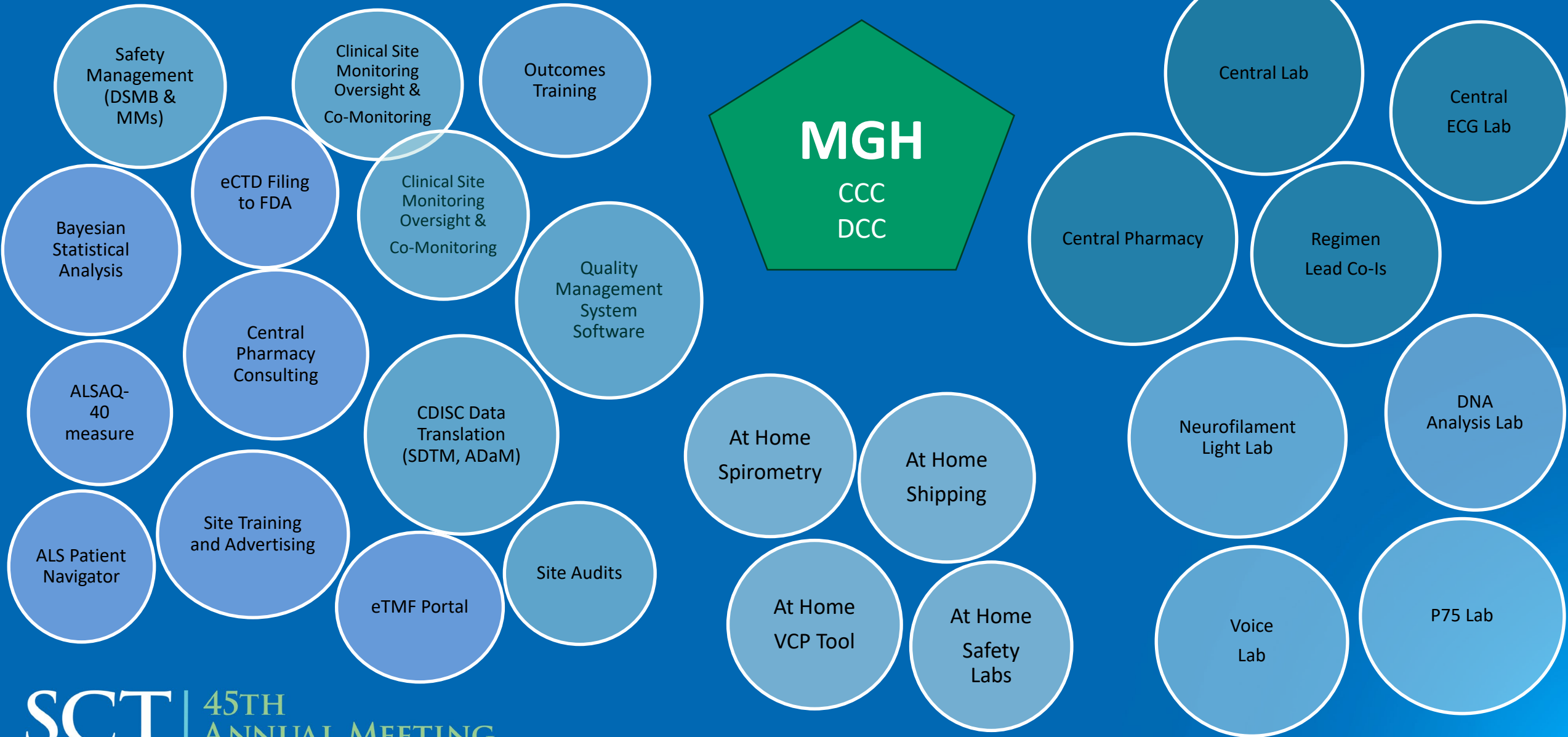
# HEALEY ALS Platform Trial Infrastructure





**75+ Participating NEALS Sites!**

# Vendors



# Industry

# Partners

Industry Partner G

Industry Partner F

Industry Partner E

Industry Partner D

Industry Partner C

Industry Partner B

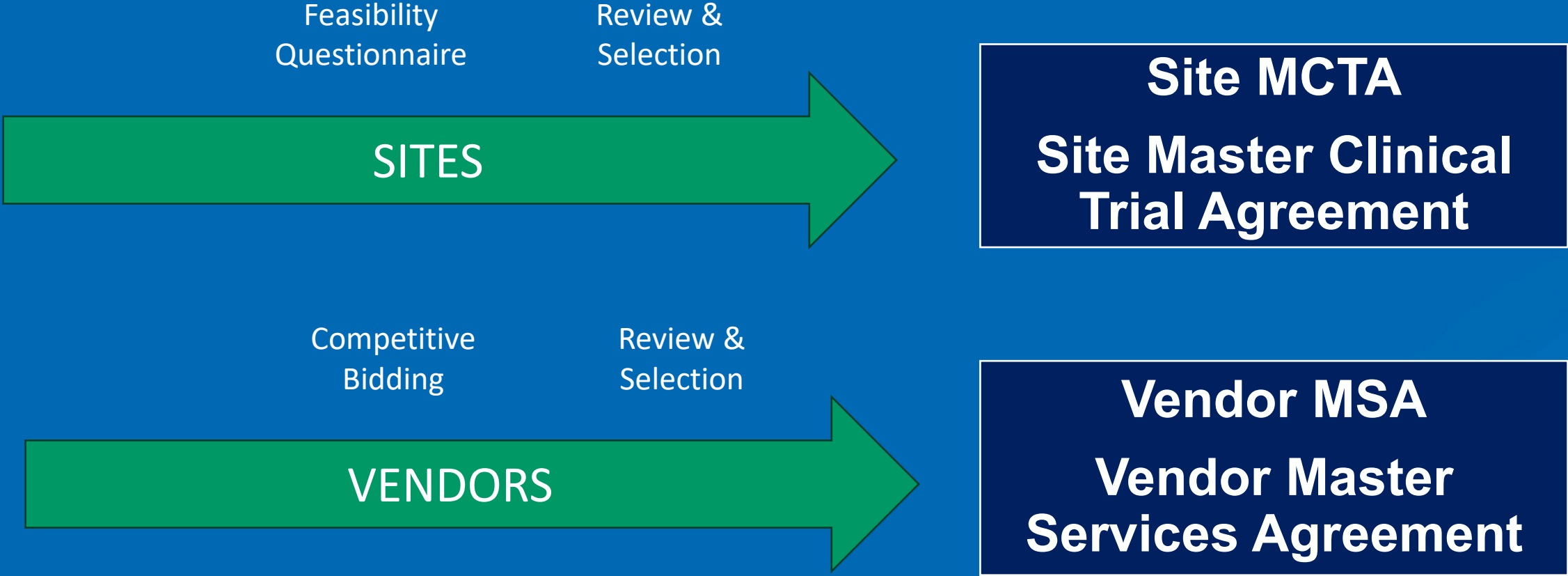
Industry Partner A

Pipeline of  
New Industry Partners

**Foundation of the  
HEALEY ALS Platform Trial  
Contract Infrastructure**

**Sites & Vendors:  
Selection &  
Master Agreements**

# 2019 Infrastructure Build



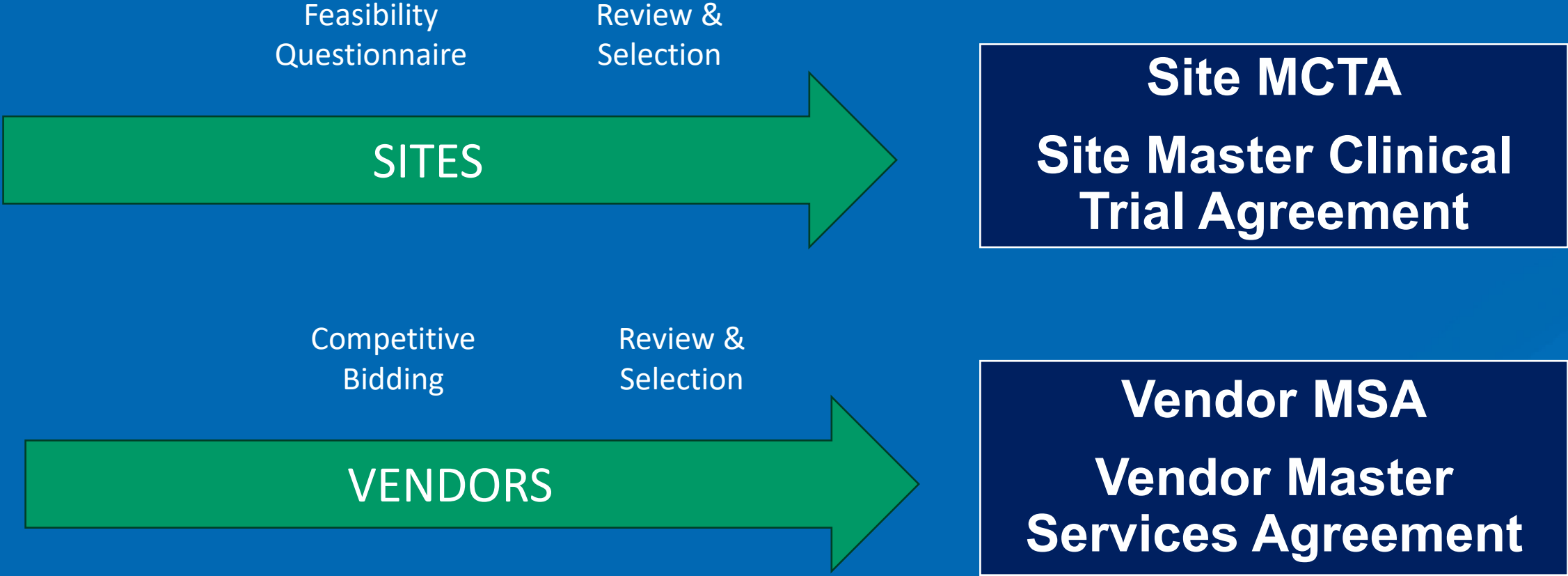
# Master Clinical Trial Agreement (Site MCTA)

- Scope of Work
- Master Protocol
- Example Regimen Task Order
  
- Terms and Conditions
  - Human Data & Materials
  - Publication
  - Intellectual Property
  - Liability and Subject Injury

Who will do what and how?

What are the rules of the game?

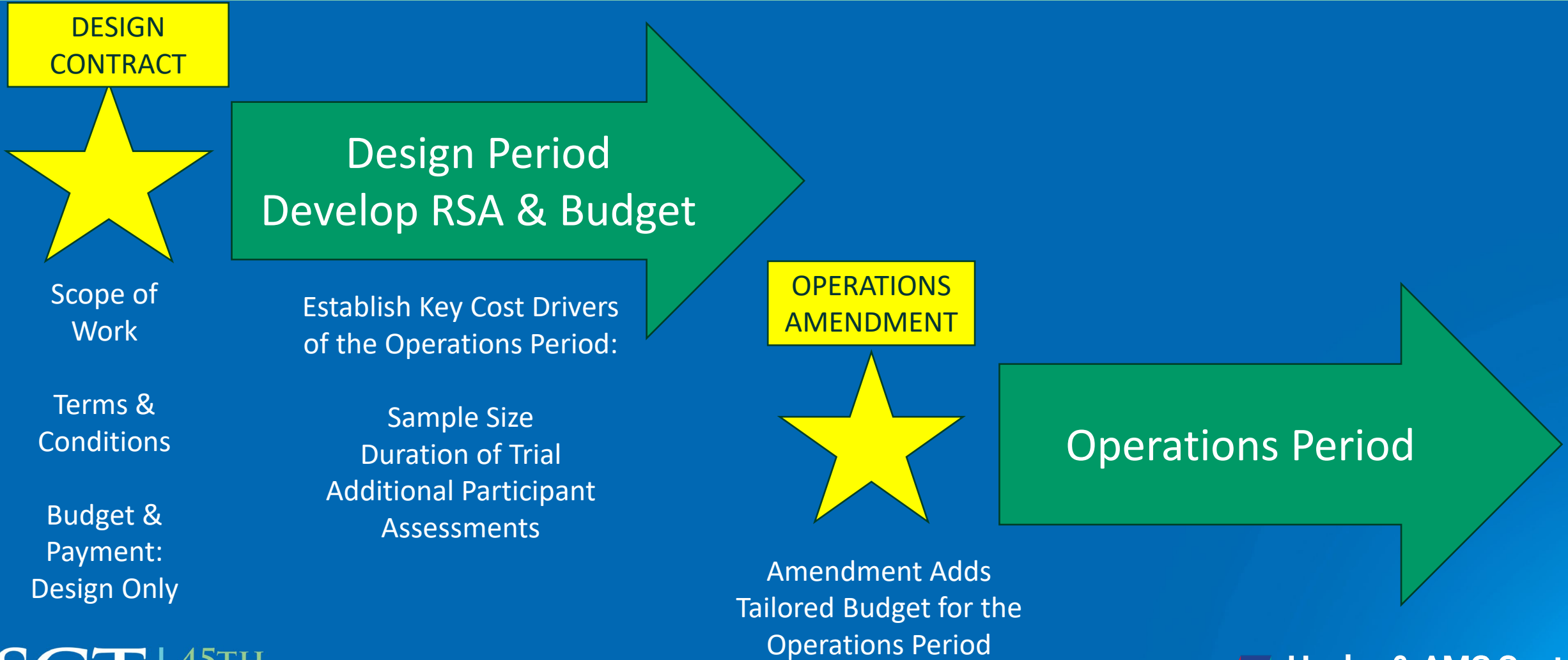
# 2019 Infrastructure Build



**Introducing New Regimens  
to the  
HEALEY ALS Platform Trial**

**Industry Partner  
Agreements**

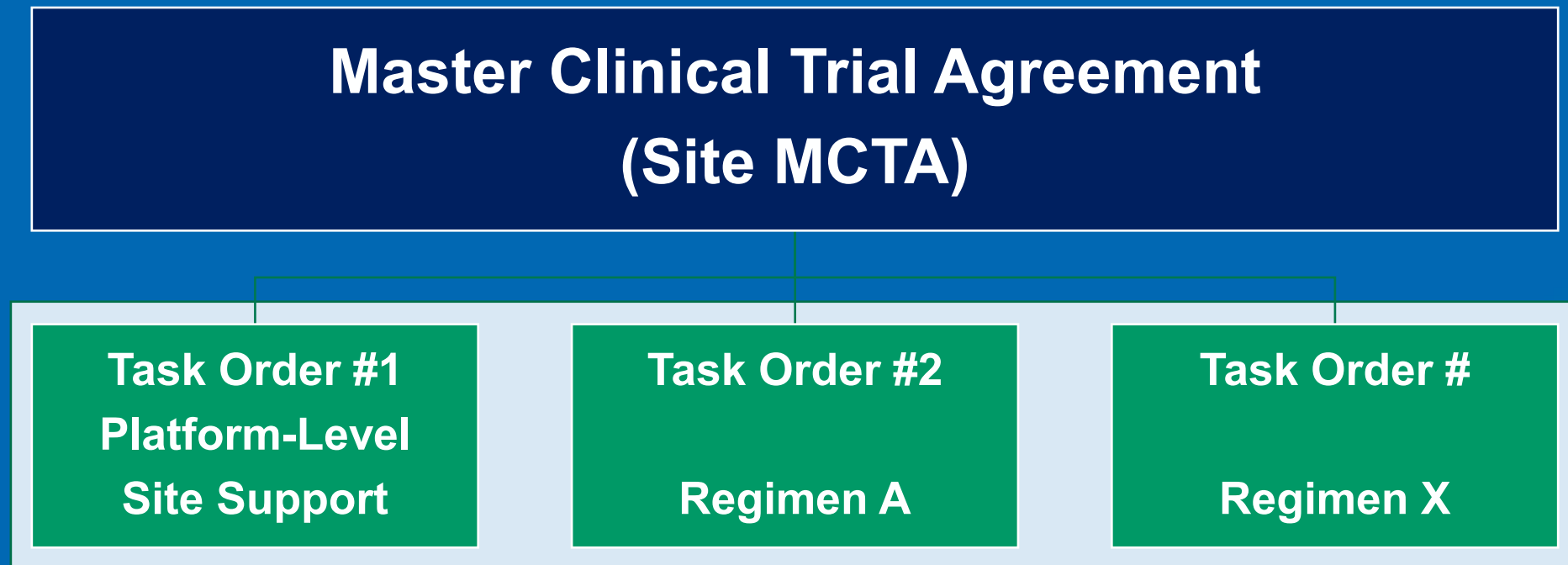
# Industry Partners: A Tiered Approach



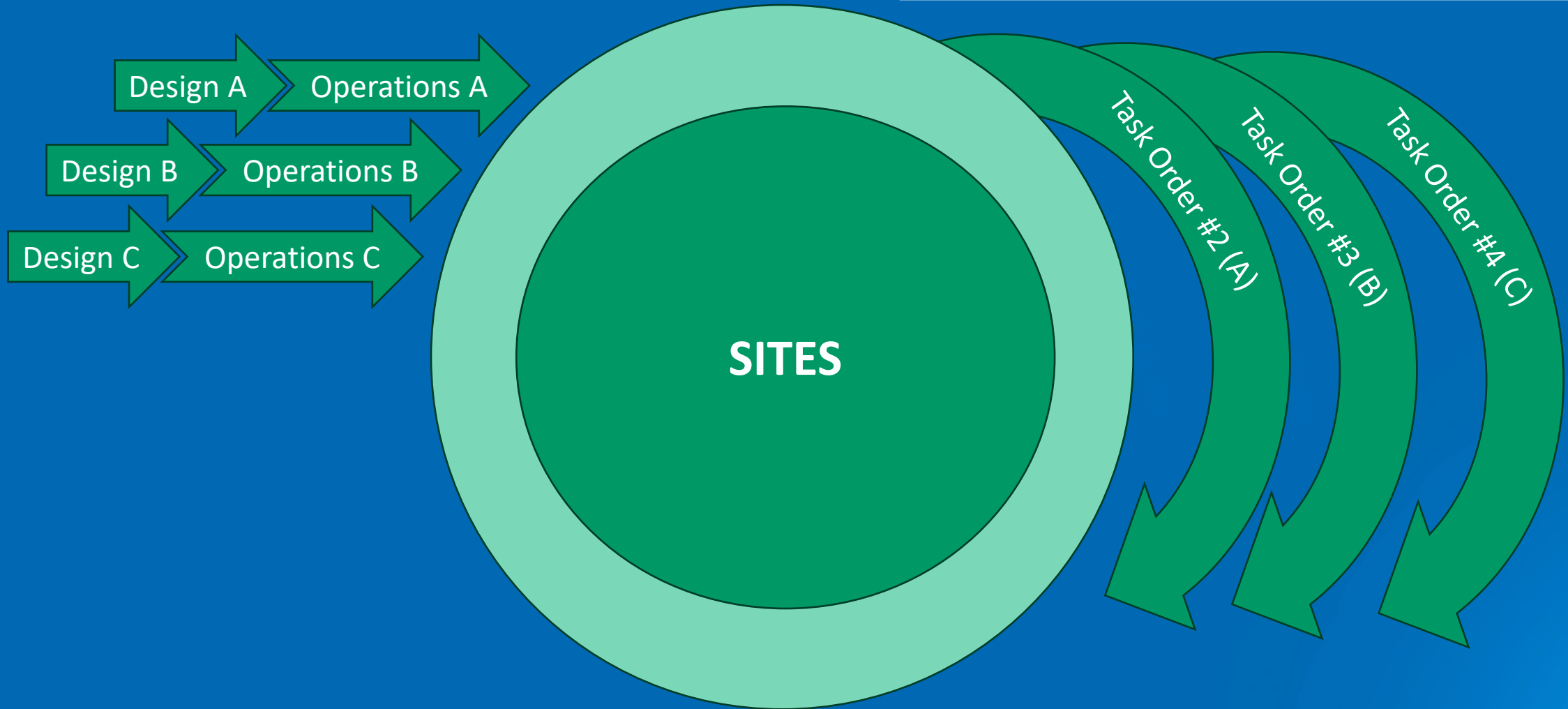
**Introducing New Regimens  
to the  
HEALEY ALS Platform Trial**

**Sites & Vendors:  
Regimen Task/Work Orders**

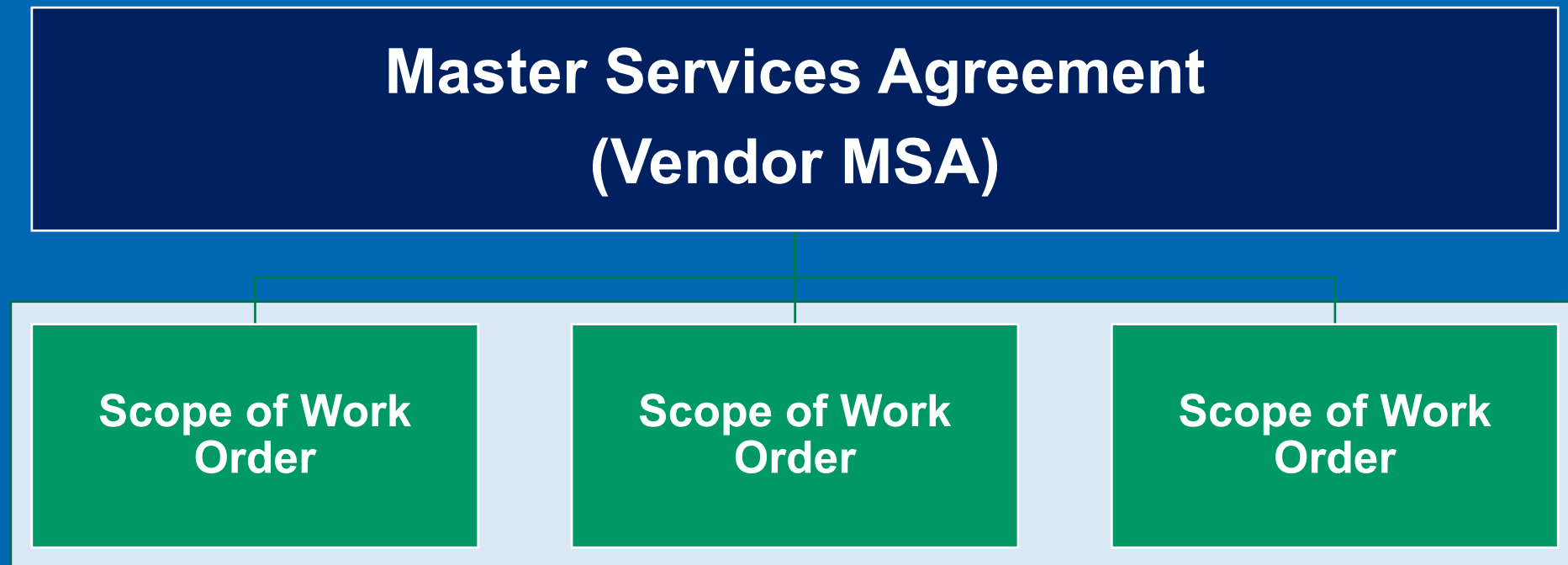
# Site Agreement Structure



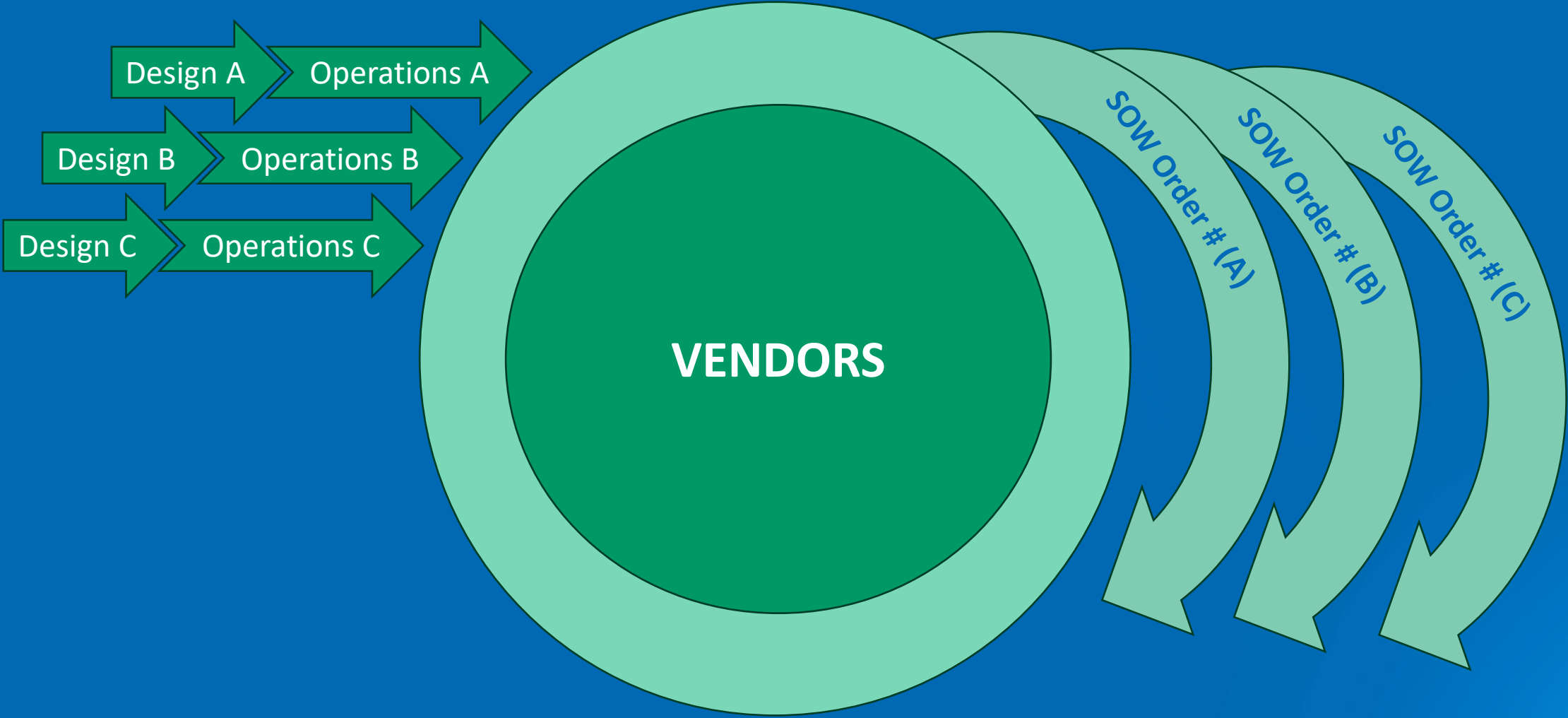
**Master Clinical Trial Agreement  
(Site MCTA)**



# Vendor Agreement Structure



**Master Services Agreement  
(Vendor MSA)**



# Summary

# Summary

- Pre-contract selection process is largely complete and does not need to be repeated w/ new regimens
- Pre-existing master contracts reduce negotiation time when new regimens are introduced
- Tiered contracting allows for tailored regimen budgeting and industry partner involvement
- Real-time cost information throughout the design period helps to facilitate design decisions.
- Overlapping the operations budget development with the design period enables industry partners to negotiate budget in parallel.

**Thank you!**

# Characteristics of Efficient Regimen Design

**Brittney Harkey, PhD**

Senior Clinical Trial Project Manager  
Healey & AMG Center for ALS at Mass General



# Regimen Start-Up Overview

- What is the goal of the start-up phase for any clinical trial?
  - Design, operationalize and implement a protocol as efficiently as possible
  - Initiate enrollment quickly
- Reduced time to FPFV = Reduced start-up costs
- How do we leverage the platform infrastructure to efficiently design regimens and initiate enrollment?



First  
Participant  
First Visit  
(FPFV)

# Regimen Start-Up Phases



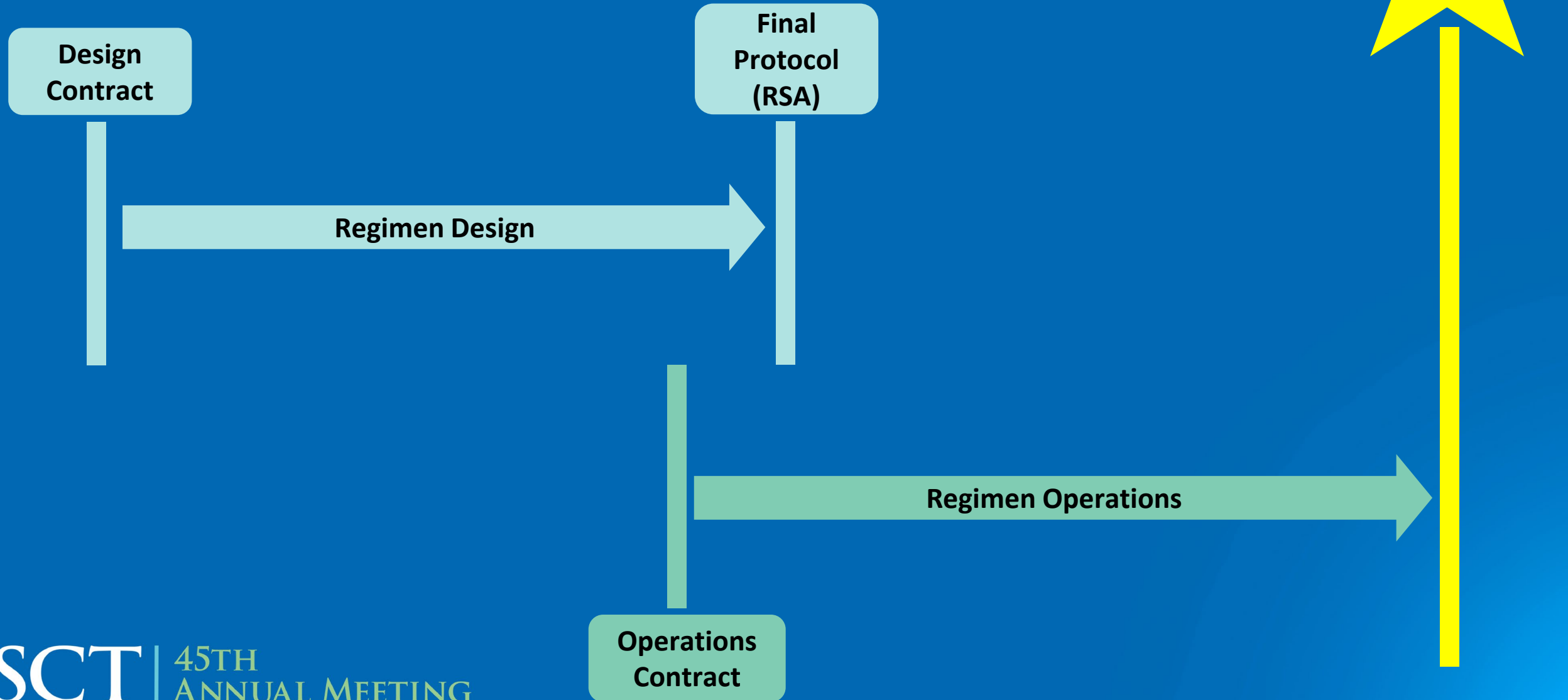
## Regimen Design

- Goal = develop and finalize a Regimen Specific Appendix (RSA), the regimen's protocol
  - Aligns with the Master Protocol
  - Customized to the Investigational Product
  - Informs full regimen budgeting

## Regimen Operations

- Goal = integrate final RSA into existing trial infrastructure
  - Regulatory Approvals
  - Regimen Contracting
  - Electronic data capture (EDC) / Interactive Response Technology (IRT) build
  - Site Regulatory Requirements

# Key Regimen Start-Up Milestones



# Regimen Start-Up Timeline

Design Contract

How do we shorten the time between design contract execution and the start of enrollment?

Regimen Start-Up

Regimen Design

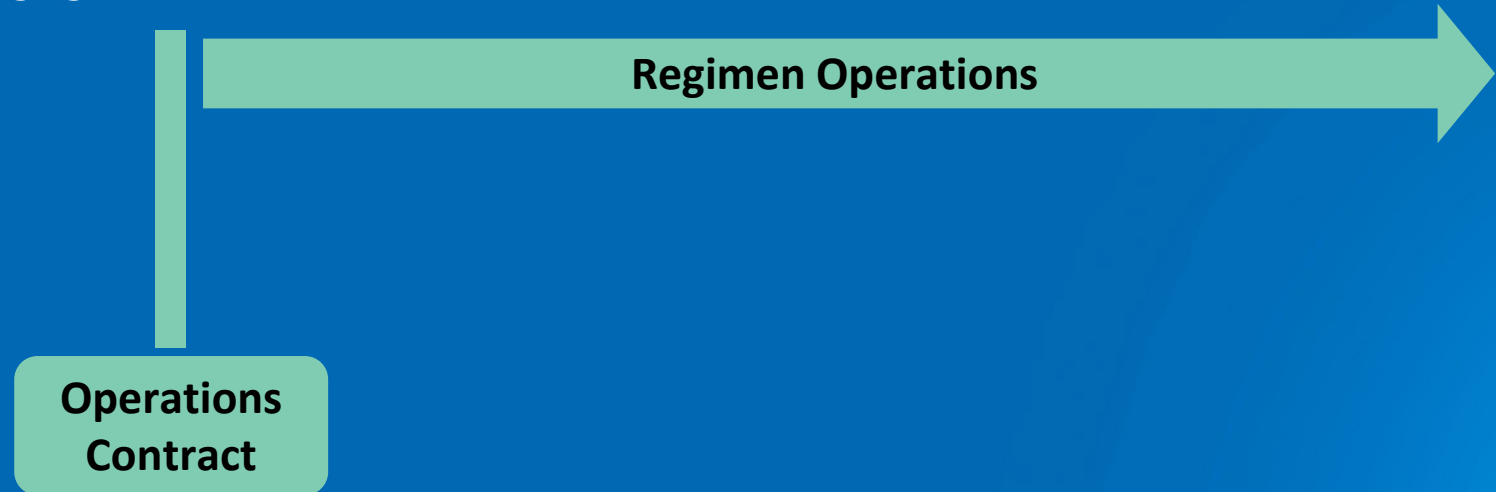
Regimen Operations

FPFV

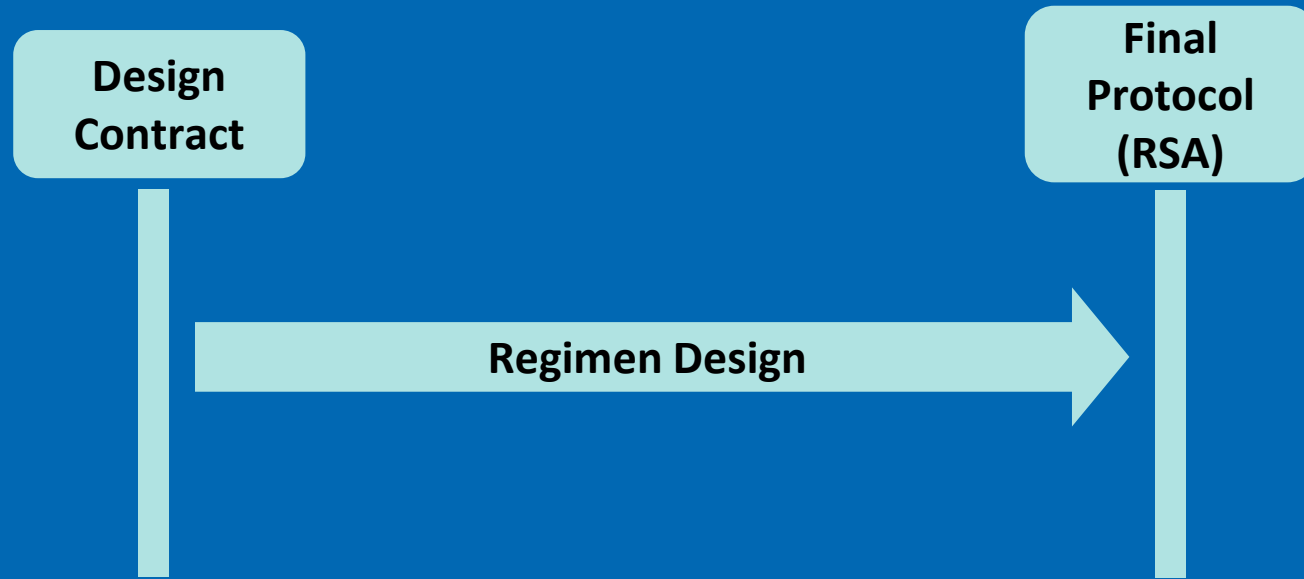
# Operations Phase Timeline



- Largely fixed
  - Cannot begin until after the regimen protocol is final
  - Budget development in design drives contract execution
  - Timelines based on prior regimens and set at platform trial level
    - New Regimen sIRB Approval
      - RSA – average of 17.5 days
      - Sites – average of 5.87 days
    - Vendor SOWs for regimens
      - 30 – 90 days
    - EDC/IRT build time
      - 6 weeks

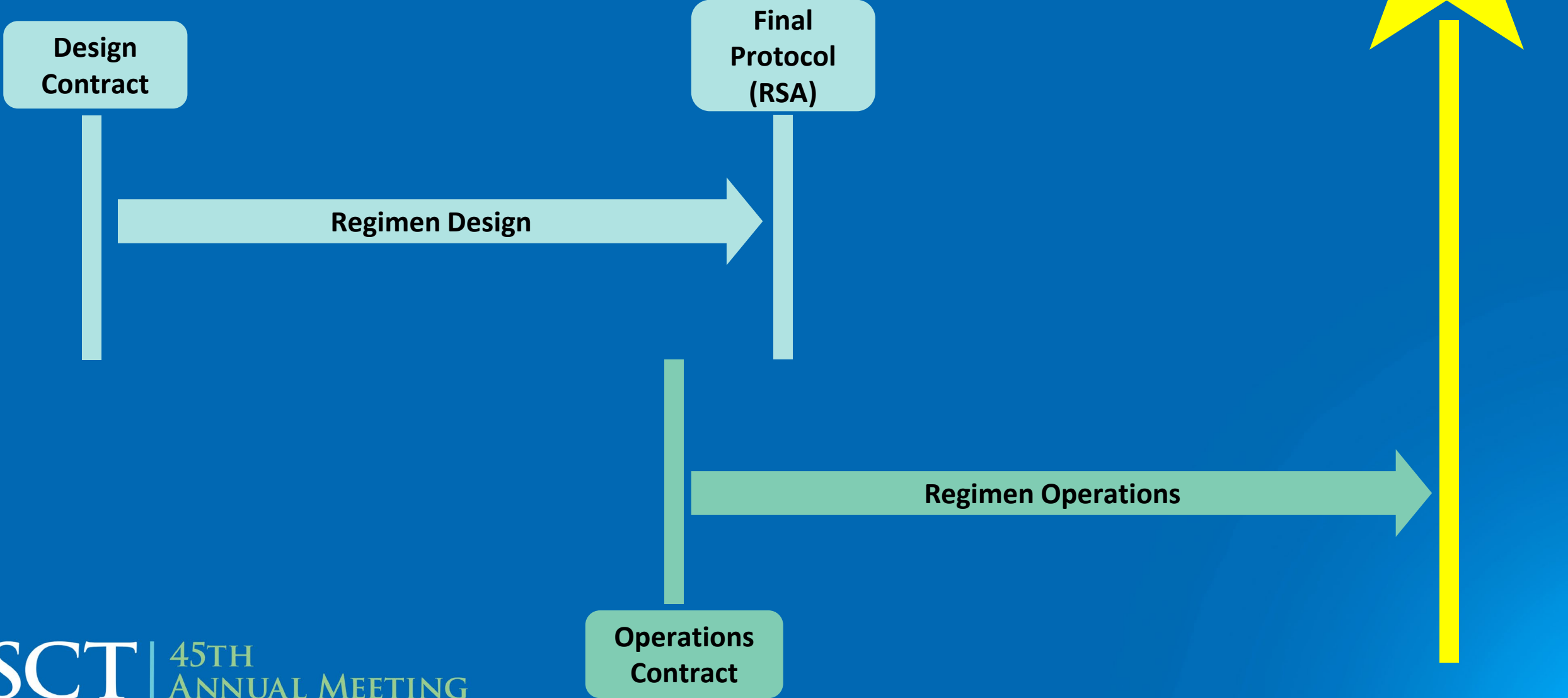


# Design Phase Timeline

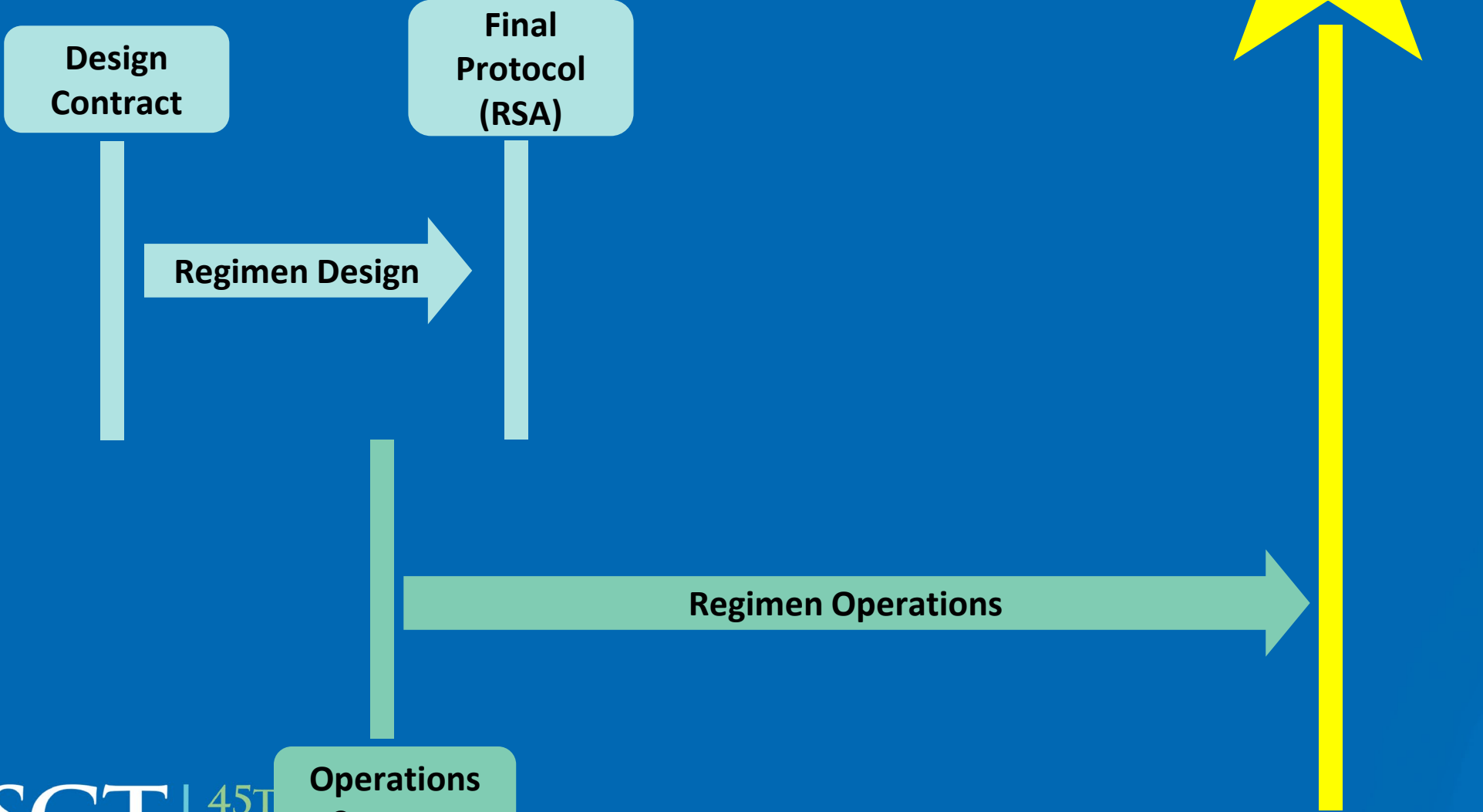


- Design and statistical decisions needed for the regimen are known in advance
- Dependent on standard process, and how efficiently key design decisions can be made

# Key Regimen Milestones



# Key Regimen Milestones



# How do we shorten the regimen design phase?

- Expedited regimen protocol development/efficient decision making
- Early determination of operational budget drivers
- Strategic regulatory meeting planning

# Regimen Design Committee

- Governs the regimen design and approves final regimen protocol
- Members
  - Core MGH Members
    - Sponsor, Regimen Leads, Biostatisticians, Project Management
  - Industry Partner Members
- Weekly Design Committee Meetings
  - Decisions on critical path to finalizing the regimen protocol (RSA) are frontloaded
    - Sample Size, Eligibility Criteria, Objectives and Endpoints, Schedule of Activities
  - Operational and statistical discussions occur in parallel

# Expedited Regimen Protocol Development

- Regimen Protocol Template
  - Pre-populated sections align with the current version of Master Protocol
  - Regimen-specific sections customized by Industry Partner
- Operational sections complete offline, questions brought to meetings as needed
- Prioritization of discussions on sections on critical path to final version of the regimen protocol (RSA)
  - Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria
  - Sample Size
  - Outcomes and Endpoints
  - Schedule of Activities
  - Safety Monitoring/Management
  - Investigational Product

# Design Meeting Discussion Roadmap

- Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria
- Sample Size
- Objectives and Endpoints
- Schedule of Activities
- Safety Monitoring/Management
- Investigational Product

Determine need  
for regimen-  
specific  
simulations

**Regimen Protocol (RSA) Development**

Set Regimen  
Inclusion/Exclusion  
Criteria

# Design Meeting Discussion Roadmap

- ✓ Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria
- Sample Size
- Objectives and Endpoints
- Schedule of Activities
- Safety Monitoring/Management
- Investigational Product

Determine need  
for regimen-  
specific  
simulations

**Regimen Protocol (RSA) Development**

Set Regimen  
Inclusion/Exclusion  
Criteria

# Design Meeting Discussion Roadmap

- ✓ Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria
- Sample Size
- Objectives and Endpoints
- Schedule of Activities
- Safety Monitoring/Management
- Investigational Product



Budget  
Discussion

Determine need  
for regimen-  
specific  
simulations

Review regimen-  
specific  
simulations and  
set sample size

Regimen Protocol (RSA) Development

Set Regimen  
Inclusion/Exclusion  
Criteria

# Design Meeting Discussion Roadmap

- ✓ Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria
- ✓ Sample Size
- Objectives and Endpoints
- Schedule of Activities
- Safety Monitoring/Management
- Investigational Product



Budget  
Discussion

Determine need  
for regimen-  
specific  
simulations

Review regimen-  
specific  
simulations and  
set sample size

Regimen Protocol (RSA) Development

Set Regimen  
Inclusion/Exclusion  
Criteria

Statistical Discussion  
Operational Discussion

# Design Meeting Discussion Roadmap

- ✓ Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria
- ✓ Sample Size
- Objectives and Endpoints
- Schedule of Activities
- Safety Monitoring/Management
- Investigational Product



Determine need for regimen-specific simulations

Review regimen-specific simulations and set sample size



Set Regimen Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria

Initial SOA Review

# Design Meeting Discussion Roadmap

- ✓ Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria
- ✓ Sample Size
- ☐ Objectives and Endpoints
- ☐ Schedule of Activities
- ☐ Safety Monitoring/Management
- ☐ Investigational Product



Determine need for regimen-specific simulations

Review regimen-specific simulations and set sample size

Review Endpoint hierarchy

## Regimen Protocol (RSA) Development

Set Regimen Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria

Initial SOA Review

Review Objectives and Endpoints

Set Objectives and Endpoints



# Design Meeting Discussion Roadmap

- ✓ Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria
- ✓ Sample Size
- ✓ Objectives and Endpoints
- Schedule of Activities
- Safety Monitoring/Management
- Investigational Product



Determine need for regimen-specific simulations

Review regimen-specific simulations and set sample size

Review Endpoint hierarchy

## Regimen Protocol (RSA) Development

Set Regimen Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria

Initial SOA Review

Review Objectives and Endpoints

Set Objectives and Endpoints



# Design Meeting Discussion Roadmap

- ✓ Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria
- ✓ Sample Size
- ✓ Objectives and Endpoints
- Schedule of Activities
- Safety Monitoring/Management
- Investigational Product



Determine need for regimen-specific simulations

Review regimen-specific simulations and set sample size

Review Endpoint hierarchy

## Regimen Protocol (RSA) Development

Set Regimen Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria

Initial SOA Review

Review Objectives and Endpoints

Set Objectives and Endpoints

Set SOA



Statistical Discussion  
Operational Discussion

# Design Meeting Discussion Roadmap

- ✓ Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria
- ✓ Sample Size
- ✓ Objectives and Endpoints
- ✓ Schedule of Activities
- Safety Monitoring/Management
- Investigational Product



Determine need for regimen-specific simulations

Review regimen-specific simulations and set sample size

Review Endpoint hierarchy

## Regimen Protocol (RSA) Development

Set Regimen Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria

Initial SOA Review

Review Objectives and Endpoints

Set Objectives and Endpoints

Set SOA



# Design Meeting Discussion Roadmap

- ✓ Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria
- ✓ Sample Size
- ✓ Objectives and Endpoints
- ✓ Schedule of Activities
- ✓ Safety Monitoring/Management
- ✓ Investigational Product



Determine need for regimen-specific simulations

Review regimen-specific simulations and set sample size

Review Endpoint hierarchy

## Regimen Protocol (RSA) Development

Set Regimen Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria

Initial SOA Review

Review Objectives and Endpoints

Set Objectives and Endpoints

Set SOA

Final Review of Protocol



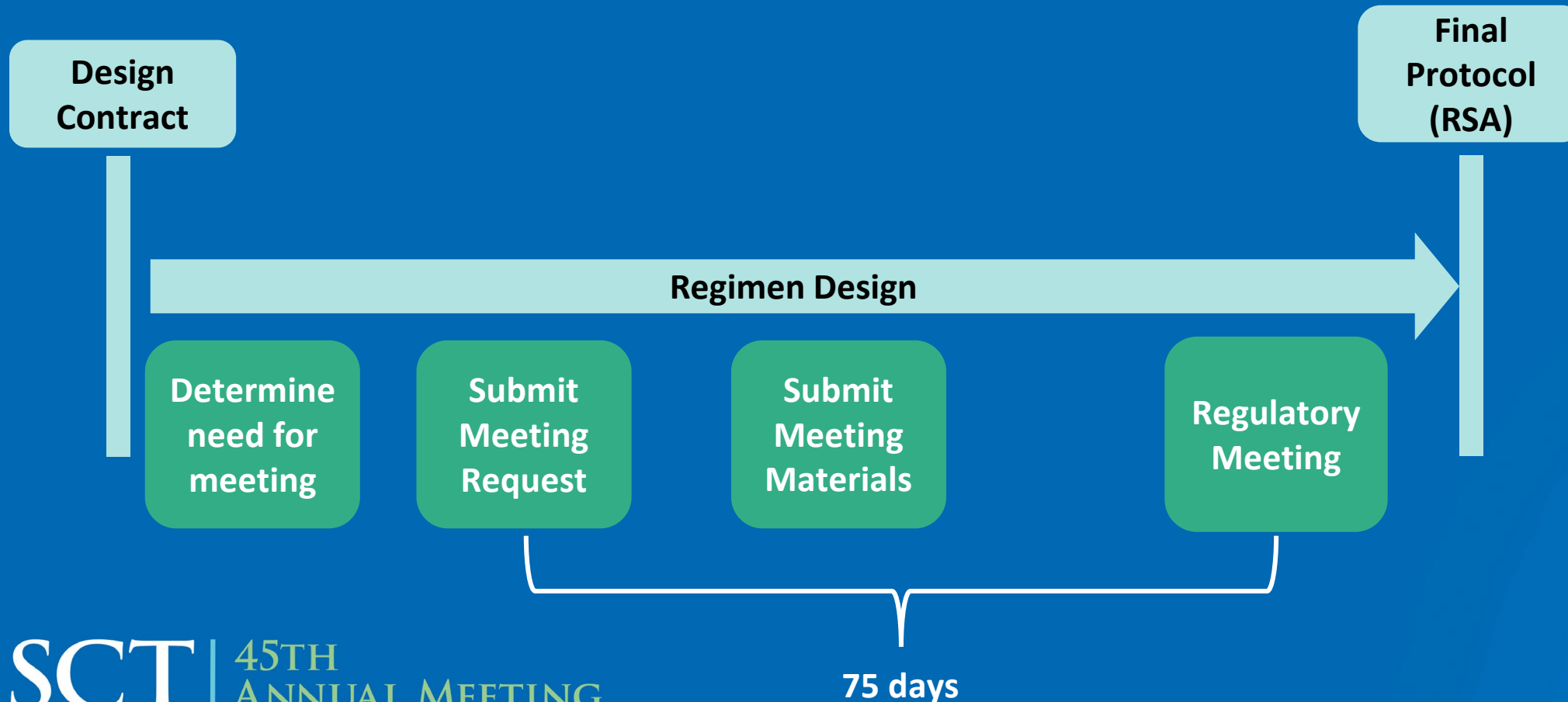
Operational sections completed offline

# Strategic Regulatory Meeting Planning

- Each new regimen has an opportunity to meet with FDA during a Type C meeting for guidance prior to finalizing the regimen protocol (RSA)
- Requesting a meeting is optional, and questions are limited to regimen investigational product and safety
  - Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria
  - Dose selection
  - Safety monitoring
- RSA cannot be finalized until after Type C meeting

# Strategic Type C Meeting Planning

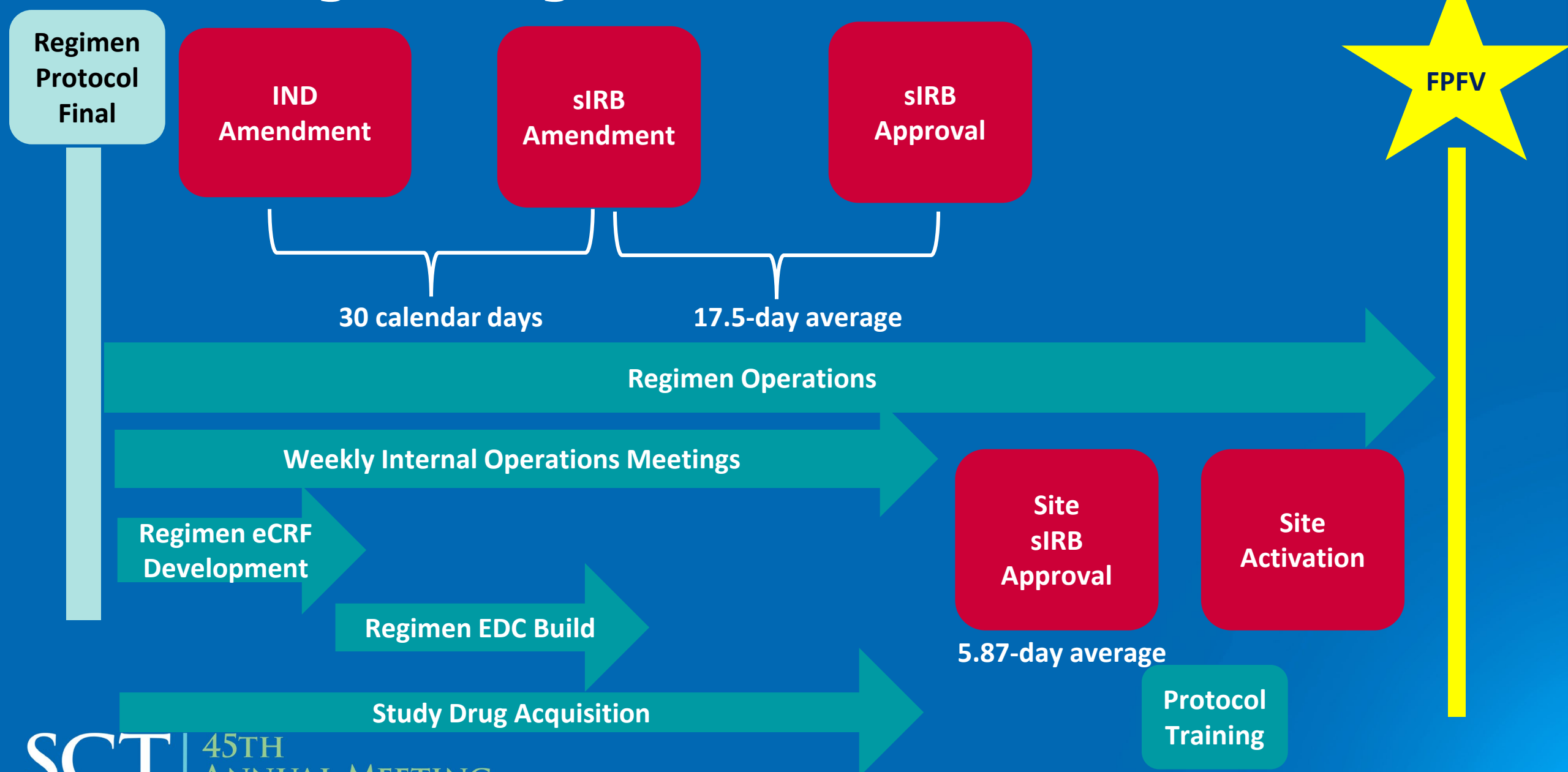
- Meeting planning runs in parallel with ongoing regimen protocol development



# Regimen Design Summary

- Expedited regimen protocol development/efficient decision making
- Early determination of operational budget drivers
- Strategic regulatory meeting planning

# How do we get to regimen enrollment?



**Thank You**