

Mathematical models on Health Economics

Cost-Effectiveness of Colorectal Cancer Screening in Selected Argentine Provinces

Objectives:

- Give an example of the application of a Markov Model to study the cost-effectiveness of a preventive health intervention
- Illustrate the need to incorporate clinical variability and heterogeneity in unitary costs of subsectors in fragmented health systems
- Warn about the risks of generalizing average national cost-effectiveness results to different health subsectors in these countries

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DE SALUD
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COSTO-EFECTIVIDAD DEL RASTREO DE CÁNCER COLORRECTAL EN PROVINCIAS ARGENTINAS SELECCIONADAS

Cost-Effectiveness of Colorectal Cancer Screening in Selected Argentine Provinces

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RESUMEN. INTRODUCCIÓN: El cáncer colorrectal (CCR) es una de las principales causas de mortalidad en adultos. En Argentina es la segunda entre las neoplasias, y se observan diferencias en la mortalidad entre las distintas provincias. El rastreo de CCR es subutilizado en Argentina, donde el sistema de salud se encuentra fragmentado. **OBJETIVOS:** Analizar la costo-efectividad (CE) de diversas estrategias de rastreo basadas en el test de sangre oculta en materia fecal inmunohistoquímico (SOMFihq) anual desde distintos subsectores provinciales. **MÉTODOS:** Se construyó un modelo de Markov, que permitió comparar tres estrategias: rastreo en población de 50 a 74 años, rastreo en población de 50 a 64 años y no rastreo. **RESULTADOS:** Se encontraron diferencias de costos y variabilidad clínica. El rastreo a población de 50-74 años presentó una razón de CE incremental levemente mayor que el rastreo en población de 50-64 años, con valores inferiores al producto bruto geográfico per cápita. Este resultado se mostró robusto en el análisis de sensibilidad. **CONCLUSIONES:** Los resultados comparados en siete subsectores de salud regionales de Argentina –con diferencias epidemiológicas, organizacionales, de capacidad instalada y de recursos–, con su variabilidad de práctica clínica y sus diferentes costos– indican de manera robusta que el rastreo de CCR se mantiene costo-efectivo en diversos escenarios. Analizar la CE de intervenciones sanitarias en Argentina requiere tener en cuenta el contexto local de los diferentes subsectores de salud.

ABSTRACT. INTRODUCTION: Colorectal cancer (CRC) is one of the main causes of mortality in adults. In Argentina, it is the second among tumors, and there are different mortality rates. CRC screening is underutilized in Argentina, where there is an important fragmentation of the health system. **OBJECTIVES:** To assess the cost-effectiveness (CE) of different screening strategies based on annual fecal occult blood test (iFOBT) for different age groups in the country. **METHODS:** A Markov model was constructed, which allowed to compare three different strategies: screening in population aged 50 to 74 years, screening to 64 years, and no screening. **RESULTS:** Different costs and clinical variability were found. Screening in population aged 50 to 74 years showed a slightly higher incremental CE ratio than screening the population aged 50 to 64 years, with values lower than per capita gross regional product. This result was robust in the sensitivity analysis. **CONCLUSIONS:** The results compared in seven regional health subsectors in Argentina –with differences in epidemiology, organization, installed capacity and resources, as well as clinical variability and different costs– are robust in showing that CRC screening remains cost-effective under different scenarios. In order to analyze the CE of health interventions in Argentina, it is necessary to take into account the local context of the different health subsectors.

<http://rasp.msal.gov.ar/rasp/articulos/volumen31/13-18.pdf>



REVISIONES

EVALUACIONES ECONÓMICAS EN UN SISTEMA DE SALUD FRAGMENTADO: OPORTUNIDADES Y DESAFÍOS METODOLÓGICOS PARA ARGENTINA

Economic Evaluations in a Fragmented Health System: Opportunities and Methodological Challenges for Argentina

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Introducción: La particularidad del sistema de salud argentino, que se encuentra fragmentado en tres subsistemas y con más de 900 financiadores, lleva a reflexionar sobre cuál es la posibilidad de desarrollar evaluaciones económicas (EE) en forma global y que sirvan de modo eficiente al proceso de toma de decisiones. **Objetivos:** Identificar y discutir los desafíos metodológicos que implican el diseño de EE en un sistema de salud caracterizado por la fragmentación, la no integración en la prestación de servicios y la presencia de múltiples financiadores. Analizar los aspectos claves de la formulación de las EE y su aplicabilidad en nuestro contexto, así como también la generalización y transferibilidad de sus resultados hacia el sistema de salud en su conjunto. **Métodos:** Se realizó una búsqueda sistemática de la literatura en las principales fuentes bibliográficas. Se relevaron indicadores a nivel provincial y sectorial. Asimismo, se citan ejemplos de estudios de EE que demuestran las diferencias intersectoriales en los principales elementos metodológicos que componen una EE. **Conclusiones:** Las características de nuestro sistema de salud fragmentado implican diferencias en términos de estructuras de costos, perspectiva de análisis y umbrales de disponibilidad a pagar según la entidad involucrada. Ello tiene repercusiones metodológicas en la elaboración y en los resultados de las EE y, por tanto, condiciona la aplicabilidad o generalización de los resultados a nivel nacional.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Evaluaciones Económicas; Sistemas de Salud; Fragmentación; Transferibilidad
KEY WORDS: Economic Evaluations; Health Systems; Fragmentation; Transferability

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INTRODUCTION

- Colorectal cancer (CRC) is the 2nd cause of death among neoplasms in Argentina, causing 20 deaths/100,000 inhabitants/year and with an annual incidence of 50 cases/100,000 inhabitants. The trend is increasing.
- CRC mortality and morbidity can be reduced by screening strategies based on Faecal Occult Blood Test (FOBT) and videocolonoscopy (VCC) in adults.
- Among the provinces of Argentina, there are differences in CRC sex-adjusted mortality rates, these being higher in the southern region of the country, in the City of Buenos Aires and in the province of Santa Fe.
- There is great heterogeneity between the different provinces in terms of demographics, costs, clinical practices, wealth (GDPpc), as well as between health subsectors in the same provinces (Public Health and Social Security)
- **OBJECTIVE:** Estimate the Cost-Effectiveness of CRC screening by annual FOBT method, followed by confirmatory videocolonoscopy (VCC) applied to the population between 50 and 74 years of age, or to the age group of 50 to 64 years, compared with no screening, from the perspective of the financier of the public subsector and Social Security Services in the Provinces of Santa Fe, Neuquén, Buenos Aires and City of Buenos Aires.

Methods

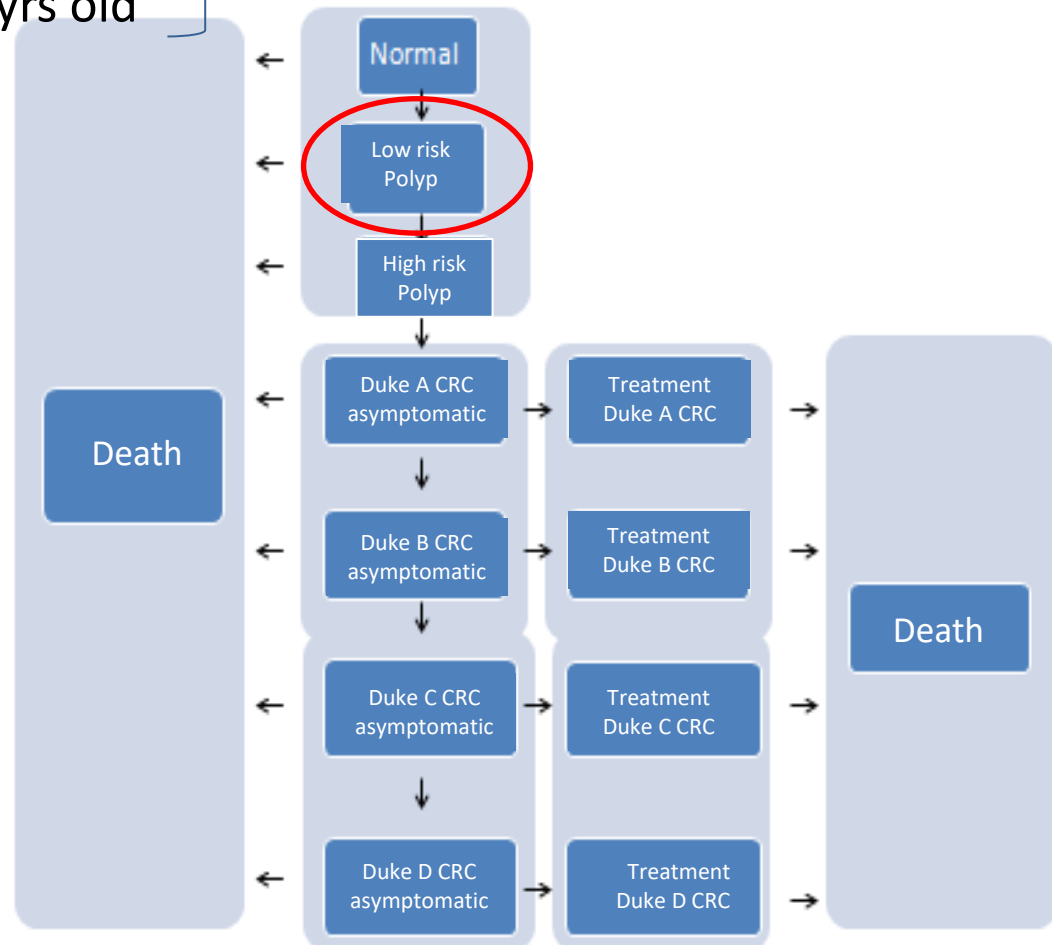
- Markov Model

- No screening → Modelling Natural Disease History

- FOBT annually to adults 50-64 yrs old

- FOBT annually to adults 50-74 yrs old

Screening Model



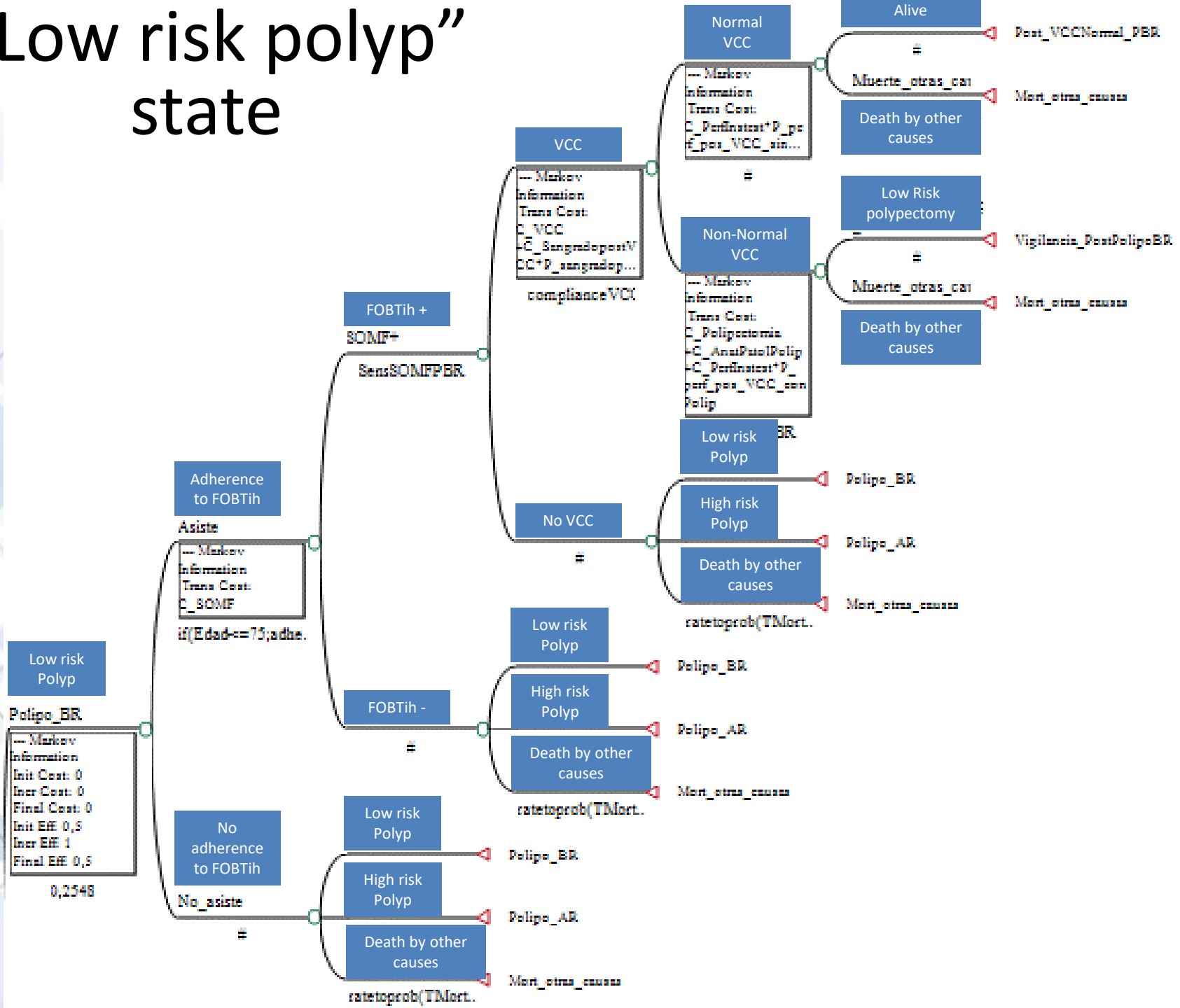
- End Points

- Years of Life gained
 - Cost for Year of Life gained
 - Incremental Cost-effectiveness ratio (ICER)

- Calibration of the model

- Sensitivity Analysis

“Low risk polyp” state



Probabilities	Value	Range	Reference
Probabilidades iniciales (prevalencia)			
Polipo Bajo Riesgo	0,2548	(0,12-0,35)	UK CRC Screening Pilot Evaluation Team, 2008; Frazier
Polipo de Alto Riesgo	0,02	(0,01-0,1)	UK CRC Screening Pilot Evaluation Team, 2008; López Bastida
CCR Duke A	0,0003	(0,00026-0,00035)	Adaptado de UK Colorectal Cancer Pilot a partir de Sharp, Irlanda (2009)
CCR Duke B	0,0005	(0,00043-0,00058)	Adaptado de UK Colorectal Cancer Pilot a partir de Sharp, Irlanda (2009)
CCR Duke C	0,0007	(0,00061-0,00081)	Adaptado de UK Colorectal Cancer Pilot a partir de Sharp, Irlanda (2009)
CCR Duke D	0,0005	(0,00043-0,00058)	Adaptado de UK Colorectal Cancer Pilot a partir de Sharp, Irlanda (2009)
Características de los test			
Sensibilidad SOMFih para pólipos	0,3	(0,2-0,4)	Cheng Ti, 2002 y Gondal G, 2003
Sensibilidad SOMF para CCR	0,7	(0,6-0,8)	Alison JE, 2002
Especificidad SOMF	0,94	(0,92-0,96)	Alison JE, 2002
Sensibilidad VCC polipo bajo riesgo	0,85	(0,8-0,85)	Winawer S, 2003 y Hixson U, 1991
Sensibilidad VCC polipo alto riesgo	0,95	(0,85-0,95)	Winawer S, 2003 y Hixson U, 1991
Sensibilidad VCC para CCR	0,95	(0,85-0,95)	Winawer S, 2003 y Hixson U, 1991
Especificidad VCC	1		Winawer S, 2003 y Hixson U, 1991
Participación en el rastreo			
Adherencia Somf	0,6	(0,13-1)	Van Rossum LG, 2008
Adherencia VCC post SOMF +	0,85		Tappenden P, 2004
Probabilidades de transición anual			
Normal a pólipo de bajo riesgo	específico por edad		Wu GH, 2006
Polipo de Bajo Riesgo a Polipo de Alto Riesgo	0,0346	(0,01-0,05)	Wu GH, 2006
Pólipo de alto riesgo a CCR Duke A	específico por edad		Wu GH, 2006
CCR Dukes A a Dukes B	0,583	(0,3-0,9)	Tappenden P, 2004
CCR Dukes B a Dukes C	0,656	(0,3-0,9)	Tappenden P, 2004
CCR Dukes C a Dukes D	0,865	(0,3-0,9)	Tappenden P, 2004
Sintomas Dukes A	0,07	(0,02-0,15)	Tappenden P, 2004
Sintomas Dukes B	0,32	(0,1-0,35)	Tappenden P, 2004
Sintomas Dukes C	0,49	(0,4-0,6)	Tappenden P, 2004
Sintomas Dukes D	0,854	(0,5-0,9)	Tappenden P, 2004
Pólipo BR recidiva a 5 años	0,38		Tappenden P, 2004
Pólipo BR post PAR (a 1 año)	0,25		Tappenden P, 2004
Pólipo BR post PAR (2años y +)	0,06		Tappenden P, 2004
Perforación por VCC (sin polipectomía)	0,0008		Tappenden P, 2004
Perforación por VCC (con polipectomía)	0,0017		Tappenden P, 2004
Sangrado luego de VCC	0,0044		Tappenden P, 2004
Mortalidad CCR Dukes A	0	(0-0,005)	Tappenden P, 2004
Mortalidad CCR Dukes B	0,01	(0,005-0,03)	Tappenden P, 2004
Mortalidad CCR Dukes C	0,0602	(0,02-0,15)	Tappenden P, 2004
Mortalidad CCR Dukes D	0,3867	(0,35-0,45)	Tappenden P, 2004

Initial probabilities

Tests characteristics

Adherence to tests

Annual transition probabilities

Costs of practices in each of the health subsectors: (Argentine pesos)

Ítem		Buenos Aires SP	Buenos Aires OSP	CABA (‡)	Neuquén	Neuquén	Santa Fe	Santa Fe
		(*)	(†)	SP (*)	SP (*)	OSP (†)	SP (*)	OSP (†)
FOBTih	Diff x 2	103	68	85	52	58	103	56
VCC		2024	3739	3124	2864	3420	2024	3140
Polypectomy		1642	1537	3629	5880	6703	1642	2545
Polyp Pathology	Diff x 8	144	164	104	280	335	144	280
CRC Pathology		144	408	104	700	828	144	690
CRC Diagnosis on screening		2358	3156	1940	3200	3435	2358	3278
CRC Diagnosis when symptomatic		4832	7355	5528	6636	7535	4832	7014
Treatment Duke A CRC		31 623	42 944	41 327	45 055	55 927	31 623	43 937
Treatment Duke B CRC		49 698	62 154	56 894	60 857	80 490	43 593	63 877
Treatment Duke C CRC	Diff x 12,9	93 411	103 904	73 732	81 735	130 013	60 853	102 326
Treatment Duke D CRC		378 494	446 815	34 584	46 875	404 905	34 691	439 635
Colonic perforation		14 077	13 201	24 078	21 100	30 778	14 077	17 378
Bleeding post-VCC		948	948	1920	1800	2981	948	1057

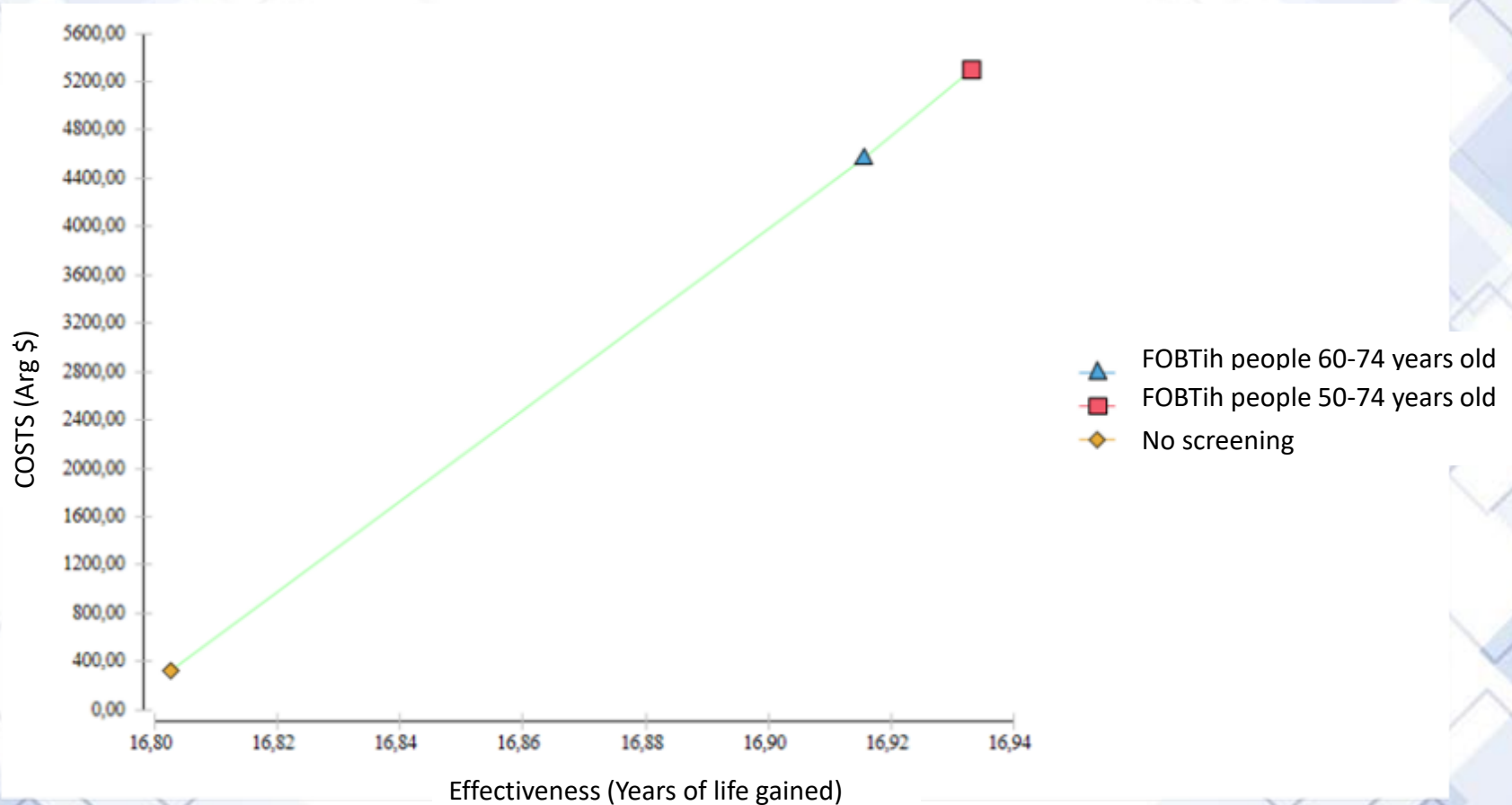
Notes:

(*) SP: Public Health; (†) OSP: Provincial Social Security; (‡) CABA: City of Buenos Aires;

Differences in unitary costs across health subsectors had different “explanations”:

- Different purchasing procedures (aggregated annual purchases vs small scale purchases)
- Same providers had different costs for different financers/funders
- Clinical variability in practices (diagnostics, therapeutics)

Incremental cost-effectiveness analysis of screening strategies using fecal occult blood (FOBTih) in the population aged 50 to 64 years or in the population aged 50 to 74 years, compared to no screening. Population with exclusive coverage by public health in Neuquén and with an annual adherence to FOBTih of 60%.

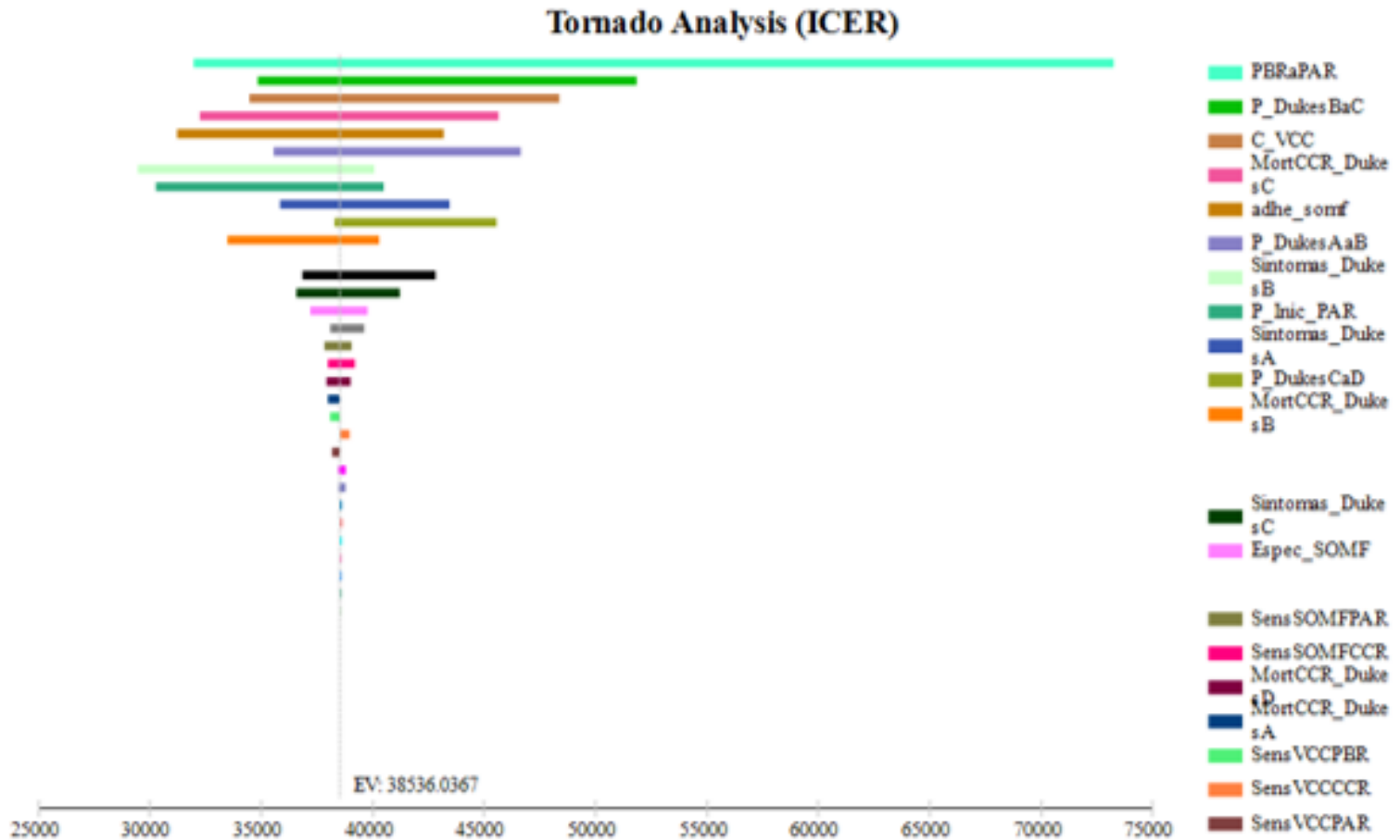


Results: Effectiveness, costs, ICER, Provincial GDP and relation ICER/GDPpc:

Subsector	Strategy	Effectiveness	Incremental Effectiveness	Costs (Arg \$)	Incremental costs (Arg \$)	ICER	Provincial GDPpc (Arg \$)	ICER/GDPpc	
Buenos Aires	SP	No screening	16,80	0,00	228,70	0,00	0,00	68.255	0,35
		FOBTih people 60-74 years old	16,92	0,11	2.948,35	2.719,65	24.113,86		
		FOBTih people 50-74 years old	16,93	0,02	3.454,55	506,20	28.787,58		
	OSP	No screening	16,80	0,00	331,45	0,00	0,00	Diff x4	Diff x2,7
		FOBTih people 60-74 years old	16,92	0,11	4.437,19	4.105,74	36.403,66		
		FOBTih people 50-74 years old	16,93	0,02	5.135,73	698,55	39.726,02		
CABA	SP	No screening	16,80	0,00	289,76	0,00	0,00	275.954	0,13
		FOBTih people 60-74 years old	16,92	0,11	4.365,13	4.075,37	36.134,38		
		FOBTih people 50-74 years old	16,93	0,02	5.080,44	715,31	40.679,58		
Neuquen	SP	No screening	16,80	0,00	330,84	0,00	0,00	130.420	0,29
		FOBTih people 60-74 years old	16,92	0,11	4.569,85	4.239,01	37.585,28		
		FOBTih people 50-74 years old	16,93	0,02	5.298,11	728,26	41.415,85		
	OSP	No screening	16,80	0,00	407,22	0,00	0,00	41.986,78	
		FOBTih people 60-74 years old	16,92	0,11	5.142,65	4.735,42	41.986,78		
		FOBTih people 50-74 years old	16,93	0,02	5.948,40	805,76	45.823,21		
Santa Fe	SP	No screening	16,80	0,00	228,70	0,00	0,00	95.962	0,25
		FOBTih people 60-74 years old	16,92	0,11	2.948,35	2.719,65	24.113,86		
		FOBTih people 50-74 years old	16,93	0,02	3.454,55	506,20	28.787,58		
	OSP	No screening	16,80	0,00	321,23	0,00	0,00		
		FOBTih people 60-74 years old	16,92	0,11	4.091,18	3.769,95	33.426,42		
		FOBTih people 50-74 years old	16,93	0,02	4.732,93	641,74	36.495,55		

Notes: (*) SP: Public Health; (†) OSP: Provincial Social Security; (‡) CABA: City of Buenos Aires;

Sensitivity analysis. Perspective of Public Health subsector of Neuquén Province.
 FOBTih to population of 50-74 years compared to no screening



CONCLUSIONS:

- Annual CRC screening with FOBTih in low-risk people between 50 and 74 years of age was found to be cost-effective in all health subsectors analyzed.
- The ICER values for screening strategies, compared to no-screening, represented between 0.13 and 0.32 of the GDPpc of the provinces studied.
- There are large differences in the GDPpc of the different jurisdictions. Difficulties in applying thresholds based on a national indicator such as GDPpc in evaluations with a national perspective.
- The results compared in 7 regional health subsectors of Argentina, with epidemiological, organizational, installed capacity and resource differences, with their variability in clinical practice, and their different costs, are robust in indicating that CRC screening remains cost-effective in various scenarios after sensitivity analysis.

Discussion:

- The limitations in the sources of local information were important.
- The robustness of C-E results across different subsectors in this study may be related to the fact that CRC screening is a very cost-effective intervention.
- For health interventions that are near the willingness to pay threshold, conflicting results may be found
- In countries with fragmented health systems and federal organization of health services, average estimations of cost-effectiveness at a national level may be risky
- Authors and Decision makers should be warned about the risks of generalizing average cost-effectiveness results to different health subsectors in “these countries”.

Thank you very much

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